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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-ninth session

Bonn, Germany
28 June – 8 July 2015

**Item 7A of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of the properties
inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger**

SUMMARY

In accordance with Section IV B, paragraphs 190-191 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the Committee shall review annually the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. This review shall include such monitoring procedures and expert missions as might be determined necessary by the Committee.

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of Reactive Monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/39COM/documents>

All state of conservation reports are also available through the World Heritage State of conservation Information System at the following Web address:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>

Decision required: The Committee is requested to review the following state of conservation reports. The Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

TABLE OF CONTENT

NATURAL PROPERTIES	2
AFRICA	2
1. Manovo Gounda St. Floris National Park (Central African Republic) (N 475)	2
3. Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Côte d'Ivoire/Guinea) (N 155 bis)	4
10. Simien National Park (Ethiopia) (N 9)	8
12. Aïr and Ténéré Natural Reserves (Niger) (N 573)	11
13. Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) (N 153)	14
ASIA-PACIFIC	19
16. East Rennell (Solomon Islands) (N 854)	19
EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA	22
17. Everglades National Park (United States of America) (N 76)	22
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	25
18. Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (Belize) (N 764)	25
20. Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras) (N 196)	30
CULTURAL PROPERTIES	38
AFRICA	38
23. Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda) (C 1022)	38
ARAB STATES	42
25. Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (Iraq) (C 1130)	42
26. Samarra Archaeological City (Iraq) (C 276 rev)	43
27. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) (C 148 rev)	45
28. Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine) (C 1433)	54
29. Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) (C 1492)	57
ASIA AND PACIFIC	61
38. Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam (Afghanistan) (C 211 rev)	61
39. Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley (Afghanistan) (C 208 rev)	63

NATURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

1. Manovo Gounda St. Floris National Park (Central African Republic) (N 475)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1988

Criteria (ix) (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1997-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Illegal grazing;
- Uncontrolled poaching by heavily armed groups and subsequent loss of up to 80% of the Park's wildlife;
- Deteriorating security situation and a halt to tourism.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1761>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1761>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 2001-2012)

Total amount approved: USD 225,488

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

May 2001 and April 2009: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Insecurity
- Poaching
- Mining
- Transhumance and illegal grazing
- Illegal fishing
- Illegal occupation of the property

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/>

Current conservation issues

On 20 March 2015, the State Party submitted a report on the conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/documents/>. The State Party has not yet invited the Reactive

Monitoring mission requested by the Committee in its Decision **38 COM 7A.34**. It has not yet been possible to organize the workshop to assess the feasibility of the restoration of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the preparation of an emergency action plan due to the political instability and fragility of the security situation in the country.

In its report, the State Party reiterates its willingness and strong political commitment to the conservation of the property. It informs of the signature of a peace agreement between the Séléka rebels and the Anti-balaka and the planning, in the near future, of a forum at Bangui regarding the restoration of peace. It notes the presence of international armed forces and the French army in the region of the property. The report also refers to the general state of insecurity in the region of the property.

However, the report provides no information on the implementation of the corrective measures or the present situation in the property. Most of the information concerns activities implemented during the 2009-2011 period.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Although there is a slight improvement as compared to the previous year, the security situation in and around the property remains problematic. Unfortunately, the State Party report only contains obsolete information and does not permit an effective evaluation of the state of conservation of the property, or the implementation of the corrective measures.

IUCN has obtained through other sources information on the North-east Wildlife Ecosystems of the Central African Republic (CAR) (Ecofaune), implemented by the State Party with support from the European Union, aimed at the conservation of the National Parks of Manovo-Gounda St Floris and Bamingui-Bangoran and the surrounding hunting zones. Despite the difficult security situation, the State Party has continued the implementation of the project and attempted to recommence the surveillance operations in the southern part of the Bamingui Park and in the cynegetic zones between the two Parks, where the hunting syndicates have indicated their intention to recommence their activities. Nevertheless, the report clarified that there was no possibility of surveillance activities in almost the entire zone of the project, and notably within the property.

It should be noted that at the 35th session of the Committee (UNESCO, 2011), the World Heritage Centre and IUCN considered *“that it would seem that criterion (x) is called into question because of the sharp decline in the wealth of biodiversity present at the time of inscription, and of the disappearance of almost all key species of large mammals, due to poaching and competition with transhumant cattle that have invaded a large part of the property. Criterion (ix) is also questionable as the effective disappearance of most big game key species questions the representativeness of the property and the natural ecological processes”*. At its 38th session (Doha, 2014), the Committee expressed its grave concern that the property may have lost its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). With continued insecurity and lack of any surveillance of the property in the face of extremely important pressure since the last session of the Committee, the perspectives for the restoration of the OUV appear more and more questionable.

In the absence of information to permit an analysis of the present situation, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its concerns and that it request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission, as soon as the situation allows, to assess the state conservation of the property and to respond to the question of whether there remain perspectives of regeneration of the characteristics of the property that justify its OUV, or whether a withdrawal from the World Heritage List should be envisaged, taking into account the procedure foreseen in Chapter IV.C of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.1

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.34**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),

3. Regrets that the report of the State Party does not allow an assessment of the state of conservation of the property, or the implementation of the corrective measures;
4. Notes that, although there is a slight improvement in comparison with the previous year, the security situation in and around the property remains problematic and does not allow for any surveillance activity within the property;
5. Reiterates its grave concern regarding the probable loss of most of the flagship species of the large mammals of the property, due to poaching and impacts from transhumant cattle;
6. Also reiterates its continued concern that the property could lose its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), which could lead to its withdrawal from the World Heritage List, in accordance with Paragraph 176 d) of the Operational Guidelines;
7. Reiterates its request to the State Party to organize a workshop to evaluate the feasibility of the restoration of the OUV of the property under the present security conditions and based on these conclusions to prepare an emergency action plan taking into account the corrective measures adopted by the Committee at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009);
8. Requests to the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission as soon as the security situation permits, to assess the state of conservation of the property and to evaluate the perspectives for the regeneration of the characteristics of the property to justify its OUV, or whether a removal of the property from the World Heritage List should be envisaged, in accordance with the procedure foreseen in Chapter IV.C of the Operational Guidelines;
9. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
10. Decides to continue to apply the Reinforced Monitoring mechanism to this property;
11. Also decides to retain the **Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park (Central African Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

3. Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Côte d'Ivoire/Guinea) (N 155 bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1981, extension in 1982

Criteria (ix) (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1992-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Iron-ore mining concession inside the property in Guinea
- Arrival of large numbers of refugees from Liberia to areas in and around the Reserve
- Insufficient institutional structure

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4982>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see pages <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1266>
and <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1575>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet established

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/155/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 19 (from 1981-2014)

Total amount approved: USD 455,588

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/155/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 25,282 from the Rapid Response Facility in January 2012 (see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/830/>)

Previous monitoring missions

October/November 1988: World Heritage Centre mission; 1993: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN mission; 1994: IUCN mission; 2000: World Heritage Centre mission; 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN mission to Guinea; 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN mission to Côte d'Ivoire; 2013: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN mission.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Mining
- Influx of refugees
- Agricultural encroachment
- Deforestation
- Poaching
- Weak management capacity
- Lack of resources
- Lack of trans-boundary cooperation

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/155/>

Current conservation issues

On 28 January 2015 and 20 March 2015, both the States Parties of Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea respectively submitted reports on the state of conservation of the property, which are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/155/documents/> and address the following:

- The implementation of the corrective measures was compromised by the Ebola outbreak in the region, causing all field activities in Guinea to be suspended for 9 months. The Ebola crisis was used to educate local communities on the danger of consuming bush meat. The management plan for the component in Guinea was finalized and is awaiting approval. The evaluation of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) funded Nimba project was postponed to 2015, but the management authority started working on a proposal for a follow up phase, which would focus on the transboundary management of the property.
- The 6th tri-national workshop (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia), planned in Côte d'Ivoire end 2014, was also postponed, and therefore no progress was made on the development of an overall management plan, a harmonized ecological monitoring system and a permanent funding system for the entire property.

The report submitted by Côte d'Ivoire notes the following progress:

- The surveillance in the property was further stepped up. A patrol truck and several motorbikes were acquired and monthly patrols were organized, resulting in the destruction of snares and the confiscation of fishing material;

- The parks agency received an International Assistance grant to support the organization of transboundary surveillance patrols, but these could not yet be organized as a result of the crisis due to the epidemic;
- Work with the communities was strengthened, in particular efforts to intensify agriculture outside the property but also alternative revenue generating activities;
- Two further community forest reserves were established as part of a buffer zone around the property.

Both reports note that the management authorities continue to lack sufficient funding and equipment.

In relation to the mining projects, Guinea notes in its report that the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) are on-going. Despite the ESIA of the project of the Société des Mines de Fer de Guinée (SMFG) being well advanced, the project was delayed due to the Ebola crisis and a major change in ownership of the Company. West Africa Exploration (WAE), however, organized information sessions on the results of its ESIA. The ESIA was submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review on 2 April 2015. The mission, which was planned to ensure that there is no overlap between the SAMA exploration concession and the property, had to be postponed because of the Ebola crisis, but the report of Guinea notes that no exploration is planned in the property.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The impacts of the Ebola crisis have seriously affected the implementation of the corrective measures since the previous session of the Committee. Activities in the Guinea part of the property were virtually halted and the implementation of important transboundary activities, in particular the development of an overall management plan, a joint ecological monitoring system and a trust fund for the property, as well as the start of joint patrolling between the two components, which had been decided at the tri-national meeting in Liberia in 2013, could not be implemented. The impacts of the Ebola crisis are likely to present important additional challenges for the management authority, CEGENS, in Guinea, which has limited capacity and needs technical and financial support.

In Côte d'Ivoire, significant efforts have been undertaken since the end of the conflict to re-assert the OIPR's (Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves) authority over the property and re-build its management capacity. The on-going work to restore the integrity of the property, develop community forests to act as a buffer zone and intensify the cooperation with the local communities should be welcomed.

So far, no progress was made in mobilizing additional funding from the GEF to consolidate the results of the first phase of the Nimba project and to enlarge its scope to the entire property. It is hoped that the humanitarian crisis, which was caused by Ebola, will not prevent further investment in the conservation of the property and the sustainable development of its neighboring communities. It will be important that the project evaluation, which was postponed to 2015, identifies which activities are most effective in safeguarding the integrity of the property and takes into account the adopted corrective measures.

In terms of mining activities, at the request of the Guinean authorities, a meeting was organized on 4 September 2013, at the World Heritage Centre, to discuss the feasibility study developed by WAE. At the meeting, it became clear that the feasibility study did not include detailed baseline studies which would allow a proper ESIA, in accordance with the highest international standards, as was requested by the Committee at its 37th session (Decision **37 COM 7A.3**). It was also pointed out that given the proximity of the SMFG and WAE proposed projects, it would be crucial to carefully evaluate the cumulative impacts of both projects. In September 2014, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN were approached by a consultant company engaged by WAE to do a "Rapid Cumulative Impact Assessment". IUCN pointed out that a rapid assessment is not appropriate in the context of a World Heritage Site, where potential impacts, including cumulative impacts, of proposed developments on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) require thorough assessment. The ESIA, which was submitted in April 2015, is currently being reviewed by IUCN and World Heritage Centre. However, a preliminary review indicates that no additional baseline studies were conducted and that no specific review on the impact of the proposed project on the OUV of the property is included. The ESIA also looks at the WAE project in isolation and there is no consideration of possible cumulative impacts, as mentioned above. It is recommended that the Committee express its concern that the preliminary review indicates that the ESIA has not been conducted in accordance with the highest international standards and reiterate its previous position on the need to develop a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to

allow for the cumulative impacts of the different projects to be fully considered, and also urge the State Party not to take any decision before the SEA has been reviewed by IUCN and World Heritage Centre and discussed by the Committee.

It is further noted that the State Party of Guinea's report confirms that no exploration activities are foreseen inside the property in the SAMA Resources exploration permit but recommends that it reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure that the boundaries of the permit do not overlap with the property.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.3

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.38**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),*
3. *Notes that the impacts of the Ebola crisis have seriously affected the implementation of the corrective measures in the Guinean part of the property and have suspended the implementation of important transboundary activities, and expresses its concern that the impacts of the crisis could present important additional challenges for the management authority, CEGENS, in Guinea, which has limited capacity and needs technical and financial support;*
4. *Welcomes the important efforts, which have been undertaken since the end of the conflict by the State Party of Côte d'Ivoire, in particular the management authority, OIPR, to re-assert its authority over the property and re-build its management capacity as well as the on-going work to restore the integrity of the property, develop community forests to act as a buffer zone and intensify the cooperation with the local communities;*
5. *Urges the States Parties to continue their efforts to implement the corrective measures approved by the Committee in its Decision **37 COM 7A.3**;*
6. *Requests the States Parties to work with UNDP and the Global Environmental Facility to develop a second phase of the Nimba project, covering the components in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, and possibly part of the Nimba mountains in Liberia, to assist with the implementation of the corrective measures in order to safeguard the integrity of the property;*
7. *Expresses its utmost concern that the preliminary review of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), which was completed for the exploration concession granted to West Africa Exploration, indicates that the ESIA seems not to have been carried out in accordance with international standards, as was requested by the Committee in Decision **37 COM 7A.3**;*
8. *Reiterates its request for a thorough Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in accordance with international standards, which must qualify and quantify all potential impacts of the different planned mining projects on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2013 monitoring mission to the property and the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessments, and to submit the results to the World Heritage Centre, for review by*

IUCN, prior to any decision on these projects, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

9. *Also reiterates its request to the State Party of Guinea to revise the boundaries of the exploration permit granted to SAMA resources in order to ensure that they do not overlap with the property;*
10. *Also requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2016, an updated joint report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
11. ***Decides to retain the Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Côte d'Ivoire/Guinea) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

10. Simien National Park (Ethiopia) (N 9)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1978

Criteria (vii) (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1996-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Depletion of the Walya ibex population and of other large mammals
- Phenomenon of encroachment
- Impacts of road construction

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4085>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1057>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet established

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/9/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 10 (from 1978-2013)

Total amount approved: USD 323,171

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/9/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

USD 100,000 in support of community conservation and development of the grazing pressure reduction strategy (Spain and Netherlands) with important co-financing from Global Environment Fund (GEF).

Previous monitoring missions

2001, 2006 and 2009: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Declining populations of Walia ibex, Ethiopian wolf and other large mammal species

- Increasing human populations and livestock numbers in the park
- Agricultural encroachment
- Road construction
- Grazing pressure

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/9/>

Current conservation issues

On 23 February 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/9/documents>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in the report, as follows:

- The revision of the draft Grazing Pressure Reduction Strategy has been initiated by Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA) and African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), during which the priorities for immediate action were identified, and the urgency of fully implementing the strategy was recognised;
- The re-demarcation of the extended national park boundaries was accomplished in a participatory process, considerably extending the park area while avoiding the inclusion of new cultivated land. The Council of Ministers approved the re-gazettal process in 2014. A boundary modification dossier to match the boundaries of the World Heritage site with the newly established park boundaries is currently being prepared for submission to the World Heritage Committee;
- Approximately USD 4 million were allocated by the State Party for the voluntary relocation of 418 households from Gich village and will be paying out compensation to the affected communities;
- Provision of alternative livelihoods for people living in the vicinity of the property remains an urgent need, which is backed by federal and regional governments, and following the donor conference held in 2012, efforts to access additional funding support are being made;
- Conservation measures to increase populations of Walia ibex and Ethiopian wolf have been undertaken, such as protection of new habitats and habitat conservation, improved relation with local communities and establishment of an active anti-poaching team;
- Capacity building for park staff, law enforcement activities, benefits to local communities and their involvement in key decision-making processes has enhanced the management capacity and effectiveness.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is recommended that the Committee welcomes the State Party's continued efforts to reduce all factors affecting the property, as identified in previous reports, including those threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1996.

