

Distribution limited

WHC-99/CONF.204/4  
Paris, 19 May 1999  
Original : English/French

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL  
ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL  
AND NATURAL HERITAGE

BUREAU OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-third session  
Paris, UNESCO Headquarters (Room X)  
5 - 10 July 1999

**Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and on the World Heritage List:**

**Reports on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

## SUMMARY

In accordance with paragraphs 92-93 of the Operational Guidelines, the Secretariat and Advisory Bodies submit herewith reports on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Where appropriate, the Secretariat or the advisory bodies will provide additional information during the session of the Bureau.

**Decision required:** The Bureau is requested to examine the attached state of conservation reports and take the appropriate action in preparation for the decision-making by the Committee at its twenty-third session.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Reports on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger are submitted to the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee to facilitate the 'review at regular intervals [of] the state of property on the List of World Heritage in Danger' which is foreseen in paragraph 92 of the Operational Guidelines.

2. The Bureau is requested to examine these reports and to take the appropriate action in preparation for the decision-making by the Committee in accordance with paragraph 93 of the Operational Guidelines which reads as follows:

*"On the basis of these regular reviews, the Committee shall decide, in consultation with the State Party concerned whether:*

- (i) additional measures are required to conserve the property;*
- (ii) to delete the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger if the property is no longer under threat;*
- (iii) to consider the deletion of the property from both the List of World Heritage in Danger and the World Heritage List if the property has deteriorated to the extent that it has lost those characteristics which determined its inclusion in the World Heritage List, in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraphs 46 to 56 above."*

3. To facilitate the work of the Bureau, a format has been developed for the state of conservation reports which includes the following items:

Name of property (State Party)  
Year of inscription on the World Heritage List and on the List of World Heritage in Danger  
International assistance  
Summary of previous deliberations  
New information  
Action required.

## NATURAL HERITAGE

At its twenty-second ordinary session (Kyoto, Japan ; 30 November – 5 December 1998), the Committee examined reports on the state of conservation of fifteen natural properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The observations and recommendations of the Committee were transmitted to the States Parties concerned via letters dated 22 December 1998. Responses from States Parties concerning Srebarna Nature Reserve (Bulgaria) and Everglades National Park and Yellowstone National Park (United States of America) are due by 15 September 1999 and will be submitted to the twenty-third ordinary session of the Committee. Updates on the state of conservation of the other twelve natural properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger are provided below:

**Manovo-Gounda-St.Floris National Park (Central African Republic (CAR))**

Inscribed on the WH List: 1988 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1997

*International assistance:* The site has not received any assistance from the World Heritage Fund so far.

*Summary of previous deliberations :* Uncontrolled poaching by armed groups had led to the death of four members of the Park staff in 1997, decimated more than 80% of the Park's wildlife populations and brought tourism to a halt. Welcoming the State Party's intention to assign site management responsibilities to a private Foundation, the Committee had requested (Naples, 1998) the Centre and IUCN to contact the Government and the Foundation to prepare a detailed state of conservation report and a rehabilitation plan for the site. At its last session (Kyoto, 1999) the Committee, noting that the State Party had not responded to its recommendation mentioned above, suggested that the Director-General of UNESCO and the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee write to the President of the CAR inviting his urgent intervention to implement the Committee's recommendation.

*New information :* The State Party has not yet responded to the letters of the Director-General and the Chairperson of the Committee. A Centre staff member met the Minister of the CAR responsible for the conservation of this site and was informed that the State Party's response to the Committee's recommendation would be transmitted to the Centre shortly.

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to recommend that the Committee retain this property in the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Bureau may wish to examine information that might be available at the time of its session and take the appropriate decision thereupon.

