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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Seventh Extraordinary Session

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters, Room II
6 – 11 December 2004

Item 4 of the Provisional Agenda : Requests for international assistance

SUMMARY

The World Heritage Centre received **four** requests for International Assistance as of 1 October 2004 for examination in December 2004. One request is for recommendation by the Bureau to the Committee, and the other three are for examination and decision by the Bureau.

The Bureau is requested to:

- take decisions concerning three of the requests presented in this document;
- make recommendations about the request to be submitted to the Committee.

SECTION I

PREPARATORY ASSISTANCE

N°	Region	State Party - Name of activity	Amount requested (US\$)	Amount recommended for approval (US\$)
1	Africa	<p>South Africa – Preparation of a nomination file for Richtersveld mixed property.</p> <p>The key objective of the project is to conduct a feasibility study to clarify to what extent the Richtersveld is of outstanding universal value and hence worthy of becoming a World Heritage Site</p>	30,000	30,000
2	Arab States	<p>Sudan – Preparation of a nomination file for the Island of Meroe</p> <p>The objective is to prepare the nomination file of the site “The Island of Meroe”, which is the region comprised between the Blue Nile, the White Nile and the Atbara River. Composed of three archaeological sites (all included in the Tentative List of Sudan) it constitutes the heartland of the Meroitic Kingdom: Meroe, Naga and Musawwarat.</p>	30,000	30,000

Funds available as at 19 November 2004 for approval under the 2004 preparatory assistance budget: US\$ 40,200

Total amount of requests submitted for approval by the Bureau: US\$ 60,000

Comments of the Secretariat: inadequate funds available for approval of both requests under 2004 budget.

Funds available for approval under the 2005 preparatory assistance budget: US\$ 208,000.

REQUEST N° 1
Preparatory Assistance
Mixed Heritage
Africa

State Party: SOUTH AFRICA

Status of dues to the World Heritage Fund as at 31 December 2003: all dues paid

Name of Activity: Preparation of a nomination file for Richtersveld mixed property.

Amount Requested: US\$ 30,000

Previous contributions from the World Heritage Fund for this property/activity:
None

I. Background

The Richtersveld is set in one of the most scenic parts of South Africa, and is the only mountainous desert in southern Africa. Some of the oldest and youngest rocks illustrating nearly 2000 million years of almost every known geological process are found here. The Richtersveld is a centre for botanical evolution with a high number of species, over 780 recorded to date, given the aridity of the climate, many of which are endemic to the Knersvlakte. It is also a significant part of an internationally recognized biodiversity hotspot, namely the Succulent Karoo Biome. Together with the Sperrgebiet across the Orange River it has the highest biodiversity of any desert in the world. The Richtersveld is also a cultural centre for the indigenous Nama people with many attributes that are specific to this group, like the characteristic round huts, which are already on the World Monuments Watch List as an endangered cultural treasure. The culture remains evident today largely in the traditional nomadic pastoralist lifestyle and the prevalence of the Nama language. The Richtersveld site could later be extended to a transboundary site, including Fishriver Canyon, which is inscribed on the Tentative List of Namibia.

II. Project description

A. Objectives

The key objective of the project is to conduct a feasibility study that will clarify to what extent the Richtersveld is of universal value and hence worthy of becoming a World Heritage site, and under what criteria it should be listed.

B. Project plan

Part funding has been made available by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism in South Africa for the proposed Richtersveld site initiative and a certain amount will be used for the feasibility study.

March 2005: verify existing research
 April 2005: identify potential sites and global significance of proposed sites
 May 2005: identify geographic boundaries and provide advice on criteria
 June 2005: clarify institutional and management matters

C. Expected outcomes

A database providing relevant information and the acquisition of research documents and reports;
 A report that proposes several sites with justification for their inclusion on the World Heritage List;
 A comparative analysis of the proposed Richtersveld sites;
 A nomination dossier and draft management plan for the Richtersveld site.

D. Budget Breakdown

Total activity budget (in US\$)	41,000
National or other contributions in kind (equivalent in US\$): Field workers: US\$ 1,143; Travel: US\$ 7,857; Acquiring Information US\$ 1,143; Administration of project US\$ 857	11,000
Amount requested from the World Heritage Fund (in US\$)	30,000
1. Consulting fees, 171 USD x 75 days	12,825
2. Consulting fees, 357 USD x 30 days	10,710
3. Accommodation, 4 consultants x 10 nights x USD 36	1,440
4. Board, for consultants and 2-3 workshops	2,168
5. Photography and mapping (photographer + GIS expert)	2,857

III. Comments

A. Comments of the Advisory Bodies

Both ICOMOS and IUCN support this request.
 ICOMOS supports the proposed process, but questions the timescale for the project, which might not foresee sufficient time to prepare the nomination file and the management plan (at least two months). An extended time frame would also allow more involvement of staff from local agencies. IUCN agrees on this and adds that the management plan should be finalized and implementation begun, before nomination of the site.
 IUCN advises further that an in depth global comparative analysis should be carried out in order to identify (and then justify) whether the site is of

outstanding universal value. The IUCN Global Studies and the IUCN and ICOMOS Analyses of the World Heritage List and proposed Action Plans should be used where possible as guides in this process. Also the conditions of integrity of the property(ies) should be carefully assessed, including the legal protection of the area(s) concerned, and problem issues mitigated or managed as appropriate, before a nomination is submitted. Should this site be submitted as a serial site, IUCN has provided some guidelines.