The significant expansion of the protected area, including boundary re-adjustments, new demarcation and field mapping with GPS, as well as initiating the re-gazettal of the property at federal level, can be considered beneficial for wildlife habitat protection, potentially favoring wildlife movement into their previous habitats, as well as for tourism development. Populations of the Walia ibex and Ethiopian wolf were noted to have increased considerably between 2001/2002 and 2012/2013, and it is recommended that the Committee requests the State Party to commission an independent scientific assessment to update the latest data presented.

While human settlements have been largely excluded from the property in the boundary readjustment process, there remain large numbers of livestock and domestic animals grazing in the park. It should be noted that the expansion of the boundary resulted in more than doubling the park area and led to the inclusion of additional grazing areas, which equally require the problem of overgrazing to be addressed. Securing financial resources for the provision of alternative livelihoods, which are found to be crucial for the effectiveness of conservation efforts, and to implement the Grazing Pressure Reduction Strategy once finalized, remain a high priority for the authorities and the international community.

Agricultural encroachment has been largely addressed through the corrective measures taken since 1996. The relocation of Gich village is underway with the support of federal and regional governments,

including budgetary allocations, but it is noted that further funding is required to successfully relocate and compensate the Gich village communities, and to rehabilitate the cropland and grazing area, e.g. for reforestation with indigenous trees, removal of remnants of former houses, and prevention of soil erosion on heavily degraded abandoned land.

The State Party does not provide further updates on re-aligning the Debarik-Mekane Birhan-Dilyibza road, but it is understood that construction is ongoing outside of the property, as reported to the Committee at its 38th session in 2014. The road through the park, which was built in 1996, continues to be used. This includes traffic due to heavy transport, tourism, public and park staff, and is likely to impact on the park until the new roads are accomplished.

In conclusion, the State Party has made progress in implementing the corrective measures and addressing the threats to the property but achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) will need considerable financial resources, in addition to current budget allocations. Until the road construction outside the property is completed and the corrective measures are fully implemented, it is recommended that the Committee retains the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is further recommended that the Committee reiterates its call on the international community to provide additional financial support to the State Party of Ethiopia, in particular in order to support the development of alternative livelihoods.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.10

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.43**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),*
3. *Welcomes the State Party's efforts to re-demarcate and re-gazette the boundaries of the park, revise the Grazing Pressure Reduction Strategy and make further progress in strengthening the management effectiveness of the property and encourages the State Party to seek supplementary international support to help provide alternative livelihoods and implement the Grazing Pressure Reduction Strategy upon its finalization;*
4. *Appreciates the State Party's continued efforts to complete the negotiated relocation of the Gich settlement from the property and requests the State Party to continue its engagement to ensure consent and appropriate compensation of the affected local communities;*
5. *Notes with appreciation the support already provided by different donors to assist the State Party with the implementation of the corrective measures and reiterates its call to the international community to increase the financial support to the property for the implementation of the remaining corrective measures;*
6. *Also requests the State Party to provide an update on the development of road realignment outside of the property to reduce the pressure on the existing road through the property;*
7. *Further requests the State Party to commission an independent scientific study in order to assess the status, composition and distribution of important wildlife species such as *Walia ibex* and *Ethiopian wolf*;*
8. *Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, including an*

evaluation of the implementation of the corrective measures and information on progress made towards achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;

9. **Decides to retain the Simien National Park (Ethiopia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

12. Air and Ténéré Natural Reserves (Niger) (N 573)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1991

Criteria (vii) (ix) (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1992-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

The region having suffered from military conflict and civil disturbance, the Government of Niger requested the Director- General of UNESCO to launch an appeal for the protection of the site

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/325>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/325>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see

pages <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/325> and <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4623>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 7 (from 1999-2013)

Total amount approved: USD 172,322

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

May 2005 and February 2015: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Political instability and civil strife
- Poverty
- Management constraints
- Ostrich poaching
- Soil erosion
- Demographic pressure
- Livestock pressure
- Pressure on forestry resources

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2015, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property. From 8 to 20 February 2015 an IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property. Both reports are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/documents>. The State Party provided the following information:

- An inventory of large wildlife and their habitat was conducted in June 2014, with support from the World Heritage Fund. This inventory makes no mention of Addax, red-necked ostriches and Saharan cheetah. However, the Dorcus gazelle and Barbary sheep are still present. The presence of the Dama gazelle was confirmed in the property, although there had been no sightings since 2002. However, the numbers and actual distribution of the species in the property still remains unknown. In total, 14 species of mammal and 55 bird species were recorded;
- A manager and 12 forestry agents are attached to the Management Unit based in Iférouane;
- The demining of the area following the period of armed conflict between 2005 and 2009 is progressing;
- Based on observations of the Addax in the vicinity of the property, the State Party expressed its hope that with the return of peace and with the continual maintenance and care of the property, this species could return to the property itself;
- Funding (Land Commissions) has been established to support activities involving all the stakeholders at the property in the management and conservation of its natural resources and to reduce poaching and logging pressures;
- The primary conservation problems identified by the State Party are the effects of climate change to its biodiversity and the use of motorized vehicles and rifles in poaching;
- A red-necked ostrich farming project is based at Iférouane managed by a volunteer family with support from a local NGO;
- The Niger Fauna Corridor Project (NFCP), financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), has as goal the creation of corridors between the three protected areas in northern Niger, including the property, with improved management efficiency, the protection of natural habitats and the establishment of the requisite conditions for their connectivity;
- Discussions are underway between the State Party and GEF for the funding of a third phase of the Co-Management of Natural Resources in the Air and Ténéré (COGERAT).

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The mission evaluated the progress accomplished by the State Party in the implementation of the corrective measures. The most important issues are examined below.

The mission notes that with the establishment of the Management Unit in Iférouane there is now a physical presence of a management body *in situ* but which, unfortunately, does not have the human and logistical means to ensure its sovereign function of surveillance and ecological monitoring of the property. The Conservator, who is also the Departmental Director of Iférouane, can only devote a minimal amount of time to the management of the property. Therefore, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to establish functional management bodies such as surveillance, ecological monitoring, planning and social mobilization and community support services, with the technical and financial means and sufficient staff, including a conservator exclusively responsible for the management of the property, for an improved rehabilitation process.

Based on discussions with local communities, the mission considered that the Land Commissions that are already in place are almost non-existent and clearly do not fulfil their function of protection of the property. With regard to the surveillance of illegal activities, and in particular poaching and commercial logging, the present management body for the property has no means to control these demographic pressures. The mission noted the lack of a surveillance programme for the property due to the insufficient human and financial operational means allocated to the property. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to reinvigorate the Land Commissions, in cooperation with local leaders, to ensure their surveillance function. Not having had the opportunity to

verify the degree of soil erosion, the mission considers that the current urgency is the control of the primary threats: poaching and commercial logging. In view of the vast area of the property, an emergency surveillance plan should be developed to install an efficient surveillance mechanism, focusing in particular on areas that shelter the last surviving populations of flagship species and ensuring, with support from the forestry service, the control of all the road networks by which the wood is transported to the large cities and gold-mining sites (a large part of the timber is sold to gold miners operating in the vicinity of the boundary between Niger and Algeria).

Finally, the mission considers that with the exception of soil stabilization actions, the corrective measures proposed by the 2005 Reactive Monitoring mission have mostly not been implemented and should therefore be retained in their quasi totality. The corrective measures, as updated by the mission, are proposed for adoption by the Committee.

The mission should also establish, in consultation with the State Party, a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). Details contained in the inventory submitted confirm that species are still present at the property, but data concerning the numbers of wildlife in the property as well as the degree of demographic pressure is lacking. This data is essential to define indicators for the DSOCR. However, an action plan is proposed in the mission report. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to undertake studies to remedy this lack of data. It is finally recommended that the Committee retain the property on the Danger List.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.12

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.45**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),*
3. *Welcomes the establishment of a Management Unit at Iférouane, in the periphery of the property, but notes with concern the comments of the Reactive Monitoring mission of February 2015 that there is a lack of human and logistical means to ensure the sovereign functioning of this Management Unit, surveillance and ecological monitoring of the property;*
4. *Expresses its deep concern that the inventory of large wildlife and its habitat conducted in June 2014 makes no mention of Addax, red-necked ostrich and Saharan cheetah and that the Dama gazelle appears to be reduced to a relict population;*
5. *Notes the conclusion of the Reactive Monitoring mission of February 2015, according to which, excepting soil stabilization actions, the corrective measures proposed by the 2005 mission have barely been implemented and adopts the updated corrective measures, as follows:*
 - a) *Establish functional management bodies such as surveillance, ecological monitoring, planning and social mobilization and community support services, together with technical and financial means and sufficient staff, including a conservator exclusively responsible for the management and conservation of the property, and better control the exploitation of natural resources in the perimeter of the property,*
 - b) *Reinvigorate, in cooperation with local leaders, the land commissions in the four municipalities and clarify the respective rights of land use and access to resources of the local populations,*
 - c) *Develop and implement an emergency surveillance plan to significantly improve the surveillance of the property and combat poaching and the illegal exploitation*

of natural resources for commercial ends, in particular focusing on the areas that shelter the last surviving populations of flagship species,

- d) *Immediate halt of timber harvesting from the property for commercial purposes, through reinforced cooperation with the forestry service in the control and collection of data on the volume and types of timber from the property, the road networks used to transport the timber to the big cities and the gold mining sites outside the property;*
6. ***Requests** the State Party to implement all the other recommendations of the 2015 mission and to implement the action plan prepared by the mission in consultation with the State Party;*
7. ***Urges** the State Party to conduct the requisite studies to respond to the lack of data on the numbers of wildlife in the property as well as on the level of demographic pressure, to enable the preparation of a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, for examination by the Committee at its 41st session in 2017;*
8. ***Also requests** the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
9. ***Decides to retain the Air and Ténéré Natural Reserves (Niger) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

13. Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) (N 153)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1981

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2007-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Poaching
- Livestock grazing
- Dam construction project at Sambangalou

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4087>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4087>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4087>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/documents>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 7 (from 1982-2004)

Total amount approved: USD 147,125

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

2001, 2007 and 2010: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN reactive monitoring missions. 2015: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Poaching, capture and relocation of wildlife
- Drying up of ponds and invasive species
- Illegal logging
- Livestock grazing
- Road construction project
- Potential dam construction
- Potential mining exploration and exploitation

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/>

Current conservation issues

On 17 January 2015, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/documents>. From 10 to 17 May 2015 an IUCN reactive monitoring mission visited the property; its conclusions are included in this report.

According to the State Party report and the conclusions of the mission, progress achieved in the implementation of the corrective measures is noted below:

- The anti-poaching mechanism has been strengthened through human, material and logistical means. Thus, two mobile brigades presently ensure a permanent presence on site with back up from permanent guard posts. Aerial surveillance support is not yet operational but options for this are being studied;
- Park staff has been significantly reinforced, with currently a total number of 196 agents (40 in 2010);
- Work is in progress in the five ponds within the framework of the combat against encroachment of the ponds by *Mimosa*;
- All the ponds in the perimeter of the property were dry at the time of the mission visit, with the exception of the Simenti pond, fed by water pumped from the River Gambia;
- Some 40 km of several impassable trails have been rehabilitated;
- In addition to the ecological data collected by rangers during patrols, a monthly ecological monitoring programme exists for a part of the property between the posts of Niokolo, Wouroli and Banghare. Moreover, two census operations have taken place in 2014 and 2015, confirming the presence of threatened species (lion, wild dog, Derby Eland, elephant and chimpanzee), although not allowing an estimation of their numbers;
- Livestock grazing in the property continues, although it is on the decrease;
- The boundaries of the property have been improved by an increase in the number of boundary markers (every kilometer instead of every 5 kilometers). However, at some places, the precision of the boundary markers requires improvement.

The following information was also provided by the State Party:

- The Sambangalou Dam project has not yet been executed, but remains ongoing;
- The closure and restoration of the basalt quarry at Mansadala, reopened to respond to the needs of road construction in the south-east of the country, is foreseen for 2016.

Finally, the State Party provided information to the mission concerning the existence of a gold prospection permit granted to the Toro Gold Society since 2009. The boundaries of this permit are about a kilometer from the eastern boundary of the property, at Mako.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The mission notes that the State Party has made commendable efforts in the implementation of the corrective measures, especially concerning the strengthening of surveillance staff and the implementation of the combat strategy against the invasive species encroaching the ponds. All the same, most of the threats remain current and it is recommended that the Committee adopt the corrective measures as updated by the mission, as well as indicators for the Desired state of conservation of the property for removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

The available data on ecological monitoring is inconclusive for purposes of comparison, thus complicating the analysis of the situation of the threatened species in the Park. However, thanks to the inventories of 2014 and 2015 and observations conducted by the rangers, the mission has noted positive signs of increased wildlife within the property. The lion, assumed absent from the property for several years, is now present. The most noteworthy observations concern the wild dog that has been regularly observed by Park rangers and researchers. However, the numbers of wildlife in the property remain low and the situation of the elephant is particularly precarious with only one individual observed on a regular basis. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to update the ecological monitoring programme and integrate it into the management plan, which must be updated and urgently implemented.

The permanent presence of rangers in the Park appears to have reduced poaching incidents. However, the mission noted that the level of loss of animals increases in with distance between fixed guard posts. Moreover, information obtained by the mission from rangers and the Direction for National Parks indicates that poaching remains an important issue affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to significantly increase patrols and to introduce the SMART tool (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) to facilitate the collection of surveillance data. Aerial support should also be ensured to further improve the surveillance of this vast Park.

The combat against the encroachment of the ponds by *Mimosa* must be continued and further strengthened, using fire management and other measures appropriate for this type of habitat.

A future dam development project on the River Gambia at Sambangalou, upstream from the property could have serious impacts on its OUV, in particular aggravating the current drying up of the ponds. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to conduct an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) to specifically assess the possible impacts on the OUV of the property, before the project is implemented, in accordance with the IUCN World Heritage advisory note on environmental assessment.

The mission is particularly concerned about the granting of a gold prospecting license in the immediate vicinity of the property. Although the ESIA of this project is not yet available (foreseen to be submitted to the Senegalese authorities by end of June 2015), initial studies already conducted demonstrate that this part of the property, as well as the area covered by the license, constitute a priority habitat for chimpanzees. Indications of the presence of lions, elephants and Derby elands have also been observed in this part of the property adjacent to the area covered by the prospection license. Moreover, the boundary of the permit is crossed by the River Gambia upstream from the property, involving possible water pollution. It is recommended that the Committee recall that mining prospection and exploitation is incompatible with World Heritage status and that it requests the State Party to prohibit all extraction activity in the vicinity of the property in view of the fact that such an activity could have a negative impact on the OUV of the property, including its integrity. It is also recommended that the Committee request the State Party to ensure the permanent closure of the basalt quarry at Mansadala and implement measures to ensure the rehabilitation of the site and avoid its encroachment by exotic species.