**World Heritage sites of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC):****Garamba National Park**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1980 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1996

**Kahuzi Biega National Park**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1980 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1997

**Okapi Faunal Reserve**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1996 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1997

**Virunga National Park**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1979 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1994

*International assistance :* **Garamba** – US\$ 77,845 for equipment under emergency assistance and US\$ 50,000 for equipment under technical cooperation ; **Kahuzi Biega** – US\$ 44, 848 for equipment under technical cooperation ; **Okapi Faunal Reserve** – US\$ 3,000 for the preparation of the nomination of the site ; and **Virunga National Park** – US\$ 20,000 for equipment under emergency assistance and US\$ 9,500 for staff training.

At its twenty-first session (Naples, 1997), the Committee, in response to a request for emergency assistance of US\$ 88,400 for the purchase of one four-wheel drive vehicle for each of the four sites, approved a first instalment of US\$ 45,000 intended to benefit any two of the four sites. The two vehicles purchased by the Centre using the US\$ 45,000 could not be delivered to the sites due to lack of security and are currently stored in Nairobi, Kenya. At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee instructed the Centre to suspend all activities related

to the purchase and delivery of vehicles to these sites until such time when security conditions improve.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* The Committee and the Bureau have expressed serious concerns with regard to the state of conservation of these sites at their annual sessions, as the eastern part of the country has become engulfed in war since 1994. Hopes for peace in the latter half of 1998 were short-lived as renewed fighting spread to all parts of eastern DRC. The sites have been looted and pillaged and there are serious threats of poaching of endangered fauna, particularly to the sub-species of the northern white rhinoceros unique to Garamba. At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), IUCN informed the Committee that most parts of eastern DRC are controlled by rebel forces and it was unlikely that missions to any one of the four sites would be feasible in the near future. The Committee had requested the Centre and IUCN to consult with IGCP and ICCN to estimate the cost of paying allowances to staff at Virunga as an interim measure and submit a proposal for emergency assistance for the consideration of the twenty-third session of the Bureau. The Committee had also suggested that the Centre and IUCN transmit its concerns on the state of conservation of the four sites to international and national NGOs and urge them to disseminate information regarding the Committee's concerns among the general public as well as specific target groups like the military.

*New information:* A representative of the International Ranger Federation (IRF), who visited Garamba from 27 February to 5 March 1999 found that resident guards appear to have forged a working relationship with rebel forces controlling the area. Significant poaching threats prevail in the region and about 16 encounters with poachers were reported each month. Guards detected one carcass of a poached rhino but also reported regular sightings of rhinos, including calves. Despite shortages in fuel supplies, vehicles, communication equipment and ammunition and the high-risk security situation, resident guards seem to be patrolling the area to the extent possible.

ICCN (Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature) has provided a proposal to the Centre for paying a selected number of staff at Virunga an allowance of US\$ 25-35 per month per person. The Centre is currently requesting clarification concerning the reasons for paying allowances to only some staff and not others and the names and addresses of international NGOs who would be responsible for delivering the allowances to site staff. In addition, the Centre is discussing procedural details that would ensure accountability and satisfy administrative and financial regulations of UNESCO for establishing contracts and disbursement of funds.

International conservation NGOs and representatives of other concerned national, regional and international organizations met in Naivasha, Kenya, from 12 to 16 April 1999. Staff representing each of the four sites and a representative of UNESCO-MAB participated in the seminar. Detailed findings of the meeting has been received by a Centre staff member during a meeting with representatives of the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), International Gorilla Conservation Programme (IGCP) and the UN Foundation on 28 April 1999 in Washington DC, USA. The UNESCO representative who attended the meeting has also submitted a written report to the Centre. These reports have been transmitted to IUCN for review. The Centre and IUCN, in cooperation with the State Party and concerned international NGOs are in the process of elaborating a set of recommendations for submission to the consideration of the twenty-third session of the Bureau. The Centre has been informed that a delegation from the DRC comprising representatives of ICCN and each of the four sites expect to attend the twenty-third session of the Bureau

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to examine the set of recommendations to be jointly proposed by IUCN and the Centre at the time of its session and take the appropriate decisions thereupon.