B. Comments of the Secretariat

The Secretariat supports this request, being the first preparatory assistance request for a nomination file in South Africa. The nomination process, commenced some years ago, has a strong focus on involving all stakeholders. In order to prepare the future site as a transboundary site with Fishriver Canyon in Namibia, it is recommended that some meetings are already planned during the nomination process.

IV. Draft decision

Draft decision: 7 EXT.COM/BUR.2.1

South Africa: Preparation of a nomination file for Richtersveld mixed property

The World Heritage Bureau,

1. *Decides to approve this preparatory assistance request for mixed heritage for US\$ 30,000 under the 2004 budget.*

REQUEST N° 2
Preparatory Assistance
Cultural Heritage
Arab States

State Party: SUDAN

Status of dues to the World Heritage Fund as at 31 December 2004: all dues paid.

Name of Activity: Preparation of the Nomination File for the site of 'Island of Meroe'

Amount requested: US\$ 30,000

Previous contributions from the World Heritage Fund for this site/activity: None

I. Background

The term " The Island of Meroe" was used by some of the classical writers to designate the region lying between the Blue Nile, the White Nile and the Atbara River in the Republic of the Sudan; thus not a complete island, but bordered by water on three sides.

Three of the archaeological sites of this region figure as one unity on the Tentative List: Meroe, Naga and Musawwarat. This is the heartland of the Meroitic Kingdom.

Meroe:

This is the second capital of the Kushite Kingdom. Meroe succeeded Gebel Barkal as the seat of the Kushite kings at an uncertain date but probably during the 4th century B.C and had remained in power down to the 4th century A.D ending with the Axumite invasion. Meroe comprises the greatest ensemble of pyramids so far discovered, located in a landscape which has not greatly changed since Meroitic times. The remains of a vast royal city are also located here.

Naga:

This is a very important Meroitic centre comprising the most beautiful historic buildings of the country:

- a well preserved, highly decorated sandstone small temple for the worship of the Meroitic Lion - God (Apademak);
- a beautiful sandstone Amon Temple;
- a small temple of Mediterranean inspiration.

In addition there is a yet-to-be excavated town, cemetery and other features.

Musawwarat:

A very important religious centre comprising many temples and a vast enigmatic building known as the 'Great Enclosure', probably the main religious centre of the Meroitic Kingdom.

II. Project description

A. Objectives

The objective is to prepare the Nomination File for the site "The Island of Meroe".

The Nomination file:

NCAM (National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums) would like to prepare a nomination file in collaboration with missions already active on the sites, these are:

- 1) The Mission of the Museum of Berlin (Naga).
- 2) The Mission of the University of the Humboldt (Musawwarat) .
- 3) Dr F.Hinkel (Architect) (The Pyramids of Meroe)
- 4) University of Khartoum and Ontario Royal Museum (The Royal City-Meroe).

The work will be coordinated by Dr Salah Mohamed Ahmed, Fieldwork Director (NCAM) and author of the previous file (Gebel Barkal and the sites of the Napatan Region).

B Project plan

The preparation of this file will take about one year counting from the date of the allocation of the budget.

C. Expected outcomes

Prepare the Nomination File of the "Island of Meroe".

D. Budget Breakdown

Total activity budget (in US\$):		30,000
National or other contributions in kind (equivalent in US\$):		N/A
Amount requested from the World Heritage Fund (in US\$):		30,000
1- Documentation work		5,000
2- Photography		5,000
3- Transport and field expenses		6,000
4- Experts' reports		7,000
5- Computer work		2,000
6- Drawings		3,000
7- Final presentation		2,000

III. Comments

A. Comments of the Advisory Bodies

ICOMOS supports the objectives of this request. However, it requests that the competent authorities provide the following additional information:

- a work plan;
- a budget breakdown, as the present one is too general.

It also wishes to draw attention to two other points of great importance: will the management plan and the report on the state of conservation be prepared at the same time as the nomination file?

Therefore, ICOMOS is not prepared to support this request for international assistance in its present form.

B. Comments of the Secretariat

The Secretariat approves and supports this initiative for the preparation of the nomination file for the site “Islands of Meroe” to the World Heritage List and agrees with the comments of ICOMOS concerning the importance of submitting a work plan and preparing, at the same time as the nomination proposal, an assessment of the state of conservation of the property and a draft description of the future management plan.