Finally, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.13

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.46**, adopted by the Committee at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Commends the efforts of the State Party in implementing the corrective measures, especially those concerning the strengthening of surveillance staff and the implementation of a strategy to combat the encroachment of the ponds;
4. Notes with satisfaction that data indicates an increase in wildlife, however, reiterates its concern as regards the low density of large wildlife in the property and requests the State Party to implement the corrective measures as updated by the 2015 mission, as follows:
 - a) Establishment and strengthening the anti-poaching mechanism based on combined aerial and land measures,
 - b) Capacity building of staff at the property by providing training and equipment adapted to the new technologies, including the application of the SMART tool (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool),
 - c) Reinforced implementation of the emergency programme for the restoration of the ponds in the perimeter of the property and implementation of alternative measures for the ponds as water points in the property,
 - d) Rehabilitation of the impassable trails in the property, concentrating on the southern part of the Park,
 - e) Updating of the ecological monitoring programme of the Park, based on indicators that are simple, reliable and inexpensive to measure, and on statistics drawn from reliable inventories of threatened populations of key species for the Outstanding Universal Value of the property (lion, Derby eland, elephant, chimpanzee and wild dog) and integrated into the management plan of the property, which must be updated and implemented urgently,
 - f) Improvement of grazing areas and water points in the village territories around the property to minimise the encroachment of domestic cattle inside the property,
 - g) Improved marking of the boundaries of the property, including the removal of obsolete markers, and the introduction of better communication means through signage adapted to the specificities of each of the local communities of the property,
 - h) Implementation of speed control measures for traffic on the part of Route Nationale 7 within the property (for example, video-surveillance, increase of speed bumps, radars) and reinforcement of controls at strategic points,
 - i) Prohibition of any extractive activity (traditional or industrial) within the property, as well as outside of the property where such an activity would have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property (OUV), including conditions of integrity;
5. Adopts the indicators of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as updated by the mission and considers that these indicators should be achieved by end-2018;

6. *Expresses its deep concern regarding the granting of a gold prospection licence in the immediate vicinity of the property and considers that if this license is converted into an exploitation license there would be a negative impact on the OUV of the property, in particular on the habitats of threatened species such as the chimpanzee, lion, elephant and Derby eland;*
7. *Reiterates its position regarding the fact that mining exploration and exploitation is incompatible with World Heritage status, policy supported by the declaration of the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) not to undertake such activities in World Heritage properties;*
8. *Also requests the State Party to ensure the permanent closure of the basalt quarry at Mansadala by 2016, as foreseen, and implement measures to ensure the rehabilitation of the site and avoid its encroachment by exotic plants;*
9. *Reiterates its request to the State Party to submit a specific assessment on the impacts of the dam project at Sambangalou on the OUV of the property before any decision on its construction, in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines and the IUCN World Heritage Advisory Note on environmental assessment;*
10. *Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
11. ***Decides to retain the Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

ASIA-PACIFIC

16. East Rennell (Solomon Islands) (N 854)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1998

Criteria (ix)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Logging;
- Invasive species;
- Over-exploitation of coconut crab and other marine resources;
- Climate change;
- Legislation, management planning and administration of the property.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

In progress

Corrective measures identified

In progress

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/854/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 2006-2012)

Total amount approved: USD 56,335

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/854/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March – April 2005: UNESCO/IUCN Monitoring mission; October 2012: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Mining
- Commercial fishing (issue resolved)
- Logging
- Invasive species
- Over-exploitation of coconut crab and other marine resources
- Legislation, management planning and administration of the property

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/854/>

Current conservation issues

The State Party did not submit a report on the state of conservation of the property, as requested by the Committee at its 38th session (Doha, 2014).

The State Party requested IUCN's Oceania Regional Office (ORO) for assistance in addressing the following points:

- Facilitation of a consultative process towards the development of a management plan;
- Legal analysis of the Forestry, Minerals, Environment, and Protected Areas Acts to see how the Minister of Environment can take decisions to suspend the logging and mining licenses on the island;
- Development of the management plan for the property.

The World Heritage Marine Programme has funding available, provided by the Government of Flanders, to provide technical assistance to the State Party for the development of a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). A joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN mission to perform this task is planned for autumn 2015. Furthermore, with the financial support by the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, a technical assistance will be provided to the State Party by the International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage (HIST, China), a Category 2 Centre under the Auspices of UNESCO, to obtain satellite images to establish the current state of conservation of the forest areas, and to clarify the exact area of the property, including its constituent parts made up of lake, forest and marine areas. In the framework of this project, a stakeholders meeting is being prepared in Australia for summer 2015 in co-operation with the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage site. No updated information is available on other conservation issues, such as invasive species, over-exploitation of coconut crab and other marine resources and climate change.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

In the absence of a report on the state of conservation of the property, progress achieved by the State Party towards implementation of the Committee's requests and the recommendations of the October 2012 Reactive Monitoring mission cannot be evaluated.

It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to undertake rigorous Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for any plans for bauxite mining on West Rennell to demonstrate that they will not have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and ensure due diligence to consultations with local communities. Furthermore, consideration of bauxite mining license applications should be deferred until the new management plan has been approved and is being implemented.

The redrafting of the management plan for the property by the State Party, in cooperation with IUCN Oceania Regional Office (ORO), UNDP, the NGO Live & Learn, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) and the Rennell Provincial Government, and in close consultation with local communities is noted. The envisaged management plan would integrate the development needs of the local communities with the priorities of protecting the property. It is understood that this is a delicate process, as it requires a series of consultations leading towards the finalization of the plan and its eventual integration into the budgetary process and prioritization of both the provincial and national budgetary allocations for 2015-2016. While noting the complexity of the process, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to expedite the completion and implementation of the revised management plan for the property, and to put in place interim measures to mitigate the impact of existing logging operations and halt new logging operations, until the new management plan has been approved and is being implemented.

As no information is available on other conservation issues, such as invasive species, over-exploitation of coconut crab and other marine resources and climate change, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its previous requests regarding these issues.

It is finally recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.16

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,

2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.29**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Regrets that the State Party did not submit a report on the state of conservation of the property, as requested by the Committee in Decision **38 COM 7A.29**;
4. Notes that the World Heritage Centre has the resources to assist with the development of a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and encourages the State Party to invite an Advisory mission in the autumn of 2015 to perform this task;
5. Reiterates its requests to the State Party to:
 - a) Undertake rigorous Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for any plans for bauxite mining on West Rennell to demonstrate that they will not have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and to defer consideration of bauxite mining license applications until the new management plan has been approved and is being implemented;
 - b) Put in place interim measures to mitigate the impact of existing logging operations and halt new logging operations until the new management plan has been approved and is being implemented;
 - c) Undertake urgent action to halt the further spread of rats on Rennell Island and prevent them from entering the property, to put in place the biosecurity controls necessary to prevent further introductions of invasive species to the island, and apply for International Assistance to support this work;
6. Urges the State Party to expedite the completion and implementation of the revised management plan for the property and requests the State Party to submit an electronic and three printed copies of the draft revised management plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
7. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
8. Decides to retain East Rennell (Solomon Islands) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

17. Everglades National Park (United States of America) (N 76)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1993 - 2007; 2010-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

The property was re-inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, on the request of the State Party, due to concerns that the property's aquatic ecosystem continues to deteriorate, in particular as a result of:

- Alterations of the hydrological regime (quantity, timing, and distribution of Shark Slough inflows);
- Adjacent urban and agricultural growth (flood protection and water supply requirements that affect the property's resources by lowering water levels);
- Increased nutrient pollution from upstream agricultural activities;
- Protection and management of Florida Bay resulting in significant reduction of both marine and estuarine biodiversity.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4348>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1275/> ;

Updated: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4348>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1062/>;

Updated: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4348> and <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4958/>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/assistance/>

UNESCO extra-budgetary funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

April 2006: IUCN participation in a technical workshop to identify benchmarks and corrective measures; January 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Quantity and quality of water entering the property
- Urban encroachment
- Agricultural fertilizer pollution
- Mercury contamination of fish and wildlife
- Lowered water levels due to flood control measures
- Damage from hurricanes
- Exotic invasive plant and animal species

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 March 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/documents/>. It details the progress made against the corrective measures adopted in 2006 and 2010, as follows:

- The first steps towards the removal of barriers to water flow have been met through completion of the Decompartmentalization Physical Model and implementation of the Modified Water Deliveries (MWD), and the Tamiami Trail 1-mile bridge project. Construction of the Tamiami Trail Next Steps (TTNS) project is expected to start within a year and be completed by 2019;
- The final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) was completed in late 2014, and is now awaiting Congressional authorization;
- The final land exchanges are expected to be completed in 2016;
- Additional shallow seepage barriers and the C-111 North Detention Area remain to be completed in order to effectively reduce seepage from the park along its eastern border. Construction of water quality features is progressing under the State of Florida's Restoration Strategies project, to improve in the next decade the quality of water reaching the property;
- The final General Management Plan is further delayed and is expected to be completed in 2015, with the establishment of an Advisory Committee expected in 2016.

The report also outlines the trends in the integrity indicators identified during the 2011 Reactive Monitoring mission, and formalized as the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

Two new integrity indicators (fire regime, Roseate Spoonbills) have been added to the previous DSOCR indicators. Detailed trends for each indicator are provided in the State Party report, with the main points summarised below:

- Trends of physical environment indicators remained the same as in 2013, with a slight improvement in interior marsh phosphorus concentrations in Shark River Slough, Taylor Slough and Coastal Basins;
- Freshwater environmental indicators show a stable trend in Shark River Slough compared to 2013, with stabilized nesting efforts and density trends for the American Alligator, but a declining trend in Taylor Slough;
- Trends in coastal and estuarine environment indicators show that seagrass diversity in the Florida Bay transition zone approaches favourable conditions, their abundance is decreasing in the western zone, and American crocodile populations are stable with nesting increasing throughout the property;
- Measures of invasive alien species continue to indicate severe problems with limited programs and funding to deal with the issue.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Progress has been made on the implementation of the corrective measures, with slight improvements in some indicators measuring integrity of the property, including the American crocodile. However, there are some concerns with the increasing spread and abundance of exotic species, including Lionfish and the limited resources/mechanisms to deal with the issue.

It is crucial for the State Party to focus its effort, together with the necessary partners in the long-term conservation of the park, to ensure all ecosystem restoration projects are implemented in the shortest time possible and their effectiveness continuously monitored. The latter is essential considering that the 2013-2014 field measurements indicated that waterflow had not reached its desired level despite the completion of the Tamiami Trail 1-mile bridge.

It is noted with concern that the General Management Plan, already mentioned in Decision **35 COM 7A.14**, has been delayed further. In view of the importance to ensure an entire catchment scale approach to the planning and management of the property for the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), it is considered that high priority should be given to the finalization of the

General Management Plan, and it is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to ensure the Plan is implemented in 2016.

The clear and comprehensive report on the DSOCR is welcomed. Significant work however remains to be done to meet this DSOCR. Therefore, it is recommended that the World Heritage Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

In view of the fact that the implementation of the corrective measures, while well underway, still will take at least 10 years to complete, it is recommended that the Committee requests the State Party to submit a report in 2 years' time only.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.17

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **38 COM 7A.30** and **37 COM 7A.15**, adopted at its 38th (Doha, 2014) and 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013) sessions respectively,*
3. *Welcomes the continued and substantial effort of the State Party to provide detailed and clear measurements of the trends and conditions for the indicators developed for the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and to connect them to the corrective measures, allowing a comprehensive report on progress;*
4. *Notes with appreciation the progress made by the State Party on the implementation of the corrective measures, and requests the State Party to continue its effort towards the completion of those restoration projects that are most crucial to increasing waterflow into the property and meeting the water quality targets, and that can lead to an improvement of the ecological indicators for the integrity of the property over time;*
5. *Notes with concern that the finalization of the General Management Plan, initially mentioned in Decision **35 COM 7A.14**, is further delayed, and urges the State Party to ensure implementation of the plan commences in 2016;*
6. *Also notes with concern the increased abundance of invasive species in the property, including top marine predators such as Lionfish and strongly encourages the State Party to ensure that the necessary resources are provided to contain their spreading and to research how and to what degree these species are affecting the property's Outstanding Universal Value;*
7. *Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017;*
8. ***Decides to retain the Everglades National Park (United States of America) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

18. Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (Belize) (N 764)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1996

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2009-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Sale and lease of public lands for the purposes of development within the property leading to the destruction of mangrove and marine ecosystems

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Drafted, proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1825>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 140,000: i) USD 30,000 from the Rapid Response Facility (RRF) for the monitoring of unauthorized activities in the Bladen Nature Reserves which were impacting the property; ii) USD 30,000 for emergency conservation actions in favour of the critically endangered wide sawfish (2010); iii) USD 80,000 in support of public use planning and site financing strategy development for the Blue Hole Natural Monument (2008-2009).

Previous monitoring missions

March 2009: joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2013: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Sale and lease of public lands within the property
- Destruction of fragile ecosystems due to resort / housing development
- Oil concessions within the marine area
- Introduced species

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/>

Current conservation issues

On 8 April 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/documents>. The State Party reports on the progress achieved towards implementation of corrective measures:

- Inventory of different land tenures within the property is currently being carried out. Following its completion, the State Party will prioritize protection of ecosystems associated with the remaining government lands;
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs) regulations are currently being revised in order to ensure that a clear set of regulations is in place for control of development rights in Belize, especially within protected areas;
- The State Party has a voluntary moratorium on issuing of any new off-shore oil concessions. The Petroleum Exploration Planning Framework and the draft Petroleum Exploration Zones and Exploration Guidelines are currently being reviewed. The State Party has also stated its commitment to prepare a suitable legal arrangement that would address the Committee's concerns regarding oil exploration and exploitation in and around the property. No concessions are currently overlapping the property;
- New management plans will be developed for the Glover's Reef Marine Reserve and South Water Caye Marine Reserve components. It is envisaged that new management plans will also reflect the Cabinet's decision that shoals areas should not be developed;
- It is envisaged that the new Living Aquatic Resources Bill and the new Mangrove Regulations should be passed through the national assembly by mid-2015;
- The Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan is currently being reviewed by the newly established Advisory Board and will be presented for endorsement by the State Party by the end of 2015.

A joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN technical mission visited the property in January 2015 to provide assistance to the State Party with the development of a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). The mission was financed by the Government of Flanders. A draft DSOCR has been prepared with technical assistance of the mission and in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

The draft has been subsequently reviewed and amended by the State Party and IUCN. Table 1 below provides the final version.