### **Sangay National Park (Ecuador)**

Inscribed on the WH List: 1983; Included in the List of WH in Danger: 1992

*International assistance:* Since its inscription on the World Heritage List, Sangay received international assistance from the World Heritage Fund under technical cooperation for equipment and environmental awareness raising activities among local communities (US\$ 48,500) and for training of Park staff (US\$ 10,000).

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee was informed that the construction of the Guamote-Macos road was the main threat to this Park and an EIA had not been conducted. Construction has been slow but very destructive of the environment. Only a small section of the road is inside the World Heritage site; the remainder of the road forms the Park's southern boundary. The Committee noted that in the latter half of 1998, economic constraints had led to a halt in road construction activities and some positive developments with regard to the state of conservation of Sangay were evident: colonization and small-scale mining activities had stopped since 1997; and a 5-year, US\$ 1.6 million conservation project, financed by the Government of the Netherlands and jointly implemented by WWF and Fundacion Natura, had begun. The Delegate of Ecuador informed the Committee that his Government had submitted to the Centre several new documents, including the "Strategic Management Plan for the Sangay National Park" and it had not issued any permits for oil exploration in Sangay. The Delegate welcomed a Centre/IUCN mission to Sangay in 1999. The Committee was satisfied to note that IUCN believed that conditions for strengthening the conservation of this site were improving and that it may be possible that the mission foreseen in 1999 may recommend the removal of Sangay from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

*New information:* Since the conclusion of the last session of the Committee, the Government of Ecuador has, via its letter of 4 March 1999, formally invited a Centre/IUCN mission to Sangay. In addition, on 27 April 1999, the State Party has provided the Centre with a state of conservation report on Sangay that has been transmitted to IUCN for review. The Centre and IUCN, in co-operation with the State Party, and other partners such as WWF and the Fundacion Natura of Ecuador, are in the process of preparing to field a site visit to Sangay in the latter half of 1999. The mission will review the state of conservation of the site, particularly within the framework of the prescriptions of the « Strategic Management Plan for the Sangay National Park » and will submit a detailed state of conservation report, including a recommendation on whether or not Sangay could be removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger, to the twenty-third session of the Committee, to be convened in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 29 November to 4 December 1999.

**Action required :** The Bureau may wish to thank the State Party for its cooperation in the organisation of the site-visit to Sangay during the latter half of 1999 and request the Centre and IUCN to submit a detailed report on the findings and recommendations of the mission to the twenty-third session of the Committee.

### **Simen National Park (Ethiopia)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1979 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1996

*International assistance:* Since its inscription on the World Heritage List, Simen National Park has been awarded a sum of US\$ 110,307 under technical cooperation and US\$ 9,000 for staff training.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* The Regional authorities in Bahir Dar, where this site is located, disagreed with the Committee's decision to include this site in the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1996. Since then the Department of Wildlife and National Parks of Ethiopia, UNESCO Office in Addis Ababa and the Centre have continued to inform the Bahir Dar authorities on the meaning and implications of the Committee's decision to include Simen National Park in the List of World Heritage in Danger. At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee noted that the responsibilities for the management of the Park had been transferred from the Central Authorities to the Region. A stakeholders' meeting had been convened and had led to the formation of a 'dialogue-group' of various national and regional offices to discuss follow-up activities for the conservation of the Park. The meeting had called for the organization of a second stakeholders' seminar, before June 1999, in collaboration with UNDP, Austria, UNESCO, UNCDF, Bahir Dar Regional Heads and donors. The second stakeholders' seminar is expected to establish a strategy to: (i) minimize the human population, currently estimated at 8-10,000, in the Park; (ii) rehabilitate the Park and re-establish populations of selected species, such as the Walia Ibex that have moved out of the Park due to human presence and the cultivation of considerable areas of the Park; (iii) create an alternative to a road which currently goes through the Park; and (iv) establish a framework for co-ordination, including the possible setting up of an Inter-Agency Committee where donor participation will be invited, for the sustainable development of the Simen Mountains ecosystem. As suggested by the Committee, the Centre is in contact with the Ethiopian authorities and has been exploring the possibility for supporting the organisation of the second stakeholders' meeting with the US\$ 30,000 approved by the Committee in 1996 and which still remains unused.