These remarks have been transmitted to the State Party requesting it to provide the Secretariat with the response as soon as possible in view of the submission of this request for examination by the Bureau. As the additional information is not available at the time of the finalization of this document, it will be provided by the State Party during the Bureau session.

IV. Draft decision

Draft decision: 7 EXT.COM/BUR.2.2

Sudan: Preparation of the Nomination File for the site of 'Island of Meroe'

The World Heritage Bureau,

1. *Decides to approve this preparatory assistance request for cultural heritage for US\$ 30,000 under the 2005 budget.*

SECTION II

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Cultural Properties

N°	Region	State Party - Name of activity	Amount requested (US\$)	Amount recommended for approval (US\$)
<i>Request for the Committee for recommendation by the Bureau (see Document WHC-04/7EXT.COM/6 Add):</i>				
3	Asia	<p><i>India – Improved Geographic Information System (GIS) for Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR)</i></p> <p>The multidisciplinary GIS would facilitate processing, synergising, planning and systematically addressing conservation and sustainable development issues for DHR & its surroundings.</p>	100,000	100,000

Funds available as at 19 November 2004 for approval under the 2004 technical cooperation budget for cultural heritage: US\$ 1,848

Total amount of requests submitted for approval by the Committee: US\$ 100,000

Comments of the Secretariat: inadequate funds available for approval under 2004 budget.

Furthermore,

- in accordance with decision **28 COM 10A**, four requests for technical cooperation will be submitted to the Chairperson/Committee in 2005 for a total amount of US\$ 104,915: namely Uganda (US\$ 14,915), Sudan (US\$ 30,000), Bangladesh (US\$ 40,000) and Morocco (US\$ 20,000);
- only an amount of US\$ 160,000 is available for cultural properties under technical cooperation assistance in the 2005 budget.

Consequently, there will be inadequate funds available for approval under the 2005 budget.

Draft decision: 7 EXT.COM/BUR.2.3

India: Improved Geographic Information System (GIS) for Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR)

The World Heritage Bureau,

1. *Noting that in accordance with decision **28 COM 10A**, four requests for technical cooperation will be submitted to the Chairperson/Committee in 2005 for a total amount US\$ 104,915;*
2. *Considering that only an amount of US\$ 160,000 is available for cultural properties under technical cooperation assistance in the 2005 budget;*
3. *Taking into account ICOMOS' comments as well as the amount of international assistance provided to the DHR in recent years (US\$ 58,000);*
4. *Recommends to the Committee not to approve this request for technical cooperation.*

SECTION II bis

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Natural Properties

N°	Region	State Party - Name of activity	Amount requested (US\$)	Amount recommended for approval (US\$)
4	Asia / Europe	Mongolia/Russian Federation – Elaboration of a joint Mongolian - Russian Federation Site Management Plan for the Uvs Nuur Basin. This project is designed to ensure adequate conservation of the Uvs Nuur natural heritage by strengthening cooperation between the Russian Federation and Mongolia through developing an effective joint management plan and its operational implementation.	26,000	26,000

Funds available as at 19 November 2004 for approval under the 2004 technical cooperation budget for natural heritage: US\$ 53,188

Total amount of requests submitted for approval by the Bureau: US\$ 26,000

Comments of the Secretariat: Adequate funds for approval under the 2004 budget.

REQUEST N° 4
Technical Cooperation
Natural Heritage
Asia/Europe

State Party: MONGOLIA/RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Status of dues to the World Heritage Fund as at 31 December 2003: all dues paid

Name of Activity: Elaboration of a Joint Mongolian-Russian Federation Site Management Plan for the Uvs Nuur Basin

Amount Requested: US\$ 26 000

Previous contributions from the World Heritage Fund for this property/activity:
None

I. Background

The World Heritage Committee at its 27th session (Paris, 30 June - 7 July 2003), inscribed the Uvs Nuur Basin on the World Heritage List.

The Uvs Nuur Basin is located on the borders of Mongolia and Russian Federation. The property comprises a great variety of landscapes within a well-defined boundary. These include high mountains and glaciers, snowy-mountain tundra, alpine zones, mountain-taiga landscape, steppes, semi-desert and shifting sand dunes.

According to natural heritage criteria (ii) and (iv), the Uvs Nuur Basin has a large range of ecosystems, representing the major biomes of eastern Eurasia, with many endemic plants. The mountains, forests, steppes and deserts are extremely important habitats for a wide range of wild animals. The steppe ecosystem supports a rich diversity of birds; the mountains are important refuges for the globally threatened snow leopard. The Uvs Nuur Basin is of international scientific importance, due to its climatic and hydrological regimes, as well as the nature of the unchangeable nomadic pastoral use of the grasslands within the Basin over thousands of years. Because of its unique geophysical and biological characteristics, the Basin has been chosen as an International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme site for monitoring global warming.