Table 1: :Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)

	INDICATORS	RATIONALE	METHOD OF VERIFICATION	TIMEFRAME
1	<p>The area of mangrove coverage in the property is maintained at least at the same level as when the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2009. There is no further loss of mangrove cover within the entire property, including all mangrove types that are unique and irreplaceable, measured against the 2009 baseline.</p> <p>(Note: this indicator requires urgent updating once the baseline data are independently confirmed)</p>	<p>Mangrove islands within the property are a key component of the property's OUV, central to the functioning of the coral reef ecosystem and provide a natural barrier against erosion and sea level rise. Current nation-wide mangrove cover is indicated to be around 93% of original extent, but further research is required to confirm, in hectares, the mangrove cover that existed within the entire property at the time of its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.</p> <p>The indicator should show that no further loss of mangrove cover has occurred. Mangrove cover lost as a result of natural disasters (cyclones, etc.) shall not be considered in measuring the success of this indicator. However, in such cases, the impact of mangrove cover loss on the OUV of the property will have to be carefully assessed and appropriate measures taken to restore damaged areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening, adoption, implementation, and effective enforcement, of the currently proposed Mangrove Regulations • Satellite imagery/aerial photography of the property indicating the current mangrove coverage, measured against the 2009 baseline • Maps showing the distribution of the different categories of land ownership within the property and cadastral data of land tenure compared against the 2009 base year (the date when the site was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger) • Adoption by law of a permanent cessation of all sales and leases of state owned land throughout the property, measured against the 2009 baseline • Adoption by law of a zoning plan covering the entire property that specifies clearly defined regulation for allowed development and use for each zone, based on scientific, ecological and biological information about the property's OUV and its attributes 	Completed by 31 December 2016
2	<p>No areas within the property and in its immediate vicinity are developed in ways that affect the property's natural outstanding beauty and status as a globally significant natural phenomenon of Outstanding Universal Value</p>	<p>The property is recognized for being a globally significant natural phenomenon, a spectacular picturesque natural setting of brilliant white sand cayes and other unique geological features such as the Blue Hole and Rocky Point and of which the visual integrity needs to be maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption by law, implementation and adequate enforcement regulations that specify the type, scale and density of coastal development consistent with the requirements to maintain the property's natural outstanding beauty and that of its immediate surroundings, including establishment of areas where no development should be permitted • Satellite imagery/aerial photography of the property measured against the 1996 and 2009 baselines 	Completed by 31 December 2016

	INDICATORS	RATIONALE	METHOD OF VERIFICATION	TIMEFRAME
3	All areas within the property and the surrounding areas that support the ecological functioning of the system are excluded from oil exploration and exploitation	Oil exploration and exploitation are incompatible with World Heritage status (<i>World Heritage Committee position</i>) Oil exploration and exploitation pose an immediate threat to the integrity of the property and a possible irreversible loss of the property's Outstanding Universal Value in the case of an oil spill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A map that defines, on the basis of oceanographic, ecological and other scientific information, the property's surrounding areas where no oil exploration and exploitation can be permitted • Legal adoption of a permanent exclusion of the entire property and the defined surrounding areas from oil exploration and exploitation 	Completed by 31 January 2016
4	The property is managed effectively and in an integrated way that will ensure the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value, and appropriately allows for achieving both sustainable socio-economic and environmental goals	The complexity of the property's ecosystem features and conservation of its integrity require an integrated management approach in which the property is embedded within the larger context of Belize's coastal and marine environment as well as the State Parties' socio-economic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption, implementation and effective enforcement of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, reflecting the World Heritage status of the property and its conservation and sustainable use requirements and consistent with the plan's draft version of January 2015 	Completed by 31 December 2016

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The activities reported by the State Party towards implementation of the corrective measures are noted. However, key legal instruments, including the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, the Living Aquatic Resources Bill and the new Mangrove Regulations, have not been finalized and approved yet, despite repeated Committee requests. While it is noted that all of these documents are undergoing final review, it is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to finalize and adopt these legal instruments as a matter of priority.

Following the January 2015 mission, the State Party stated that it was committed to develop a suitable legal arrangement to address Committee requests regarding oil exploration and exploitation in and around the property. It is recommended that the Committee welcome this commitment and urge the State Party to develop the necessary legal instruments as a matter of urgency to permanently exclude the entire property and the areas that provide a functional ecological connection between the components of the serial property from any future oil exploration or exploitation. The confirmation that no oil concession is currently overlapping the property and that a voluntary moratorium on issuing of new concessions will be in place until the above-mentioned legal arrangement is developed should be welcomed.

The preliminary results of the land tenure inventory provided by the State Party show that a high percentage of lands within the property has either been sold or leased to private owners. The confirmation from the State Party that no further national lands have been sold or leased since 2009 when the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger is noted. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request that the State Party develop a legal instrument that would guarantee permanent cessation of the sale and lease of lands throughout the property. More importantly, strict regulations need to be in place to ensure development on the privately owned or leased lands will be sustainable and commensurate the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Conservation of existing mangrove areas within the property is crucial for the preservation of the overall health of the property's ecosystems. Conservation of the mangrove cover and the exclusion of the property from any oil exploration and exploitation are considered key indicators that will need to be achieved in order to move towards the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

It is noted that a revision of EIAs regulations is currently ongoing. Strengthening of regulations and enhancing capacity for their implementation and enforcement is essential and together with the adoption of the Living Aquatic Resources Bill, Mangrove Regulations and Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, should provide a basis for ensuring that private housing and tourism-related development within the property is strictly regulated and does not threaten its OUV including the conditions of integrity.

It is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger and adopt the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.18

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **38COM 7A.31**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),*
3. *Welcomes the activities reported by the State Party towards the implementation of the corrective measures, but notes with concern that key legal instruments, including the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, the Living Aquatic Resources Bill and the Mangrove Regulations, have not yet been finalized and approved;*
4. *Also welcomes the information provided by the State Party that no oil concession is currently overlapping the property, as well as its commitment to develop a suitable legal*

arrangement that would address the Committee requests regarding the elimination of all oil concession in and around the property, and urges the State Party to develop such a legal arrangement as a matter of priority;

5. Notes that a land tenure inventory is currently ongoing, including within the property, and reiterates its request to the State Party to establish, as a matter of priority, a legal instrument that would guarantee permanent cessation of the sale and lease of lands throughout the property and a clear definition and strict control of development rights on existing private and leased lands;
6. Further welcomes the constructive cooperation between the State Party and stakeholders and adopts the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) they proposed (see Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add, Table 1), as well as its indicators, methods of verification and timeframe, and also urges the State Party to work closely together with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for their successful implementation;
7. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
8. **Decides to retain the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (Belize) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

20. Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras) (N 196)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (vii)(viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1996 -2007, 2011-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Illegal logging;
- Illegal occupation;
- Lack of clarity regarding land tenure;
- Reduced capacity of the State Party;
- General deterioration of law and order and the security situation in the region.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Drafted, proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4439>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 8 (from 1982-2015)

Total amount approved: USD 223,628

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 80,000 (in addition to approximately USD 100,000 of in-kind technical assistance) under the management effectiveness assessment project "Enhancing our Heritage".

Previous monitoring missions

2000: IUCN monitoring mission; 2003, 2006 and 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Illegal settlements
- Illegal livestock grazing and agricultural encroachment
- Illegal logging
- Illegal commercial fishing
- Poaching
- Alien invasive species
- Management deficiencies
- Potential impacts from hydroelectric development projects Patuca I,II and III
- Lawlessness
- Lack of law enforcement
- Lack of clarity regarding land tenure and access to natural resources
- Deforestation

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/>

Current conservation issues

On 4 February 2015, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/documents>.

Lead by the Honduran institution in charge of forests, protected areas and wildlife (ICF) and a technical *ad hoc* Committee bringing together a wide range of sectors, the State Party has conducted a number of activities, summarized hereafter:

- A draft Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) was submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- The Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the property (RSOUV) has been finalized and it is submitted for approval by the Committee at its 39th session;
- Settlers in the property were evicted along with their livestock in August 2014;
- The longstanding efforts to clarify and formalize access to land and natural resources are ongoing in the cultural zone of the biosphere reserve;
- A time series of satellite images, used to detect changes in forest cover and land use, suggests the loss of more than 28,000 hectares of broad-leaved forest between 2010 and 2013 in the biosphere reserve;
- ICF, with external support, has consolidated the integrated monitoring system for the biosphere reserve (<http://www.protep.org/simoni/>);
- Patrolling, though limited due to security concerns, took place to complement remote sensing and to respond to illegal trade in timber and wildlife;
- To counter illegal logging, cooperatives are supported to engage in controlled logging and several licenses were granted to this effect. The efforts include attempts to establish mechanisms allowing for the tracking of wood (chain of custody). Non-commercial use licenses were likewise granted to cover local livelihood needs;

- A first construction phase of the Patuca III hydro power project appears to have started.

The ongoing lack of clarity in terms of which exact part of the vast biosphere reserve is formally recognized as the World Heritage property, is acknowledged. Furthermore, the State Party acknowledges limited human, financial and logistical capacity, partially compensated for by external support. The State Party has submitted an International Assistance Request focusing on this challenge. The request was approved by the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee in January 2015. The clarification of boundaries is also expected to enable the finalization of the DSOCR.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Progress in addressing the many challenges the property is facing is noted. In particular, the improved availability of data on status and trends of deforestation and land use change and the further consolidation of an integrated monitoring system provide an encouraging foundation for future activities. Similarly, the ongoing efforts to further negotiate and clarify access to land and resources on the part of local and indigenous communities and the attempts to discourage illegal logging through the promotion of controlled forest management are plausible and promising.

The fundamental question mark remains about the exact extent and location of the formally recognized World Heritage property within the vast biosphere reserve exceeding 800,000 hectares. The forest loss reported by the State Party between 2010 and 2013 is alarming regardless of its location. Nevertheless, putting the figure formally in perspective of the *World Heritage Convention* requires the currently impossible determination of whether such loss has occurred outside or within the property.

It is worth recalling that the unchanged ambiguity of the boundaries and possible approaches to address it are described in detail in the 2011 mission report. The recently approved International Assistance Request focusing on this very issue is the adequate mechanism to move forward and clarity in terms of the exact boundaries and zonation of the property will also facilitate the ongoing efforts to define the draft DSCOR, which has been discussed and agreed with the State Party and will serve as a decisive structured framework to guide action towards the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger and to assess progress made according to measurable indicators. Ideally, the established monitoring system should be used in this regard. It is recommended that, following the clarification of the property's boundaries, the DSOCR be revised and, if necessary, further complemented with additional indicators.

The eviction of settlers and livestock from the core zone of the property is sensitive and all care should be taken to ensure that this process is conducted in a peaceful manner. Such sensitive operations are likely to cast a shadow on the relationships between governmental actors and local communities. Further intrusions should be prevented so as to reduce the necessity of future operations.

The State Party provides no clear and updated information on the Patuca III project. Given the additional absence of clarity of the exact boundaries of the property, it is not possible to make a conclusive statement on the situation and its possible implications. It should be recalled that possible direct and indirect impacts were not adequately assessed in the original Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the project. Once the boundaries have been clarified, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to assess potential impacts on the OUV of the property in line with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

Given the ongoing lack of clarity of the boundaries, the limited overall progress in addressing the multiple challenges, the limited human, financial and logistical resources and consistent evidence of security challenges, including in the State Party report, it is recommended that the Committee retain Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The following DSOCR has been developed by the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, and is proposed for adoption by the World Heritage Committee:

Timeframe for implementation:

The implementation of the corrective measures outlined in this draft DSOCR will have to be able to achieve in a maximum period of **17** years, if the necessary administrative and political efforts are met, as well as if it is possible to count on the international bodies' support.

It is suggested to adopt the integrity and management indicators proposed by the State Party as provisional as they apply to the wider Biosphere Reserve and potentially will need to be refined once the new boundaries of the property have been adopted in order to ensure that all indicators are specific to the World Heritage property (see below, indicators 5-9). Further two indicators are proposed to be considered as optional as they are setting broad management goals. Those were moved to the end of the draft DSOCR (see details below).

	N°	INDICATOR FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE PROPERTY FROM THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER	REASONING	METHOD OF VERIFICATION
ATTRIBUTES	1	<p>A proposal for boundary modification is submitted by 1 February 2016 and approved by the Committee at its 40th session in 2017</p> <p>*The current draft DSOCR will need to be revised and, if necessary, completed with further indicators following the adoption of new boundaries</p>	<p>Clarification of the property's boundaries is a long-standing issue and needs to be resolved as a matter of priority in order to be able to develop precise measures aimed at preserving the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. The recently approved International Assistance Request will provide financial support to the State Party for the analysis of the current situation and development of a proposal for new boundaries of the property that would best represent and protect its Outstanding Universal Value. It also foresees provision of technical advice by IUCN. The main activities will take place during 2015 which should allow sufficient time for the preparation of the official proposal to be submitted by 1 February 2016. New design of the boundaries would provide a basis for refining the adopted indicators and, if considered necessary, the development of further indicators to be included in the draft DSOCR.</p>	<p>Submission and subsequent approval of the proposal for boundary modification</p>
	2	<p>By year 2025, the actual percentage of the coverage of the broadleaf forest is maintained in the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve (83%)</p>	<p>The analysis for the Reserve made in 2012 showed that the state of conservation of the broadleaf forest is good regarding its viability and considering its key attributes, and showing that the percentage of the actual cover in relation to the historic one was 83%. It is essential that the actual forest cover is maintained.</p>	<p>Multi-temporal analysis of the broadleaf forest cover (use of satellite images)</p>

3	By Year 2025, 300 ha of degraded lands have been recovered in the core zone of the RHBRP	300 ha of degraded lands have been identified in the core zone of the RHBRP, and their recovery is expected after the implementation of eviction and surveillance actions; the natural recuperation of those areas is considered feasible given that natural recuperation within 10 years has already been observed in other formerly occupied areas.	Satellite images and/or photographs obtained with overflights
4	By Year 2025, the abundance indexes of the populations of jaguar (<i>Panthera onca</i>) and its prey species (<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i> , <i>Tapirus bairdii</i>) are maintained or have increased	The jaguar has been identified as one of the key targets for conservation in the analysis made in 2012 and previous studies about ecological integrity since this species is the apex predator of the food chain in the tropical forests present in the reserve, its main function being the regulation of prey populations, which makes it an indicator species for the overall state of the ecosystems. This species is also included in Appendix 1 of the CITES Convention.	Quinquennial monitoring studies of the relative abundance and distribution of the jaguar, its population composition and the structure of the prey species Implementation of SIMONI
The following indicators apply to the wider Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve and will need to be revised following the modification of the property boundaries as outlined in Indicator 1			
5	By Year 2020 in the cultural zone and the buffer zone of the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, 101 719.22has of forest are sustainably managed through the assignment of forest community management contracts following processes which guarantee the legality of the forest products	In the cultural and buffer zone of the Biosphere Reserve, sustainable use of the forest resources needs to directly involve local communities by assigning them responsibilities in conservation and protection of these resources.	Approved Forest Management Plans Evaluations of achievement Monitoring and surveillance of use activities
6	By Year 2017, the actual presence of populations and working areas in the core zone of the Rio Platanos Biosphere Reserve are 100% eliminated	The core zone is an area of special protection where human presence and any activities (except for research activities in accordance with a granted permit and the monitoring and investigation plan) are forbidden. Illegal occupation of lands in the core zone represent the main threat to natural resources of the area also given the fact that the inscription of the property as a natural World Heritage site was largely based on the existence of virgin forests (without intervention of men) contained in this zone.	Eviction reports Reports of control and monitoring (overflights and patrols) Satellite images