*New information:* Ethiopian authorities have not yet responded to the letter transmitting the recommendations that the Committee made at its last session in Kyoto, Japan (1998).

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to examine information that may be available at the time of its session and take the appropriate decision thereupon

### **Mount Nimba Nature Reserve (Guinea/Côte d' Ivoire)**

Inscribed on the WH List: 1981; Included in the List of WH in Danger: 1992

*International assistance:* This site has so far received: US\$ 29,082 as preparatory assistance; US\$ 30,000 as emergency assistance; US\$ 179,927 for technical co-operation; and US\$ 22,000 for training.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee had observed that despite a 2-3 year effort, the establishment of a foundation or a trust fund for the conservation of Mt. Nimba appears increasingly unlikely in the near future. The Committee learned that the Permanent Executive Secretary of the MAB National Committee for Guinea had informed the Centre that the Nimba Mining Company (NIMCO) has been dissolved by the Government and no other enterprise has been created to replace it. Agreeing with IUCN's observation that information on the state of conservation of this site needs to be updated, the

Committee accepted IUCN's offer to request its Regional Office for West Africa in Burkina Faso to undertake a mission, at the invitation of the States Parties concerned, in order to prepare a state of conservation report for submission to the twenty-third session of the Committee.

*New information:* IUCN has expressed its satisfaction with regard to the withdrawal of the iron-ore mining proposal and has suggested that a site-visit, particularly to review the refugee situation would be beneficial. The two States Parties involved have not yet invited a site visit to Mt. Nimba. The Centre is co-operating with the Permanent Delegations of the two States Parties in order to expedite the relevant Government authorities in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire to invite a mission to the site by a team representing UNESCO and IUCN's Regional Office for West Africa.

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to request the Centre and IUCN to continue their efforts to co-operate with the States Parties to field a site visit and provide a detailed report on the state of conservation of Mt. Nimba to the twenty-third session of the Committee.

### **Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1982 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1996

*International assistance:* Since its inscription on the World Heritage List in 1982, Rio Platano has received US\$ 167,025 for technical cooperation and US\$ 11,000 for training.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee recalled that the State Party is in the process of implementing an eleven-point corrective action plan for this site since 1996. A management plan for the site is being elaborated as part of a project financed by GTZ-KFW (Germany) and supported by a contribution of US\$ 30,000 from the Fund. The Committee learned that a proposed hydroelectric development project (Patuca II), to be implemented near the Reserve, could open new access roads to the Reserve, reduce downstream water flow and quality, and result in the loss of scenic and bio-diversity values. The Committee noted that indigenous peoples living in and around the Reserve had complained to IUCN about the Government's efforts to expedite the implementation of this project, the lack of consultation and transparency in the preparation of an EIA for the project and a plan for opening a new road. The Committee was concerned that communications with the Honduran authorities have become difficult due to damage caused to the country's infrastructure by Hurricane Mitch and information on the extent of hurricane damage to this site was urgently needed. Moreover, the Committee requested that the State Party invite a site visit by IUCN and the Centre to prepare a detailed state of conservation report on Rio Platano for submission to the twenty-third session of the Committee in 1999.

*New information:* A report from the Regional Vice-Chair of IUCN/WCPA has advised that flooding of the Patuca River, at the time when Hurricane Mitch impacted the site, has destroyed a great deal of vegetation and wildlife as well as settlements. However, more precise information on impacts on the natural heritage values of the site is needed to plan rehabilitation measures. IUCN's Regional Office for Meso-America is promoting a project to assess the impact of Hurricane Mitch on protected areas in the region, including World Heritage sites, with a view to obtaining baseline data necessary to prepare and implement restoration plans. The Centre is in contact with the staff of the GTZ-KFW conservation project for Rio Platano and with the Permanent Delegation of Honduras to UNESCO to obtain more information on the Patuca II project and the extent of damage caused to Rio Platano by Hurricane Mitch.