Under the regulation of Mongolian laws on "Special Protected Areas", the Uvs Nuur Basin Specially Protected Area was established in 1993, by Parliament Resolution Number 83. The Management Plan of the Uvs Nuur Basin Strictly Protected Area was completed in 2000, to which additional amendments were made in 2003. There are currently 81 known rare and endangered bird species in the Basin, along with 22 rare species of mammals, two of which are entered in the IUCN's Red Book. The endemic species rank high among the flora and fauna of the Basin.

The Uvs Nuur Basin is a transboundary natural heritage property of Mongolia and the Russian Federation. The joint activities both of Mongolia and the Russian Federation have only been monitored through the Protocol of Cooperation between the "Uvs Nuur Hollow" and the "Uvs Nuur" natural preservation. While geographically isolated from urban areas, an increase in the local population, as well as the lack of provision of additional services, could lead to uncontrolled hunting, thereby threatening forests and causing over-grazing. Forest fires caused by unauthorized hunting are extremely difficult to fight due to the vastness of the territory and lack of official collaboration mechanisms between the Russian and Mongolian authorities.

II. Project description

A. Objectives

This project is designed to ensure adequate conservation of the Uvs Nuur natural heritage by strengthening cooperation between the Russian Federation and Mongolia through developing an effective joint management plan and its operational implementation.

B. Project plan

- January-February 2005: Both countries will appoint a working group to further develop the action plan;
- March-April 2005: Information gathering, data analyses with further modifications of national policy and plans; on-site monitoring as necessary;
- May 2005: Both countries will organize local stakeholders' consultation meetings;
- June 2005: Organization of a Workshop on the Development of the Joint Site Management Plan in Mongolia;
- August 2005: Further discussion and final adoption of the Joint Site Management Plan.

C. Expected outcomes

- Improved joint approach on conservation of the Uvs Nuur natural heritage;
- Effective and operative control over the management of the Uvs Nuur hollow through the implementation of the Joint Site Management Plan;
- Improved protection of the important eco-system;
- Involvement of local stakeholders with a view to promoting their support for management actions and enable on-going negotiations between the relevant Ministries of the Russian Federation and Mongolia to establish a Cooperation Agreement for the Uvs Nuur hollow.

D. Budget Breakdown

Total activity budget (in US\$)	29,000
National or other contributions in kind (equivalent in US\$)	3,000
Amount requested from the World Heritage Fund (in US\$)	26,000
1. Evaluation of the current state of conservation, field trip, data collection and analyses (US\$2,000 for Mongolia and US\$2,000 for the Russian Federation)	4,000
2. Organization of National Stakeholders' meetings (US\$3,500 for Mongolia and US\$3,500 for the Russian Federation)	7,000
3. Workshop on the Development of the Joint Site Management Plan (Travel costs and DSA for International experts: US\$4,500; participants from the Russian Federation US\$6,500; Local participants: US\$2,500)	13,500
4. International communication and other costs	1,500

III. Comments

A. Comments of the Advisory Bodies

IUCN was pleased to see this request for international assistance from Mongolia and the on-going efforts of the two States Parties to collaborate closely on the management of this World Heritage property.

IUCN notes the decision **27 COM 8C.9** of the World Heritage Committee on this property, whereby it:

- “2. Encourages the State Party of Mongolia to give priority to upgrading the Tes River Specially Protected Area, currently protected at a provincial level, to a Specially Protected Area under State legislation;
3. Further encourages both States Parties to ensure that adequate resources are made available quickly and maintained for the effective implementation of the management plans;
4. Commends Mongolia for steps taken to expand the nominated area, and both States Parties for their efforts to date in developing trans-boundary co- operation for the conservation of the property. The consolidation of such collaboration should be encouraged and maintained.”

The proposal to prepare a Joint Site Management Plan is therefore welcome. This is also following the results of the special training workshop on the preparation of management plans organized by the Russian Federation near St. Petersburg in May 2004. IUCN is of the view that some of the newly gained expertise from this workshop can be used in the elaboration of this management

plan. The Russian Federation may wish to make available materials from that workshop to its Mongolian counterparts.

B. Comments of the Secretariat

The Secretariat supports this bilateral cooperation for the elaboration of a Joint Site Management Plan for the Uvs Nuur Basin, taking into account the comments made by IUCN.

IV. Draft decision

Draft decision: 7 EXT.COM/BUR.2.4

Mongolia/Russian Federation: Elaboration of a Joint Mongolian-Russian Federation Site Management Plan for the Uvs Nuur Basin

The World Heritage Bureau,

1. *Decides to approve this technical cooperation assistance request for natural heritage for US\$ 26,000 under the 2004 budget.*