7	In 2020, the indigenous peoples (Miskitos, Pech and afro-Honduran (Garífunas)) are integrated in the management of the Biosphere Reserve under a governance plan of the territory through the entitlement of 424 123.87 has (Community and Intercommunity titles for full possession) recognizing their ancestral rights in the Cultural Zone of the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve	The use of ancestral territories of the miskitos, pech and garífunas communities in the Cultural Zone will be regulated respecting their ancestral knowledge of the limits recognized by the territorial councils, and complying with the ILO- Convention 169 and the forest law that provides for participation and integration of the communities in the management of natural resources and protected areas.	Titles in favor of indigenous peoples and afro-Honduran peoples present in the reserve
8	By 2020, management responsibilities and rights of use are assigned to all the inhabitants in the buffer zone of the Biosphere Reserve, who comply with the established requirements in the law through the signature of familial usufruct contracts	<p>The forest law provides for a mechanism of allocation and assignment of use, conservation, management and usage of the lands meant for forest use in the national territory under a series of requirements of which the aim is to encourage the communities by making them participants of the management.</p> <p>Currently, there is a cadastral basis for lands in the buffer zone and in the latter, approximately 2 200 usufruct familial contracts and 2 community titles for indigenous communities Pech (Culuco and Jocomico) present in the buffer zone of the reserve, have been granted. These processes are being realized with the support of the German cooperation through the Project of Territorial Communal Management and Protection of the Environment in Rio Platano (PROTEP).</p>	Contracts of assigned usufruct and monitoring of their implementation
9	The <i>ad hoc</i> Committee has annually developed and implemented a Work Plan aimed at creating efforts of resource management and political impacts	It is necessary to elaborate concrete work plans for the functioning of the <i>ad hoc</i> committee, by starting to manage and coordinate actions that contribute directly to the conservation of the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve.	Work plans and progress reports of activities and follow-up of realized actions

10	At least until the year 2025, the level of acceptable management is maintained in the implementation of the Methodology for monitoring the management effectiveness in relation to the implementation of the Management Plan of the area	<p>The Management Plan of a protected area is a technical administrative tool in which the actions are regulated, and strategic axis are established, which will help to reduce the threats on the objects of conservation identified for the area and simultaneously involve the communities in the effective management of the area, contributing to their sustainable development.</p> <p>The implementation of the Methodology for monitoring the management effectiveness allows to measure the degree of implementation of the planned actions within the stated timeframe.</p>	Biannual evaluations of Management effectiveness in the Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve
11	By 2017, at least one co-management structure has been established in the Rio Platano Biosphere reserve	<p>Until now co-management has not been used in the reserve, however a strategy identifying the most appropriate co-management arrangements is needed in the area where various organizations and institutions are present which are interested in the realization of co-management. The report of the diagnosis of key actors identified 8 non-governmental organizations, 5 governmental organizations, 6 municipalities, 3 indigenous federations and 1 afro-Honduran, UNICAF, 2 inter-institutional tables, all of them being present and active in the reserve. By 2017 it is planned to sign at least one co-management agreement with one of these institutions.</p>	<p>Established agreements</p> <p>Progress reports on the established co-management agreements</p>

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.20

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.33**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Commends the State Party and external supporters for the progress made in consolidating an integrated monitoring mechanism and the further clarification of access to land and natural resources, and encourages the State Party to continue these efforts;
4. Adopts the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) developed by the State Party in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, as presented under Item 20 of Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add, and considers that this DSOOCR should be revised and, if necessary, further complemented with additional indicators following the clarification of the property's boundaries;
5. Notes the approval of the International Assistance Request to conclude the clarification of the boundaries of the property and urges the State Party to submit, as required, a boundary modification for consideration by the Committee, in conformity with the appropriate procedures laid out in the Operational Guidelines;
6. Recalls the State Party's intention to minimize the environmental and social impacts of the construction of dams in the Patuca watershed, and requests the State Party to report on the possible impacts of the Patuca III project once the boundaries of the property will be clarified;
7. Reiterates its concern that no apparent progress has been made in terms of human, financial and logistical resources, and notes with concern that the security situation appears to impact on the State Party's ability to operate in the property;
8. Also reiterates its concern that illegal activities continue to impact on the property, and strongly urges the State Party to prevent new illegal settlements so as to avoid further evictions in the future;
9. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
10. **Decides to retain the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

23. Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda) (C 1022)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2001

Criteria (i)(iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2010-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger
Fire that resulted in the destruction of part of the property

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4351>

Corrective measures identified
Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4351>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures
Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4351>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1022/documents/>

International Assistance
Requests approved: 3 (from 1998-2010)
Total amount approved: USD 111,292
For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1022/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds
Total amount granted: 2011-2012: 68,365 USD from the Japanese FIT for an Expert Appraisal Mission; 2013-2016: 650,000 USD from the Japanese FIT for the project: Technical and financial assistance for the reconstruction of Muzibu-Azaala-Mpanga, architectural masterpiece of the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi, Uganda, World Heritage property in Danger.

Previous monitoring missions
April 2010, August 2011, November 2011, and August 2013: World Heritage Centre mission; November 2010: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2012: Joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2015: Joint UNESCO/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports
Destruction by fire of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1022/>

Current conservation issues
On 16 February 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report for the property, addressing the requests of the Committee. A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property from 4–6 February 2015. Both reports are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1022/documents>.

The State Party reports the following:

- The project timeline has been adjusted with the aim of finishing the reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga by December 2015. The entire process is being documented. The current firefighting system is temporary and will be replaced by a more permanent one (with less visual impact) by the end of the project.
- The National Technical Committee has resumed meetings and the Buganda Reconstruction Committee is overseeing reconstruction efforts. The Buganda Kingdom has furthermore appointed the Buganda Heritage and Tourism Board to manage the Kasubi Tombs and all other heritage sites in the kingdom. This will necessitate a reconsideration of the management plan. A draft master plan was presented to the mission team but has not yet been discussed by the three key stakeholders (the Buganda Kingdom, the traditional managers and the State Party).
- While it was necessary for security reasons to construct a wall surrounding the property, the entrance area will be reconfigured to improve the visual connections with the surrounding setting. All new constructions have been halted, except for the solar panel and water projects, which were already underway. Progress on the reconstruction activities at the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga is also addressed along with other buildings on the property.

The findings of the mission can be summarized as follows:

- In regard to the reconstruction, there has been slow but steady progress. It was confirmed that the steel structure was up, and the fire retardant paint was in the process of being applied. Work had also begun on the preparation of the bundles of grass for the thatching. The main challenges relate to the procurement of the necessary grasses used in the thatch and finishes. The mission was informed that it would take 18 months to finish the thatching, with the possibility that it may take up to 2 years. The mission further found that the firefighting system had yet to be redesigned.
- With the addition of the Buganda Heritage and Tourism Board as site manager, there is a need to ensure that the three key stakeholders should continue to have good communication and share in the management decisions at the property.
- There is a strong need to update the management plan to reflect the new structures and relationships now on the property, as well as the development of a disaster risk management plan and a tourism management plan.
- The mission was also concerned with the number of *ad-hoc* constructions occurring on the property and indicated that there was an urgent need for a master plan to be developed and finalized for the property before any further developments were considered.
- A final concern for the mission team was the proposal to widen Masiro Road, which would directly encroach on one edge of the property.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The progress that has been made on the reconstruction efforts for the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga is recognized and the work that has now begun on the first part of the thatching process (bundling the grass) is welcome. There is concern, however, that the timeframe established to finish the work is too short. It would be better to give the thatching the necessary amount of time (up to 24 months) rather than hurrying to finish with perhaps less quality results.

There is also some concern over the unplanned developments that are currently taking place at the property. Without a master plan, it is not possible to ensure that these various *ad-hoc* developments will not impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. It is therefore recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to halt all work on *ad-hoc* developments, until the master plan can be completed and reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. Such a Plan needs to be based on a survey of all structures on the property, including details of their history and restoration. It would be unfortunate if the major restoration of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga was not complemented by a wider conservation and revitalization of the whole property.

Archaeological surveys should also be considered as an integral part of the design and implementation process for future developments. A reconsideration of the entrance area of the property will also need to take place in light of the enclosure of the property by the security wall. Plans are currently being developed by the architect to soften the effects of the wall at the entrance.

Furthermore, there is concern that the widening of Masiro Road may encroach on the property. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies would recommend that the State Party work with the relevant Ministries to ensure a realignment of the road proposal, so as to not have a negative impact on the property. It will be necessary for the State Party to inform the World Heritage Committee, as per Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, of any major development proposals being proposed, which might impact on the OUV of property.

Concerns remain about the management of the property. As the traditional management system was one of the attributes of OUV at the time of inscription, there is a need to ensure that the traditional site managers are involved in decision making at the property. The representative of the State Party (the Department of Museums and Monuments) also needs to be involved. The appointment of the new Buganda Heritage and Tourism Board, as site manager, may be a positive step for the property, but care must be taken to ensure that safeguarding of OUV takes priority over tourism considerations. Towards this end, it may be necessary to institute a capacity building programme for staff of the Buganda Heritage and Tourism Board. Furthermore, it will be very important to reconsider the management plan to ensure it takes into account the new management arrangements, and also to ensure that it is based first and foremost on the safeguarding of the OUV.

In addition, a comprehensive disaster risk management plan needs to be developed that looks not only at fire, but at other possible risks. A tourism management plan would also be useful to guide tourism development. These plans should, however, be strongly integrated with the management plan to ensure that they are in agreement with each other. The National Technical Committee should also be reactivated to ensure that all stakeholders have input into management decisions. There is also a need for the National Technical Committee to play a key advisory role at the property and for the reconstruction committee to be active as long as the reconstruction process is ongoing.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.23

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.26**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),*
3. *Notes the progress made on the reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga and congratulates the State Party for its continued commitment to this work;*
4. *Expresses its concern that the timelines provided in the state of conservation report for the reconstruction of the Muzibu Azaala Mpanga are overly optimistic, and in order to better reflect the need for careful work to be carried out on the thatching, and on the redesign and installation of a fire protection system, requests that the State Party provide a revised, realistic reconstruction project timeline, with clearly defined benchmarks;*
5. *Also expresses its great concern that ad-hoc developments within the property could adversely impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;*
6. *Also requests the State Party to:*
 - a) *halt further work on the provision of a reservoir and a fire-fighting system, alterations to the entrance, implementation of a visitor route or development of tourism facilities such as restaurants, until an Integrated Master Plan has been completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, as requested by the Committee since 2012,*
 - b) *prepare, in order to inform the Master Plan, a comprehensive site plan showing all structures on the property, indicating their date of construction as far as is*

ascertainable, and submit this to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

7. *Further expresses its concern that the plans to widen Masiro Road may encroach on one edge of the property, and further requests the State Party to ensure that this proposal is realigned in such a way as to avoid any negative impact on the OUV of the property, and to submit revised plans to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
8. *Requests furthermore the State Party to revise the management plan for the property to take into account the new management structure for the property, and in particular, to ensure that the safeguarding of the OUV of the property is the overarching principle for management decisions, and to submit the plan to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
9. *Requests moreover that a comprehensive disaster risk management plan and a tourism plan be developed and integrated into the management plan;*
10. *Requests in addition the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
11. ***Decides to retain the Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

ARAB STATES

25. Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (Iraq) (C 1130)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2003

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2003-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Nearby construction of a dam entailing partial flooding and seepage;
- Armed conflict.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet established

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2003-2003)

Total amount approved: USD 50,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 6,000 from the Italian Funds-in-Trust

Previous monitoring missions

November 2002: UNESCO mission for the Makhool Dam project; June 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Partial flooding and seepage due to a dam building project
- Fragile mud brick structures
- Absence of a comprehensive conservation and management plan

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/>

Current conservation issues

On 12 April 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report for the four World Heritage properties in Iraq as well as for ten of the eleven sites included in the country's Tentative List. The report is available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/documents/>.

The State Party reports that armed groups occupied the house of the German archaeological mission as well as the new house of the Iraqi archaeological mission, located at the south-west area of the property, at the ziggurat and the ancient palace. The State Party also reports that this occupation of the site has led to the striking of the armed groups' positions by air forces on 27 and 29 August 2014. This striking caused damage to the house of the German archaeological mission as well as to the wall of Ashur and destroyed the glass cover that protects the Royal Cemetery.

The property being located in ISIL's control area, it is very difficult to gather accurate information on its state of conservation.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

On 17 July 2014, an expert meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters led to the adoption of an Emergency Response Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Iraq's Cultural Heritage (also see Part I of Document WHC-15/39.COM/7).

The absence of information about the situation at the site raises a very high concern. It would be essential, as soon as the security conditions permit, that the responsible authorities carry out a rapid assessment of the state of conservation of the property and submit the results of this assessment to the World Heritage Centre, prior to any action on the ground.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.25

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.2** adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Commends the State Party for its efforts to ensure the protection of the property in spite of the difficult prevailing situation;
4. Expresses its great concern about the absence of information on the state of conservation of the property and requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of the evolution of the situation on the ground;
5. Also requests the State Party, as soon as the security conditions allow the responsible authorities to visit the site, to carry out a rapid assessment of the state of conservation of the property and submit the results of this assessment to the World Heritage Centre prior to any action on the ground;
6. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
7. **Decides to retain Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (Iraq) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

26. Samarra Archaeological City (Iraq) (C 276 rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2007

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2007-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

State of conflict in the country that does not allow the responsible authorities to assure the protection and management of the property.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified
Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures
Not yet established

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/276/documents/>

International Assistance
Requests approved: 0
Total amount approved: USD 0
For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/276/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds
Total amount granted: 100,000 USD from the Nordic World Heritage Fund for training and documentation aiming at the preparation of the Nomination File.

Previous monitoring missions
June 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Weathering and lack of maintenance affecting the fragile structures
- State of conflict in the country that does not allow the responsible authorities to assure the protection and management of the property

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/276/>

Current conservation issues
On 12 April 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report for the four World Heritage properties in Iraq, as well as for ten of the eleven sites included in the country's Tentative List. The report is available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/276/documents/>.

The State Party reports that an attack perpetrated by ISIL partly damaged the Dome Crusade, located 600 m from Al-Maashook Palace. A second attack in July 2014 caused damage to the fixed walls. The Eshnass fence was partly damaged by a car bomb. The State Party reports that the rest of the property has not suffered from any damage.

Other sources report that in November 2014, a black banner was hang on the Spiral Minaret (Al-Malwiyah), while clashes were going on between local armed groups and ISIL outside the town. In March 2015, part of the Spiral Minaret (Al-Malwiyah) was covered with black and red graffiti. On 26 March 2015, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the Permanent Delegation of Iraq to UNESCO concerning the local armed groups surrounding the property, with religious signs displayed within the latter and notably at the Spiral Minaret (Al-Malwiyah). The World Heritage Centre expressed its concern about these signs which can transform the site into a military target and therefore requested clarifications about the on-going situation. At the time of drafting this report, no response had been received yet.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

On 17 July 2014, an expert meeting, held at UNESCO Headquarters, led to the adoption of an Emergency Response Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Iraq's Cultural Heritage (also see Part I of Document WHC-15/39.COM/7).

The property seems to be still under the control of the responsible authorities despite the incidents of the banner and the graffiti. However, this kind of incident can put the property at high risk due to the presence of ISIL around the city of Samarra. In October 2014, one of the most important shrines, the Shrine of Al-Douri (Imam Dur Shrine), located north of Samarra, and built in 1085, was deliberately destroyed by ISIL.