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to reiterate the Committee's request to the State Party to consider inviting a Centre/IUCN mission to the site in 1999. Furthermore, the Bureau may recommend that the Centre and IUCN continue to cooperate with the State Party to obtain detailed information concerning the Patuca II project and baseline data on the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch in order to plan rehabilitation measures. The Bureau may wish to recommend that the Committee retain this site in the List of World Heritage in Danger.

### **Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (India)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1985 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1992

*International assistance :* Manas has been granted US\$ 165,000 as emergency assistance since June 1997, in two instalments of US\$ 75,000 and US\$ 90,000, respectively, for the implementation of a 3-year rehabilitation plan approved by the Bureau in June 1997. The total cost of plan-implementation was estimated at US\$ 2, 335,000, of which US\$ 2,100,000 is provided by the Government of India and the State Government of Assam ; the balance of US\$ 235,000 was requested from the World Heritage Fund.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee learned that the implementation of the rehabilitation plan was progressing satisfactorily. The Committee agreed to the use of the savings of US\$ 872 from the first grant of US\$ 75,000 to support a sitevisit by a staff from the UNESCO Office in New Delhi. The Committee learned that the construction of range posts and staff housing using the second instalment of US\$ 90,000 had been delayed due to adverse climatic conditions in the area throughout 1998. The Committee was informed that while security conditions in and around Manas had improved, the threat of insurgency still prevailed and that militants often traversed the Sanctuary. Nevertheless, the Committee noted that conditions for site protection and the relationship with local villagers were gradually improving ; the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF) had provided US\$ 400,000 to strengthen the conservation of Manas during 1997-98, and an additional US\$ 100,000 in 1998. MOEF will consider making further contributions as soon as the funds provided so far are utilized in accordance with plans agreed upon by MOEF, the State Government of Assam, site management and the Bureau in 1997. The Committee also requested the Director-General of UNESCO to invite the Government of Bhutan to ratify the World Heritage Convention and to consider nominating the Royal Manas National Park of Bhutan for consideration by the Committee for World Heritage status. The Committee noted that this could help to strengthen the overall protection of the trans-border Manas ecosystem.

*New information:* A staff from the UNESCO Office, New Delhi, India, undertook a site visit to Manas on 6 and 7 March 1999 and has confirmed that all equipment purchased and delivered using the first installment of US\$ 75,000 is now operational and in use. With regard to the use of the second instalment of US\$ 90,000, plans for the purchase of two additional wooden fiber boats and 400 units of patrolling gear for US\$ 20,000 remain unchanged and are being implemented. The use of the balance of US\$ 70,000 for the construction of range posts and staff housing however is being reviewed, due to the fact that not all parts of the Sanctuary are fully secure for staff to be resident. Furthermore, site management seems eager to support selected activities that would benefit local villages and enhance trust-building between management and the local community. Following the site visit, MOEF has submitted to the Centre a revised budget, comprising sixteen activities, for the use of the US\$ 70,000. The Centre, after consulting with IUCN, is seeking clarifications from the Indian authorities on conservation benefits expected to

derive from six of the sixteen activities that are intended to cater to the needs of local villagers. Upon the receipt of the clarification from MOEF, the revised budget for the use of the US\$ 70,000 will be submitted to the Chairperson for authorization as the basis for further project implementation.

The WWF Office of Bhutan, by its letter of 12 April 1999, has informed the Centre of its willingness to assist the Centre in reviewing detailed documentation on the Convention, with a view to advising the Royal Government of Bhutan on the implications of Bhutan's ratification of the World Heritage Convention and the nomination of the Royal Manas National Park as a World Heritage site. The Centre has transmitted all relevant information to the WWF Office in Bhutan and will continue its cooperation with WWF and other international conservation organizations resident in Bhutan to urge the Royal Government of Bhutan to ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to urge the Centre and IUCN to co-operate and finalize revision of the budget for the use of the US\$ 70,000 and to expedite the rate of implementation of the rehabilitation plan which appeared to have slowed down during 1998. The Bureau may wish to endorse the efforts of the Centre and IUCN to cooperate with WWF and other partners in encouraging the Government of Bhutan to ratify the Convention, and nominate the Royal Manas National Park as World Heritage as soon as possible. The Bureau may wish to recommend that the Committee retain this site in the List of World heritage in Danger.