Concerning the graffiti, a rapid consultation carried out by the World Heritage Centre with an expert in mural paintings and based on the pictures sent by the responsible authorities led to the elaboration of a technical note. The latter lists a series of recommendations for the treatment of the graffiti, with a necessary preparatory work, advice on the technics and materials to be used and proposal of long-term solutions. This note was sent to the Permanent Delegation of Iraq to UNESCO on 10 April 2015.

Considering the prevailing situation in the country and the potential risk for the property, it is recommended that the responsible authorities take all possible measures to secure the site. It is also highly recommended that the necessary efforts be made in order to preserve the property from ostentatious religious signs, which are likely to increase the risk of deliberate damage.

While giving priority to the protection of the property from the effects of the prevailing situation, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to try, as far as possible, to implement the measures requested at its 38th session (Doha, 2014) and listed in Paragraph 4 of Decision **38 COM 7A.3**.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.26

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.3**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),*
3. *Commends the State Party for its efforts to ensure the protection of the property in spite of the difficult prevailing situation and requests it to reinforce this protection by ensuring that no ostentatious religious signs are displayed at the property;*
4. *Also requests the State Party to implement, as soon as possible, the measures recommended in the technical note elaborated in view of addressing the graffiti issue;*
5. *Further Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
6. ***Decides to retain Samarra Archaeological City (Iraq) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

27. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) (C 148 rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1981

Criteria (ii)(iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1982-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

(cf. Document CLT 82/CH/CONF.015/8)

"[...] they considered that the situation of this property corresponds to the criteria mentioned in the ICOMOS note and, in particular, to criteria (e) (significant loss of historical authenticity) and (f) (important loss of cultural significance) as far as "ascertained danger" is concerned, and to criteria (a) (modification of juridical status of the property diminishing the degree of its protection), (b) (lack of

conservation policy) and (d) (threatening effects of town planning) as far as "potential danger" is concerned. [...]"

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet established

Previous Committee Decisions See page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests Approved: 1 (1982)

Total Amount Approved: 100,000USD

For details, See page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/intassistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: approximately USD 5,000,000 (since 1988)

Previous monitoring missions

February-March 2004: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission; from September 2005 to May 2008: 6 experts missions within the framework of the elaboration of the Action Plan for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem; February-March 2007: special World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission sent by the Director-General of UNESCO for the issue of the Mughrabi ascent; August 2007, January and February 2008: missions for the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism; March and December 2009: World Heritage Centre missions; December 2013, October 2014, February 2015: project missions.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Natural risk factors
- Lack of planning, governance and management processes
- Alteration of the urban and social fabric
- Impact of archaeological excavations
- Deterioration of monuments
- Urban environment and visual integrity
- Traffic, access and circulation

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/>

Current conservation issues

A report was provided to the World Heritage Centre by the Israeli Permanent Delegation to UNESCO on 2 February 2015. A joint report was provided by the Jordanian and Palestinian Permanent Delegations to UNESCO on 16 March 2015. These reports are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/documents/>.

I. Report by the Israeli authorities

It is to be noted that since 1967, the Old City of Jerusalem "*is de facto administered by*" the Israeli authorities. The report submitted on 2 February 2015 underlined that it refers only to new actions taken or ongoing processes in the areas inside the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem – intra muros sites. The report presents a wide range of activities. Most of them are similar to those mentioned in the 2014 report and the previously reported activities are therefore not included in the present document. Updates are summarized hereunder:

a) Overall plans and development

Regarding town planning, the report indicates that the Local Plan for the Old City, "a derivative of the strategic plan and previous planning initiatives, was set out to determine the methods and terms of

preservation and restoration of the Old City monuments and of the public realm. The plan was designed as an interim plan in preparation of more detailed plans to follow. In 2014 the plan was presented to the local planning committee. Due to the parallel advancement of more detailed Residential Block Plans, its discussion is currently being suspended.”

Concerning residential block plans, the report indicates that “local plan AM/9 for the Old City of Jerusalem adopted in 1976 is still valid for most parts of the Old City. The Residential Block Plans provide tools of management, conservation and development of the urban fabric and allow the issuance of building permits for local residents”. The report also indicates that, “out of some sixty blocks defined (and 26 intended for improvement), six were selected for the first phase of planning. The plans implement policies and guidelines for the safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Old City, the conservation and rehabilitation of historic assets, and facilitate the issuance of building permits in these blocks”. Furthermore, the report states that two residential local plans have been completed being the result of close cooperation between the various professional planning departments at the Municipality and the Regional Planning Committee. They are now being examined for compliance with threshold requirements for discussion before the Regional Committee. Furthermore, work is already progressing on the next four blocks. The report mentions that a new Comprehensive Local Plan for the Jewish Quarter in the Old City is being developed and intended to set guidelines for the preservation and development of the Jewish Quarter. The main goal of the plan is to enhance the value of its cultural, historical and archaeological assets and turn it to a distinctive and attractive urban environment for both residents and tourists. The plan will update land use allocations and accommodate future infrastructure needs. Other than regulate future changes to the public realm, it will concentrate on three compounds: the Jewish Quarter designated parking lot; the Cardo; and the Hurva Synagogue piazza. The plan has been submitted to the Regional Planning Committee, now being examined for compliance with threshold requirements for discussion before the Regional Committee.

The report also provides a list of detailed schemes for the Old City, including notably: the Tifferet Israel - for which a petition has been filed regarding the entrance to the building- the approval of a rehabilitation plan for an Armenian Church in the Christian quarter; the Liba (core) House for which the plan was to return it to the planners for further details to the suggested alternative. The report mentions that a plan for additional spaces to the Western Wall elevator has been approved and that the plan for an addition to an existing residential building has been objected by the Local Planning Committee and passed on to the Regional Committee with recommendations. Furthermore the report indicates that plans for the expansion of an existing housing unit, for approving a building deviation in an existing housing unit, as well as for the enlargement of an existing residential unit have been submitted

The report indicates also that the first phase of the Bab Huta neighborhood was completed, including the replacement of underground infrastructure; street lighting and furniture, pavement and provision of accessibility. The work along Hagai (El Wad) Street has progressed, including the completion of the accessibility of the street along its complete length, as well as the approaches to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Western Wall and the Haram al-Sharif. A streetscape improvement plan for the Christian Quarter including the Muristan plaza and the routes to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is in the final stages of design. Streetscape improvement plans have been designed for the area within the New Gate and within and outside of Damascus Gate, including regulation of traffic, improved accessibility, and the upgrading of storefronts. A new plan for the complex of Galicia roofs, serving as an important open space in this dense area as well as providing access for inhabitants, is designed to provide a safe access to the complex as a whole. The report further underlines that a new plan for the Armenian Patriarch street (Armenian Quarter) is devised for the overall improvement of the street's infrastructure as well as the regulation of traffic and facilitating handicapped access. Works conducted in the inner piazza of the Dung Gate include improvement of accessibility and shading. A manual for the upgrading of storefronts, ‘Storefront Upgrading’, has been prepared and published in 2014 in both Hebrew and Arabic. Implementation of the Old City Lighting Master-Plan is continually conducted. The report mentions that, in 2015, completion is planned for the Mount of Olives and the Hurva Synagogue. The pilot for Interpretation and Orientation Signage has been completed and the project has been extended to the other areas of the Old City. The process of street numbering of over 4000 shops and residential homes throughout the Old City has been completed.

Furthermore, the report states that the four-year contract for the enhanced cleaning and maintenance services in the Old City has been renewed recently, that a special project is being carried out for deploying central garbage collection spots and that, in 2014, engineers identified and declared seven buildings as dangerous and as a potential risk to public safety. The report informs of the daily

operation, since 2014, of a new public minibus service including a shuttle circulating the Old City. Accessibility for the disabled improvement works and installation of directional signage for accessible routes have continued through 2014. Finally, the report indicated that more emphasis was put on compounds rather than streets, where accessibility improvements were integrated within the infrastructure improvement schemes in the Latin Quarter (around the New Gate), Lions' Gate (both in and outside) and Damascus Gate and that the signage system was also enhanced.

b) **Archaeology and conservation**

Al-Aqsa Mosque

The report indicates that ongoing conservation works on Dome of the Rock includes preservation of dome mosaics and marble tiles cladding in the inner walls. Ongoing conservation is taking place in the Solomon's Stables. Conservation works were completed on the Eastern Wall. A stone fence surrounding an electric generator complex was completed. Four of the wooden doors of the al-Aqsa Mosque were replaced by the Waqf.

Western Wall Compound

The report states that an archeological site beneath the Ohel Yitzhak Synagogue demanded a unique, complex and expensive conservation project, and that solutions were designed by a group of Israeli and non-Israeli engineers. Salvage excavations continued at the Strauss building and along the Herodian Wall. Limited conservational work took place at the Little Western Wall.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher

The report indicated that various works of construction, restoration and maintenance were carried out at the St. Abraham convent. The front of the Chapel of the Franks underwent cleaning.

The Old City Walls

The report mentions that graffiti cleaning and maintenance of the Bet Shalom Promenade (on the southern wall) were undertaken. Works in the Muslim Quarter include conservation at the Haldiah-el Kirmi dangerous structure; the Mamluk burial site Turbat Seadia; the Mahkamah building and Sabil Hamam el Ain as part of the Hagai (el Wad) street infrastructure upgrading project. The report underlines that salvage excavations were also carried out along Kirmi road; and at the Catholic Armenian Church on Via Dolorosa. In the Jewish Quarter, salvage excavations and conservation were carried out in Birkat Torah Yeshiva, the Tifferet Israel Synagogue site as well as along Ararat and Chabad roads. The report also indicates that salvage excavations were carried out at the Church of the Redeemer, in the Christian quarter.

Finally, the report provides a list of tourism and cultural events that were organized.

II. **Report by the Jordanian and Palestinian authorities**

The report has been submitted on 16 March 2015. It provides information based on the observations and reports of the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf and the Jordanian National Committee for World Heritage. It presents activities undertaken by the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf and information on measures undertaken in the Old City, reiterating the concern of the Jordan and Palestinian authorities on these matters. The report is composed of three chapters entitled as follows:

1. "Chapter 1 : Al-Aqsa Mosque and its environs
2. Chapter 2 : Israeli Occupation Authorities's Aggressions and Violations against the Historic Character of the Old City of Jerusalem and Its walls
3. Chapter 3 : Recommendations "

The content of each chapter is summarized below :

c) **Al-Aqsa Mosque and its environs**

The report first presents **the activities carried out at the Al Aqsa Mosque/Al Haram Al-Sharif**, with a definition of the Al Aqsa Mosque/Al Haram Al-Sharif as well as its historical and religious significance for Muslims.

Furthermore the report contains a section B entitled "Israeli Occupation violations against Al-Aqsa" including information with regard to reported "aggressions against Al-Aqsa Mosque, worshippers and the staff of the Jerusalem Awqaf", as well as reports on "Obstruction of Al-Aqsa renovations, (...) excavations and digging threats, (...) "cracks in the Dome of the Rock (...), forcing of Jewish names on Arab buildings".

The report presents activities and projects undertaken by the Jordanian Awqaf for the conservation of Al-Aqsa and the Waqf properties in the Old City of Jerusalem, among them:

- Restorations of parts of the eastern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque,
- Restoration of Two Mamluk wooden gates of Al-Aqsa Mosque,
- Continuing the restoration work of the plastering and mosaic decorations inside the Dome of the Rock,
- Covering the roofs of some buildings of Al-Aqsa Mosque with lead sheets,
- Continuing marble restoration of the interior walls within the Dome of the Rock,
- Re-pointing of the stone courses of the seventh colonnade of al-Marwani Mosque.

The report also mentions the cooperation with UNESCO for the rehabilitation of the Manuscript Conservation Laboratory and for the refurbishment of the Islamic Museum, as well as training of some employees. It also indicates that the Jordanian Jerusalem Awqaf is finalizing with the help of a UNESCO expert a conceptual design for the Islamic Museum of Al-Aqsa Mosque.

d) Israeli Occupation Authorities's Agresions and Violations against the Historic Character of the Old City of Jerusalem and Its walls

This chapter presents "A – reminder of the illegality of all Israeli Occupation measures in Occupied Jerusalem, B – some of the continued illegal intrusive tunnelling and underground excavations, C – new projects of Judaization of historic sites in the Old city of Jerusalem and its surroundings, and D – examples of demolition and change of status of historic remains in order to replace them with Jewish prayer places."

The report also recalls the Resolutions and Decisions taken in this regard by the United Nations notably.

In addition, the report provides several examples of measures to "enforced Judaization construction projects in the Old City of Jerusalem" (section C), in the vicinity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque notably, in a manner that negatively affects the function, visual view and skyline of the Old City. Furthermore, the report indicates that the Umayyad Palaces Area had suffered destruction, misrepresentation and disfigurement of relics.

The report expresses concern at demolitions and confiscations designated for establishing new Jewish prayer places. In this regard, the report mentions a new plaza and prayer wall at the southern western wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque, the conversion of the historic site of Ribat al-Kurd / Hosh al-Shihabi, located near Bab Al Hadid (Iron Gate) of Al-Aqsa Mosque into a Jewish prayer place during the period 2006 through 2014 as well as acts of demolition and removal of artefacts at the Nabi Dawoud Mosque, an Islamic Waqf property, located next to the southern wall of the Old City of Jerusalem.

In 2014 and 2015, UNESCO has received reports from an Israeli NGO on recent activities regarding excavation and construction work in and around the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls. The Secretariat requested Israel to provide additional information in particular related to the construction activity for the "Giv'ati Parking Lot". At the time of the preparation of this report, no answer was received. A large part of the report relates to the extensive archaeological excavation and tunnelling

undertaken in and around the Old City¹, in particular in the areas of the Western Wall and in Silwan, affecting notably the structural integrity of the areas around and under the Al-Haram Al-Sharif. Of particular concern to the Jordanian and Palestinian authorities are the tunnels connecting Al Wad Street with the Western Wall and the Kittan Cave/Suleiman Cave, the excavations and tunnelling at Silwan and Al Buraq Plaza, Beit Strauss as well as with the plans to build the “Kedem Compound” on the site of the Upper Silwan “Givati Parking Lot” at the entrance of Silwan, and only a few meters from the walls of the Old City. The report also mentions the plan to open a parking lot on the site of Nea Maria Church, in the southern part of the Old City of Jerusalem a few meters away from the Nabi Dawoud Gate. The report further informs that Muslim cemeteries, Roman layers, important historic rooms and walls in Silwan are reported to have been removed without documentation.

e) **Recommendations**

Finally the report addresses several recommendations and “calls on Israel, the Occupying Power, to comply with the relevant UNESCO decisions” and to comply with the relevant provisions of major Conventions related to heritage protection, including the 1954 Convention and the 1972 Convention. The report also addresses recommendation to UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to comply with Decisions and Resolutions adopted by the Executive Board as well as by the World Heritage Committee related to the World Heritage site of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls.

III. The Mughrabi Ascent

Since its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007), the World Heritage Committee has repeatedly asked “the World Heritage Centre to facilitate the professional encounter at the technical level between Israeli, Jordanian and Waqf experts to discuss the detailed proposals for the proposed final design of the Mughrabi ascent, prior to any final decision.” (Decision **31 COM 7A.18**). Two such meetings took place in Jerusalem on 13 January and 24 February 2008.

UNESCO convened a technical meeting at its Headquarters in 2012. Jordanian and Waqf experts participated in this meeting, with representatives of the World Heritage Centre, ICCROM and ICOMOS. However, due to the absence of the Israeli experts, neither examination nor discussion of the Israeli proposal took place. Therefore, the situation has remained unchanged as the objective of the meeting was to review both proposals in order for the parties to reach a consensus on the design of the Mughrabi Ascent.

At the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (Saint Petersburg, 2012), Decision **36 COM 7A.23.II**, reiterating the terms of the Executive Board decision, was adopted by consensus among the concerned parties.

A note verbale from the Permanent Delegation of Jordan to UNESCO, dated 9 October 2012, informed UNESCO that “On May 22nd, 2012, the Israeli authorities commenced unilateral actions at the Mughrabi Gate Pathway which are continuing to this date.” thus disregarding previous decisions of the Executive Board and of the World Heritage Committee requesting that “no measures, unilateral or otherwise, shall be taken on the site”. The note verbale highlights the great concern of the Government of Jordan about these actions “which have adversely altered the site’s characteristics, integrity, authenticity and Islamic cultural heritage” and which “hinder the efforts to finally settle the Mughrabi Gate Pathway dispute in a manner consistent with UNESCO’s consensus decisions and acceptable by all relevant parties”. Two additional notes verbales, dated 4 and 14 February 2013 as well as a letter dated 2 April 2013 reiterated this matter.

¹ The issue of the archaeological excavations carried out since 1967 in the Old City of Jerusalem is also the subject of consideration by the Governing Bodies of UNESCO. These archaeological campaigns are in contradiction with article VI. 32 of the 1956 New Delhi *Recommendation on International Principles Applicable to Archaeological Excavations, related to excavations in an occupied territory*.

The Jordanian authorities, in 2013, reiterated the above and the deep concern of the Government of Jordan that such actions would alter the “status quo” and may lay the foundations for erecting a permanent bridge or annexing the levelled areas to the Plaza. Furthermore, Jordan called upon UNESCO to comment on the Jordanian design submitted in May 2011, in order for UNESCO to approve it.

Israel stated in its 2013 report on the State of Conservation of the Old city of Jerusalem that in February 2012, work commenced in order to stabilize the temporary wooden bridge as well as in the area where the new Mughrabi Ascent is to be built, including the removal of unstable walls, filling of underground spaces with dirt, stabilizing ancient walls, removal of layers of dirt, and stabilizing dirt cuts.

During the discussions at the 190th session of the Executive Board, Member States expressed their concern regarding the lack of progress in implementing the decisions of the Board and of the World Heritage Committee. A meeting of the Bureau of the Executive Board was convened by the Chairperson on 7 and 8 March 2013, requesting the Director-General to deploy her efforts to achieve progress on this matter. At the 191st session, a consensus was finally reached among the concerned parties for an experts meeting to take place in May 2013, as acknowledged in Decision 191 EX/5.

The meeting was foreseen to take place at the World Heritage Centre on 27 May 2013, and the Jordanian and Palestinian authorities had designated their experts. However, failing an agreement on the Terms of Reference of the mission (see below, VI), the meeting has not taken place at the time of the drafting of the present document.

At its 37th session, the World Heritage Committee reiterated “the need for the parties concerned to cooperate on all related aspects of this issue [Mughrabi ascent] and regrets Israel’s refusal to fulfil World Heritage Committee Decision **36 COM 7A.23.II**, Executive Board 191 EX/Decision 5 (I) and related UNESCO Resolutions and Decisions”.

In response to the request for additional information regarding the constructions work undertaken at the beginning of the ramp leading to the Mughrabi Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem, UNESCO was informed, by letter from the Ambassador of Israel to International Organizations dated 31 January 2014 that “all the ongoing construction works are carried out with full cooperation and coordination between the Waqf authorities, the Municipality of Jerusalem and the Israeli Antiquities Authority”.

The information provided in the report by the Jordanian and Palestinian authorities indicates that reported “extensive aggressions” against the Mughrabi Gate Pathway and its surroundings since 1967 continued in 2014-2015. The report mentions that threats to construct a permanent bridge, neglecting the calls of UNESCO and the international community to preserve the site’s heritage, continued in 2014. Furthermore, considerable demolitions of the historic remains, including entire rooms and parts of the Afdaliyya Mosque were conducted in 2013-2014. The report also indicates that the Jewish women’s prayer area has been expanded and that many new constructions and excavations are continuing through 2015, including the erection of a huge wooden platform for Jewish reform and conservative prayer place labeled as a new expansion of the Western Wall constituting an imposed change of Jerusalem status-quo.

Since 2014, the Executive Board deplored the fact that the meeting of experts on the Mughrabi Ascent, had not taken place. By several Decisions, notably 196 EX/Decision 26 (Part I.C) the Executive Board “urges Israel, the Occupying Power, to accept and facilitate the implementation of the (...) Experts meeting in accordance with UNESCO decisions and in conformity with its obligations under the provisions of UNESCO Conventions for the Protection of Cultural Property and Cultural Heritage.” The Executive Board further invited all parties concerned to participate in the expert meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent and requested that the report and recommendations of the mission as well as the report of the meeting on the Mughrabi Ascent, be presented to the parties concerned before the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee (June 2014). It also thanked the Director-General for her continuous efforts to implement the above-mentioned UNESCO joint mission and all related UNESCO Decisions and Resolutions.

It has been brought to the attention of the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee that not all the parties concerned were in a position to attend the expert meeting prior to its opening on 15 June 2014. The same information has been brought to the attention of the 195th and 196th session of the Executive Board (October 2014 and April 2015). Both the World Heritage Committee and the Executive Board reiterated the request to organize the expert meeting.

The Secretariat will be reporting on such a meeting to the World Heritage Committee accordingly, either through an Addendum or orally, in case it would take place.

IV. UNESCO operational projects

In 2008, within the framework of the UNESCO Action plan for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, the A.G. Leventis Foundation decided to contribute to a project for the restoration of the lower part of the Church of St. John the Baptist, also known as St. John Prodromos. The overall state of conservation of the underground part of this Church, which is one of the most ancient in Jerusalem, was considered critical since no serious restoration and maintenance works have been undertaken for decades. The project aimed at solving structural problems and making the lower church accessible to the resident community and visitors. In 2011, after the removal of a modern floor, in-depths archaeological research was completed. In 2012 the overall programme for the structural consolidation and project proposals was prepared. However, the available funds were not sufficient to undertake a full restoration project and therefore the works were limited to key priorities. The World Heritage Centre conducted a mission to Jerusalem in November 2013 for the closure of the operational project on the Church of St. John the Baptist. The project has now been terminated and the remaining funds were returned to the donor in December 2014.

The third phase of the project for the establishment of the Centre for the Restoration of Manuscripts of the Haram al-Sharif, funded by Norway, started in September 2011 and is progressing well. Five additional staff members have been recruited and 10 training sessions on conservation and restoration techniques have been held so far, in addition to the field visits to restoration centres in Paris and Florence in 2013. The project also provided the Centre with conservation equipment and materials. UNESCO conducted two consultation missions in October 2014 and in February 2015 in order to review progress achieved and to plan future activities to be implemented in 2015.

The project "Safeguarding, Refurbishment and Revitalization of the Islamic Museum of the Haram al-Sharif and its Collection" started in 2008 with funding from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The premises of the Islamic Museum have been repaired and the necessary equipment has been purchased in order to help with the inventory process and the digitization of the collections. From 2011 to present, nine training sessions were held and permanent staff members have been trained in conservation and museum management, English language and computer programmes. In addition, a storage room was set up and the archives were digitized. The electronic and photographic inventory was completed. The museological phase started in September 2012, with the consultant team selected by UNESCO, and is finalizing the scientific concept and design planning of the museum, in consultation with the authorities. An audience development team produced a report on the expectations of the public. Selected artefacts were cleaned and conserved, in view of the production of a new permanent exhibition of the museum. Progress review as well as planning for future activities during 2015 was undertaken during the UNESCO consultation missions in October 2014 and in February 2015.

V. Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism

The "Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism", requested by the UNESCO Executive Board at its 176th session and by the World Heritage Committee at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007), has been applied to the Mughrabi Ascent since then. Consequently, nine reports were prepared by the World Heritage Centre and forwarded to the concerned parties and the members of the World Heritage Committee. At its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011), the World Heritage Committee decided to expand the mechanism to the entire Old City of Jerusalem and, thus, five reports were prepared respectively in December 2011, March 2012, February 2013, March 2014 as well as in April 2015 and transmitted to the members of the World Heritage Committee and the concerned parties.

VI. Reactive Monitoring mission

The World Heritage Committee requested at its 34th (Brasilia, 2010), 35th (UNESCO, 2011), 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012) sessions respectively, "a joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property as referred to in the *Operational Guidelines* to assess and advise on progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan and, in cooperation and consultation with the concerned parties, to identify appropriate operational and financial mechanisms and modalities to strengthen technical cooperation with all concerned parties in the framework of the

Action Plan". At the 191st session of the Executive Board, a consensus could finally be reached among the parties concerned for the mission to take place in May 2013, as acknowledged in Decision 191 EX/9.

The mission was scheduled to be carried out from 20 to 25 May 2013. However, no agreement could be reached between the concerned parties on the Terms of Reference of the mission.

At its 37th session, the World Heritage Committee deplored "the continued Israeli failure to cooperate and facilitate the implementation of the World Heritage Committee Decision **34 COM 7A.20**, which requests a joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls [...] and asks Israel to refrain from any new preconditions in order not to obstruct the implementation of the above mentioned agreement".

In April 2014, the Executive Board deplored the fact that the reactive monitoring mission to the site of the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls had not taken place. The decision 196 EX/ Decision 26 (Part I.C) also "urges Israel, the Occupying Power, to accept and facilitate the implementation of the mentioned Mission (...) in accordance with UNESCO decisions and in conformity with its obligations under the provisions of UNESCO Conventions for the Protection of Cultural Property and Cultural Heritage.". By 194 EX/Decision 5 (I, D) adopted by vote, the Executive Board also decided to implement paragraph 11 of Decision **34 COM 7A.20** adopted by the World Heritage Committee in Brasilia at its 34th session, amended as follows:

(a) Phase I: the dispatch, on an agreed date prior, at least 10 days, to the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee, of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls to assess, as a first phase, the 18 sites included in the Action Plan as pilot sites;

(b) Phase II: the dispatch, on an agreed date, of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls, to assess, as second phase, the major monumental complexes designated in the Action Plan (i.e. al-Haram ash-Sharif, the Citadel, the Western Wall, the Holy Sepulchre and the City Walls).

The Executive Board further requested that the report and recommendations of the mission be presented to the parties concerned before the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee. However, it has been brought to the attention of the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee (June 2014) that the reactive monitoring mission to the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls could not be undertaken before the 38th session of the World Heritage Committee. The same information has been brought to the attention of the 195th and 196th session of the Executive Board (October 2014 and April 2015). Both the World Heritage Committee and the Executive Board reiterated the request of the dispatch of the mission.

The Secretariat will be reporting on such a mission to the World Heritage Committee accordingly, either through an Addendum or orally, in case it would take place.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.27

The Draft Decision will be presented to the World Heritage Committee during the session.

28. Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine) (C 1433)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2012

Criteria (iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2012

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Degradation of the architectural complex of the Church of the Nativity;
- Development pressure;
- Tourism pressure.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Drafted; proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Corrective measures identified

Drafted; proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Drafted; proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1433/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1433/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 723,000 from Italy (Emergency Action Plan 1997-1998; Conservation and Management Plan 2006-2010).

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Degradation of the architectural complex of the Church of the Nativity
- Development pressure
- Tourism pressure

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1433/>

Current conservation issues

On 25 February 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report; which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents> The State Party also submitted in November 2014 progress reports on the restoration of the Church of the Nativity.

- The first phase of the restoration of the Church of the Nativity started in September 2013. As additional funds were acquired, further phases of work on the Narthex and its Eastern Wooden Door, and on murals, plasterwork and external facades were added. The whole project is now due for completion in December 2016. Repairs to the roof trusses and cover boards have been completed and the roof lead replaced. "Ancient" wooden timbers from Italy were used to replace defective roof structures. Details are provided on investigative surveys that have been undertaken including dendrochronology and radio-carbon dating of the roof timbers.
- A Conservation Plan was included as an Annex. This includes a list of relevant charters, general conservation principles, and preliminary steps, such as characterisation, structural analysis, and

documents to be produced. This is a generic conservation approach rather than a Conservation Plan that is specific to the Church of the Nativity.

- A Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in danger (DSOCR) and corrective measures are submitted, in agreement with the State Party, for approval by the World Heritage Committee.
- Guidelines for a Management Plan have been agreed. A Management Unit was put in place in December 2014; its first task is to complete the Management Plan.
- In order to control development within the buffer zone, Regulatory Bylaws for the Historic Centre in Bethlehem and for Traditional Buildings were adopted in September 2014. A Manual for the Rehabilitation of the Historic Town is also under preparation. Further Regulatory Bylaws will be produced on a 70-metre belt beyond the buffer zone to ensure visual corridors in the wider setting of the property.
- A Marketing Management Plan is being planned for the Pilgrimage Route. Work is also underway to prevent traffic along the pilgrimage route and to restore its façades and paving.
- A tunnel under Manger Square is being considered in order to provide an alternative route for vehicles that cross the square. Once conceptual designs have been drawn up, these and impact assessments will be submitted for review. Currently there is no funding for this project.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Considerable progress has been made with the roof restoration and this is now substantially complete.

Although a Conservation Plan document has been submitted, this is more of a generic conservation approach rather than a document that justifies specific interventions within the restoration work of the Church of the Nativity. It is now too late for such a document to be produced, as the main decisions on the restoration have been made and the work undertaken. It remains unclear how the very detailed surveys and analysis that were undertaken were used as a basis for deciding on specific interventions. Although extensive surveys of the roof timbers have produced evidence for structures dating back to the 14th century, it is not clear from the documents provided which of these have been retained or repaired, nor where “ancient” timbers imported from Italy were inserted. Given the extreme significance of the Church of the Nativity, and the particular importance of its roof, a more detailed level of specification should have been provided, based on a summary and review of existing knowledge, in order that there was a clear rationale and documentation for how each of the trusses and purlins were conserved. Such an approach would have provided an understanding of the precise dating of each timber and of the overall authenticity of the roof. It is suggested that a record now needs to be provided retrospectively.

Therefore, it should be noted that, if an extension of the project to encompass further work on murals, facades and the Narthex is envisaged, it should be preceded by the preparation of a comprehensive conservation plan, on the basis of due analysis and studies, which is submitted for review.

A DSOCR and corrective measures have been agreed between the State Party and the Advisory Bodies, and it is suggested that these should be recommended for approval. The danger to the property was not defined in the Committee decision at the time of inscription or in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) agreed by the Committee in 2012, and thus has to be inferred from the Nomination dossier and the ICOMOS evaluation. It is suggested that the danger should be considered to be the lack of repair and conservation of the roof structure of the Church of the Nativity and the consequent threat to the roof timbers, roof covering, and the interior wall surfaces from water ingress.