#### **Aïr et Ténéré Natural Reserves (Niger)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1991; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1992

*International assistance:* Air and Ténéré Nature Reserve benefited from a preparatory assistance grant of US\$ 10,000 and training grants amounting to US\$ 40,000.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee recalled the fact that it had recommended a mission to this site to evaluate the state of conservation and to determine whether the site could be removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee noted the findings of the Centre/State Party/IUCN site mission (September-October 1998), and of previous missions of IUCN-Niger indicating that the numbers of most wildlife species are recovering. The flora, except in some valleys where over-use by local people was noted, is mostly intact. Species like the ostrich however, are seriously threatened by poaching and international trade in live animals and its by-products; the ostrich population in the Reserves has dropped to less than 10% of 1990-91 estimates. The Peace Agreement between the Government and the rebels has been effective and the impact of rebel activities on the site has been less severe than previously expected.

The Committee was informed of the State Party's efforts to elaborate an emergency rehabilitation programme for the site focusing on: (i) restoring sites used as bases by the rebels in the past; (ii) strengthening surveillance and protection capacity; (iii) promoting ostrich breeding in partial enclosures; (iv) carrying out rapid evaluation of impacts on populations of key faunal species; (v) establishing a Committee for development and management of the site; and (vi) conducting training workshops on threats to natural heritage for selected target groups like border police, customs officers etc.

*New information :* The full text of the emergency rehabilitation plan will be presented to the Bureau in Document WHC-99/CONF.204/INF.12. In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, made at its last session, the Centre and IUCN are co-operating with the State Party and donors such as SDC, DANIDA and UNDP to: (i) explore modalities for financing the implementation of the emergency rehabilitation plan; and (ii) identify priority activities for support from the World Heritage Fund. The results of these efforts, and a recommendation concerning the possibility of removing the Air and Ténéré Reserves from the List of World Heritage in Danger will be presented to the twenty-third session of the Bureau.

**Action required :** The Bureau may wish to examine specific recommendations to be submitted by the Centre and IUCN at the time of its session and take the appropriate decisions thereupon.

### **Ichkeul National Park (Tunisia)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1980 ; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1996

*International assistance:* Ichkeul has so far been awarded US\$ 50,000 under technical co-operation and US\$ 15,000 under training.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At its last session (Kyoto, 1998), the Committee noted that the Bureau (June 1998), while concerned about the feasibility of the effective rehabilitation of this site and urging the State Party to take all necessary measures to ensure rapid and effective implementation of the rehabilitation programme for Ichkeul, had recommended an expert mission to the site. The mission was intended to give due consideration to the possibility for developing an improved rehabilitation programme for Ichkeul and retain its status as a World Heritage site and to allow the State Party sufficient time for the implementation of the rehabilitation programme. The Committee recommended that the Centre and IUCN ensure that the expert mission (i) establish baseline data and information necessary for evaluating the effectiveness of rehabilitation measures which are being currently implemented; (ii) prepare a report on the adequacy of conservation and rehabilitation measures; and (iii) if necessary, propose additional measures that may be needed for the conservation of the site. The Committee requested the Centre to submit a report of the expert mission to the twenty-third session of the Bureau, and invited the State Party to provide a comprehensive report on the results of the implementation of the rehabilitation measures to the twenty-third session of the Committee, in 1999.

*New information:* A three-person team representing IUCN, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and the Centre undertook a mission to Ichkeul in February 1999. A detailed report of the mission will be tabled as Information Document WHC-99/CONF.204/INF.11 to the twenty-third session of the Bureau. The mission, while recognizing the uncertainty linked to the feasibility of rehabilitating Ichkeul to conditions that existed at the time of its inscription (1980), noted that the State Party is committed and taking significant efforts to mitigate threats to the site and ensure effective and timely rehabilitation. However, the mission was of the view that monitoring of the effectiveness of rehabilitation would have to be based on a reasonable time frame. Inter-linked indicators such as salinity, availability of preferred species of food plants of birds, and the number of wintering birds arriving in Ichkeul could fluctuate significantly based on annual variations in rainfall and evapo-transpiration which affect water levels in the lake. The mission was of the view that the Committee should defer its judgement concerning the feasibility of the successful rehabilitation of Ichkeul until such time when possible improvements to the ecology of the lake, expected to be derived from the diversion of waters from the Sejnane River via a dam and a canal (of which construction is due to be completed in the year 2000), could be monitored. The mission

has proposed an outline for the threat mitigation status report, to be submitted by the State Party to the twenty-third session of the Committee. The proposed outline invites the State Party to define current and expected values for a set of indicators, e.g. water-salinity levels, counts of a selected number of endangered species of birds and the availability of preferred food plants of birds etc., which could provide the basis for monitoring during a 5-year period from 2000 to 2004. In addition, the mission recommends that the State Party undertakes necessary studies and analysis needed for developing the region's economy based on ecotourism and similar non-extractive resource uses, so that local people who are dependent on grazing their livestock on the Ichkeul marshes could be provided with alternative livelihood options.

**Action by the Bureau:** The Bureau may wish to review the expert mission report, to be submitted as Document WHC-99/CONF.204/INF.11 to its twenty-third session. The Centre and IUCN will propose a set of decisions and recommendations with regard to monitoring the state of conservation of Ichkeul at the time of the twenty-third session of the Bureau.

## **CULTURAL HERITAGE**

At its twenty-second ordinary session (Kyoto, Japan ; 30 November – 5 December 1998), the Committee examined reports on the state of conservation of seven cultural properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee decided to delete two properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger: Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia) and Wieliczka Salt Mines (Poland). The decisions, observations and recommendations of the Committee were transmitted to the States Parties concerned. Further reports on the state of conservation of cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger will be submitted to the twenty-third session of the Committee. Progress reports on Angkor (Cambodia) and Bahla Fort (Oman) are provided below.

### **Angkor (Cambodia)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1992. Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1992

*International assistance:* Preparatory Assistance (US\$ 15,000) 1992. Formulation of the Tentative List and nomination form for Angkor.

Emergency Assistance: (US\$20,000) 1993: Installation of an alarm system at Angkor. (US\$50,000) 1994: Consolidation of Pre-Rup, Angkor.

Technical Co-operation: (US\$28,595) 1998: Hydrological study for the Angkor Wat moat. Hydrological studies of the Angkor moats funded under Emergency Assistance approved by the World Heritage Bureau in June 1998, were postponed due to a change in direction at the APSARA (Authority for the Protection of the Site and Management of the Angkor Region). A new study plan is under preparation.

Training Assistance: (US\$20,000) 1992: Training Seminar.

The ongoing operational projects funded by UNESCO funds-in-trust and implemented by various international teams are progressing normally. Details are presented in Information document WHC-99/CONF.204/INF.13.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* The Committee expressed the wish for closer co-ordination between the World Heritage Centre and the Division of Cultural Heritage, and insisted upon the need to be kept informed of the operational activities undertaken at the site in the framework of international assistance and to continue to be vigilant with regard to the prevention of illicit traffic of cultural properties from Angkor.

*New information:* The technical session of the International Co-ordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Area of Angkor (CIC), of which UNESCO provides the Secretariat, met on 14 and 15 September 1998. The three ad hoc experts carried out their evaluation mission on proposed projects and projects being implemented in the framework of the CIC. In addition to the recommendation to establish a risk chart for Angkor, the experts provided technical advice regarding the projects in general. The plenary session of the CIC is foreseen for 21 June 1999 at Phnom Penh.

The third colloquium on the Bayon Temple, organized by the JSA Japanese team with support UNESCO support, was held on 18 and 19 December 1998. The sixty participants who attended the session, continued discussions, begun in 1997, on the safeguard and restoration of the Bayon Temple. In the framework of the preparation of a Master Plan, they examined the future function of the monument and the technical aspects of repair methodology for the architectural structure.

At the request of the Cambodian authorities, the Cultural Heritage Division of UNESCO contributed towards the formulation of a request for submission to the authorities of the United States of America to restrict the importation of cultural properties to this country from Cambodia, in application of the 1970 Convention on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Properties.

The activity reports prepared each year by the International Co-ordination Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Area of Angkor (CIC) are available to the World Heritage Committee.

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to adopt the following:

“After having examined the state of conservation report of the site, the Bureau congratulates the Royal Government of Cambodia and encourages it to strengthen the actions of the Authority for the Protection of the site and the Development of the Region of Angkor (APSARA) in order to ensure proper control of work and regular maintenance and protection of the site against looting and illicit traffic in cultural properties. The Bureau requests the State Party to submit a report on further actions taken by 15 September 1999 for examination by the Committee at its twenty-third session”.

### **Bahla Fort (Oman)**

Inscribed on the WH List : 1987; Included in the List of WH in Danger : 1987.

*International Assistance:* Technical co-operation (US \$ 7,000), 1988, expert mission for technical advice. The mission assisted the Omani authorities in establishing an international conservation team at the site.

Technical co-operation (US \$ 50,000), 1989, urgent conservation works. The assistance covered the cost of materials and labour.

Technical co-operation (US \$ 9,772), 1995, monitoring restoration works; the mission advised the conservation team.

Monitoring missions (on cost-sharing basis), annually 1996-1999; continued monitoring of the restoration works. The mission advised the conservation team.

*Summary of previous deliberations:* At the twenty-second session of the Committee in 1998, the Secretariat presented the result of the third expert mission to Bahla Fort undertaken in September 1998. The mission reported that the situation at the site had improved in a satisfactory manner and the mission discussed with the authorities the possibility of reinforcing the cost-sharing approach used so far. The Committee, after examination of the state of conservation of the property, commended the Government of Oman for the actions taken for the preservation of the Fort. It requested the Secretariat to collaborate with the national authorities in the preparation of a five-year conservation plan for the entire oasis, for examination by the Committee at its twenty-third session.

*New Information:* Following the expert mission of September 1998, another mission took place from 27 February to 13 March 1999 to continue the monitoring of the conservation/restoration works carried out by the operational team (104 persons, including 97 site workers, led by two Moroccan architects). It also assisted the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture (MNHC) in the preparation of a Conservation Plan for the Fort, as well as of a Management Plan involving the co-operation of a number of other governmental bodies. The advancement of the works conducted in the Fort since the last mission was satisfactory, several parts of the smaller aisles being now sheltered and roofing in progress in a small section of the very large Fortress (Qasabah). To undertake structural studies, an engineer, seconded from the Moroccan Government, has joined the operational team. Furthermore, the photogrammetric team of the German Mining Museum made their site survey in Bahla in November 1998 and the resituated plans and photographs should be handed to the MNHC by the end of May 1999. An "Outline of Conservation Plan" was drafted during this mission, giving to the operational team a tool for preparing the detailed plan to be implemented on a short-term (two years) or mid-term (five years) basis. The methodological approach for the establishment of the "Management Plan for the Great Bahla" in close co-operation with all interested departments, has been discussed and agreed upon with the MNHC. It should lead to the completion of this plan within two years: the time when Bahla Fort would be declared to be «out of danger».

**Action required:** The Bureau may wish to adopt the following:

“The Bureau takes note of the progress made in the preparation of the five-year conservation plan. It will evaluate the progress after two years in order to assess if it can recommend the Committee to delete the site from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Bureau recommends that the Committee at its twenty-third session, endorses this procedure. Moreover, the Bureau invites the Omani authorities to increase their financial contribution for the missions to enable the team of experts to continue assisting the national authorities at the site in implementing the five-year conservation plan.”