The new Regulatory Byelaws for the Historic Centre of Bethlehem and those proposed for the wider setting are to be welcomed, as is the aim to reduce traffic from the Pilgrimage Route. Proposal for a possible tunnel under Manger Square is preoccupying and does need to be submitted for review at the earliest possible conceptual level.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.28

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.5**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Notes that considerable progress has been made with the conservation of the roof of the Church of the Nativity;
4. Also notes with concern that no specific conservation strategy was set out to justify precise intervention on the roof timbers, based on analysis and review of all the evidence gathered from surveys and research, before work was undertaken, as envisaged in the corrective measures;
5. Requests the State Party to prepare, retrospectively, documentation on each of the roof timbers, that shows the recent interventions in relation to evidence of age and materials, in order to understand the authenticity of what is now in place, and the chronology of the roof elements;
6. Also requests the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory bodies, a comprehensive conservation plan for the murals, the facades and the Narthex should any works be foreseen thereon ;
7. Adopts the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and corrective measures, as follow:
 - a) Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger:

Completed conservation and repair of the roof structure of the Church of the Holy Nativity
 - b) Corrective measures:
 - (i) Complete a full investigative survey of the historic timbers and lead work of the roof, identifying the age and historical significance of the various component parts.
 - (ii) Develop a Conservation Plan that synthesis the conclusions of the detailed investigative survey into a clear statement of the significances of the various elements of the roof within a comprehensive conservation philosophy for the roof restoration project.
 - (iii) Prepare a detailed project specification for the roof repairs that allow a full understanding of which elements of the roof will be maintained, which repaired and which replaced.
 - (iv) Undertake the roof repair project, including stabilising the vaults of the Narthex, and document its interventions.
 - c) Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures:

[to be submitted]
8. Calls upon the international community to support the State Party in the implementation in the above-mentioned corrective measures;

9. *Urges* the State Party to continue pursuing the implementation of the corrective measures and to submit a timetable for their full implementation by **1 February 2016** for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
10. *Welcomes* the introduction of Regulatory Bylaws for the Historic Centre of Bethlehem and their proposed development for the wider setting;
11. *Further notes* the aim to free the Pilgrimage Route from traffic through diversions, car parks and possibly a tunnel under Manger Square, and *also urges* the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, concept proposals of the tunnel at the earliest opportunity, and before plans are finalised or approved;
12. *Also requests* the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
13. ***Decides* to retain the Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

29. Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) (C 1492)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2014

Criteria (iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2014

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Potential construction of a separation fence (wall)
- Abandonment of terraces and afforestation
- Impact of socio-cultural and geo-political transformations

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Drafted, proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Corrective measures identified

Drafted, proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Threats identified at the time of inscription in 2014:

- Potential construction of a separation fence (wall)
- Abandonment of terraces and afforestation
- Impact of socio-cultural and geo-political transformations

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/>

Current conservation issues

On 25 February 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1492/documents>. This responded to the request of the World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription, as follows:

- *Construction of fence (wall)*: In January 2015, the Israeli High Court of Justice agreed to freeze the construction of the “Wall”, although the Israeli Government reserved the right to build the Wall in the future. This judgement followed the Israeli Government’s decision not to reauthorize the 2006 plan for a three-kilometre stretch of the “Wall”, as the plan was considered “not a high security priority”.
- *Socio-cultural and geo-political changes and abandonment of terraces and afforestation*: Geopolitical changes are reported to be accelerating the processes of abandonment of agricultural practices and seriously affecting the socio-cultural structures. Both of these factors are having an increasingly disruptive effect on the integrity of the property. Further “illegal” construction of settlements on surrounding hills are negatively impacting on the setting of the property and also having an adverse impact on ecological systems.
- *Management and Conservation*: The stakeholders are committed to developing a Management and Conservation Plan for the safeguarding and sustainable use of the property. A Master Plan for the village is also being planned. Various projects to restore irrigation channels, springs and stone walls are being undertaken.
- A draft Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) was submitted with the State Party report. A timeframe for its implementation was later agreed with the State Party.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The decision by the Israeli High Court not to build the “Wall” is to be welcomed, as removing a major threat to the property. It is noted that this decision has not necessarily finally closed the issue but any new proposals would need to re-start the processes of consultation and approval within the Israeli administration.

As noted by the State Party, changes that have the potential to undermine the traditional social and cultural processes are accelerating and continuing to impact adversely on the functionality and integrity of the cultural landscape.

The reversal of these negative changes will only be achieved through sustained interventions at a local level, through an active management plan, and with the full engagement of local communities, and local and national authorities. The development of a Management and Conservation Plan and a strong management system is urgently needed as is adequate protection. The Plan needs to set out specific projects to deliver the necessary corrective measures.

It is recommended that the Committee adopt the DSOCR, developed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in agreement with the State Party, as proposed in the draft Decision below.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.29

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 8B.4**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Welcomes the judgment of the Israeli High Court not to build the “Wall”, and notes that any new proposals for a wall or fence would need to re-start the processes of consultation and approval within the Israeli administration;
4. Notes with concern that the decline in traditional social and cultural processes is accelerating, bringing further negative impacts on the functionality and integrity of the landscape;
5. Takes note of the commitment to develop a Management Conservation Plan and urges the State Party to progress this as soon as possible;
6. Adopts the following Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR):
 - Dismissal of plans to build a “Wall” along the property, or within its setting,
 - Adequate conservation in place of the agricultural terraces and their associated components, including watchtowers and drystone walls throughout the property,
 - Adequate restoration in place of the irrigation system and the development of an adequate sewage system to protect water quality in the property,
 - Protection in place for the property and its buffer zone,
 - Management plan and monitoring systems adopted and sustainable management system in place;
7. Also adopts the following corrective measures and timeframe for their implementation by the State Party:
 - a) Corrective measures:
 - (i) Agreement to dismiss plans to build a “Wall” along the property, or within its setting,
 - (ii) Implementation of projects to retrieve an appropriate state of conservation of the agricultural terraces and their components, including the watchtowers and drystone walls throughout the property,
 - (iii) Implementation of a project to restore traditional irrigation systems,
 - (iv) Implementation of a project to put in place adequate sewage system to protect water quality in the property,
 - (v) Preparation, approval and implementation of a Conservation, and a Management Plan for the property,
 - (vi) Development and implementation of an active system of management that involves local communities and stakeholders,
 - (vii) Preparation of a set of indicators for monitoring the property and implementation of a monitoring system,
 - (viii) Development of protection for the property and its buffer zone,

b) *Timeframe for implementation of the corrective measures:*
[to be submitted]

8. *Also urges the State Party to implement the corrective measures and to submit a timetable for their full implementation to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
9. *Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
10. *Decides to retain Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.*

ASIA AND PACIFIC

38. Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam (Afghanistan) (C 211 rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2002

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2002-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Lack of legal protection;
- Lack of an effective monuments protection agency;
- Lack of adequate protection and conservation personnel;
- Lack of a comprehensive management plan.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/211/documents>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/211/documents>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/211/documents>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/211/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1995-2015)

Total amount approved: USD 190,950

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/211/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 844,901 (2003-2012) from the Italian Funds-in-Trust; USD 124,300 (2003-2012) from the Swiss Funds-in-Trust.

Previous monitoring missions

Several annual UNESCO expert missions took place between 2002 and 2006 in order to implement the operational projects for the property. After a period of three years of inactivity from 2007 to 2009, due to the security situation, UNESCO dispatched a mission in cooperation with an Afghan local NGO in 2010 to resume the on-site operations.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Political instability
- Inclination of the Minaret
- Lack of management plan;
- Illicit excavations and looting

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/211/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 April 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/211/documents>. Apart from the repair work of the gabion and the mission

undertaken to the property in October 2014, the submitted document details a series of the activities to be carried out rather than activities that have been carried out, as follows:

- *Conservation and management:* A mission was undertaken by a group of Afghan experts and international professionals in October 2014 in order to assess the condition of the Minaret and measure its inclination. An inclination of 28mm at 54 m relative height between 2006 and 2014 was observed through the topographical measurement. However, whether this inclination between 2006 and 2014 is caused by the 2007 flood and is stopped by now, or is an on-going process, cannot be confirmed by the mission. In light of this, it has become the top priority to install a high precision monitoring system as soon as possible. In November 2014, the State Party submitted an emergency assistance request "Preparatory work for the conservation plan for the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam" (USD 73,750). The project aims to ensure the long-term stability and conservation of the property, and the government will undertake activities to mitigate the existing threats. The request was approved in March 2015.
- *River Defense Protection:* As reported in 2014, the temporary gabion, constructed on the bank of the Jam river with the financial aid from the US military funding, was removed in September 2014. The Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC), in co-operation with the UNESCO Office in Kabul, constructed a strong retaining wall constructed on the bank of the Jam river in October 2014. At the same time, flood breakers in several points of the Jam Rud river have been implemented to reduce the power of the floods. The report says that the retaining walls on the Hari Rud river are still in good condition. The report recognizes further hydrogeologic research, as requested by the International Assistance under emergency category 2014.

Furthermore, the MoIC, in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior, has deployed a team of police officers for the security of the site, in particular to address looting and illicit traffic. The report also underlines the need to construct a foot bridge over the Hari Rud river to enable year-round access for inhabitants of nearby villages and for future conservation works, as well as a repair and rehabilitation of the guest house built by UNESCO in 2003.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's efforts in the implementation of corrective measures, in particular for site security, as well as for the protection of the property against floods and river erosion, are recognized.

In relation to the need of accurate mapping of the archaeological traces and built heritage, as well as of the definition of appropriate boundary and buffer zones for the property, the attention of the Afghan experts should be drawn to the detailed topography produced in 2012 within the 'UNESCO/Italy Funds in Trust for Jam and Herat' project. The detailed topography, not only took into account the surrounding archaeological remains, but also provided detailed boundary of the property and buffer zones. The completion of the topographic and archaeological survey of Jam is an essential step to properly plan for, and implement, an effective conservation strategy for the property. This strategy should include the important ancient settlement, the precise extent and remains of which have yet to be defined. However, it is regrettable that the State Party has not adopted this detailed topography for Jam yet, and not submitted a minor boundary modification proposal to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS.

Furthermore, the formulation of a long-term conservation policy and action plan should be undertaken by using a multidisciplinary approach to address all the relevant issues in a holistic way. It is recommended that a multidisciplinary team of international experts such as hydrological engineers and architects, as well as archaeologists, assist the government of Afghanistan in these efforts. In this respect, the approved emergency assistance request (USD 73,750) under the World Heritage Fund can provide a good basis to form a multidisciplinary team of international experts that can carry out preparatory work to establish a long-term strategy to ensure the stability of the property.

Upon establishing a long-term conservation policy, the government of Afghanistan shall be able to propose a revised time frame for implementing the corrective measures identified by the World Heritage Committee at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007), so as to achieve the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.38

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM7A.14**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Reiterates its request to the State Party to adopt the detailed topographic map of the property produced in 2012, and to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, a proposal for the minor boundary modification, in accordance to paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by ICOMOS;
4. Encourages the implementation of the emergency assistance project for the property, which will allow the State Party to conduct a full survey and assessment of the Minaret, as well as its archaeological remains, on the basis of which a long-term strategy can be established;
5. Calls upon the international community to continue its technical and financial support, in co-operation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in the implementation of corrective measures and in the implementation of the long term conservation strategy, to be established upon the implementation of the International Assistance Request;
6. Requests the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to revise the timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures upon development of the conservation strategy and action plan, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2016**;
7. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;
8. **Decides to retain the Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam (Afghanistan) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

39. Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley (Afghanistan) (C 208 rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2003

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2003–present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Site security not ensured;
- Long-term stability of the Giant Buddha niches not ensured;
- State of conservation of archaeological remains and mural paintings not adequate;

- Management Plan and Cultural Master Plan (the protective zoning plan) not adopted and implemented.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1287>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1287>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Initial timeframe adopted now requires review

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2002-2002)

Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/208/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 6,345,807 (2003-2014) from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust; USD 159,000 (2011-2012) from the Swiss Funds-in-Trust; USD 900,000 (2013) from the Italian Funds-in-Trust; USD 5,435,284 (2013-2016) from the Korean Funds-in-Trust.

Previous monitoring missions

No Reactive Monitoring mission has been carried out; November 2010: World Heritage Centre/ICCROM Advisory mission; April 2011: UNESCO Kabul/ICOMOS Advisory mission; UNESCO expert missions in the context of the implementation of specific projects.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Risk of imminent collapse of the Giant Buddha niches
- Irreversible deterioration of the mural paintings
- Looting, illicit traffic and illegal excavations of cultural heritage assets
- Continued use of certain heritage areas for military posts
- Anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordinances (i.e. munitions) (issue resolved)
- Development pressure

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/208/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 April 2015, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/2008/documents>. However, it should be noted that this report is identical to the one submitted in 2014. Therefore, the current document is prepared on the basis of the annual report on the Japan Funds-in-Trust Safeguarding of the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan valleys (Phase IV) submitted to the Government of Japan.

In 2014, only the ICOMOS Germany team undertook field activities for the conservation work within the above project, as follows:

- Conservation of two lapidaries within the Eastern Buddha niche with more durable materials, including partial repairs of the surrounding wall;
- Conservation of fragments in front of the Western Buddha niche, with proper storage and documentation;
- Establishment of partial scaffolding for the Western Buddha niche, based on a feasibility study, for the protection for experts and workers from falling rocks, although incomplete;
- Consolidation of the rear wall and stabilization of the upper corridor access to the Western Buddha niche.

On the other hand, the discussion on the appropriateness of extensive conservation work, carried out on Eastern Buddha feet by the German ICOMOS team, continued between the donor and UNESCO. The ICOMOS technical Advisory mission took place from 26 May to 2 June 2014 and formulated a set

of recommendations that have been submitted to the Government of Afghanistan for their follow-up action.

The mission recommended that, since neither a decision nor a feasibility study regarding the partial reconstruction of the Eastern Buddha existed, the two pillars ought to be carefully removed. The mission also recommended that a study and/or debate, involving all local, national and international stakeholders, be commissioned on the feasibility and options for the reconstruction of the Eastern Buddha. Up to date, no comment had been made by the State Party. The Ministry of Information and Culture was expected to start implementing the recommendations made by the ICOMOS technical Advisory mission, upon consultation to be undertaken with UNESCO as well as other stakeholders.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

It is regrettable that no updated state of conservation report has been submitted. While the current report has been prepared on the basis of the annual report on the Japan Funds-in-Trust, it should be acknowledged that its scope does not cover all the range of conservations issues in compliance with the requests made by the World Heritage Committee. For example, there has been no updated information regarding the development pressure within the property and its setting that has been quite strong over the past years. Given some recent large scale developments such as a hotel, there is a great need to enforce building codes and regulations on development in the buffer zones of the property and its setting and to finalize the Management Plan.

More support and capacity building for local communities and Afghan experts to mitigate development pressure is needed, as well as the incorporation of the Management Plan into the Ministry of Urban Development's Urban Development Master Plan.

It is recommended that the Committee underline the urgent need for the State Party to finalize and adopt the comprehensive Management Plan, as the key condition toward efficient implementation of the corrective measures adopted by the Committee in Decision **31 COM 7A.21** (Christchurch, 2007). It is also suggested that the State Party consider making any decision on proposed development projects, including the proposed museum and visitor facilities, based on a Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), in line with the ICOMOS Guidelines on HIAs for World Heritage Cultural properties. Proposals for large-scale projects need to be subjected to HIAs and submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies.

It is noted that there has been some progress in the conservation efforts at the Buddha niches, in particular, progress towards the establishment of scaffolding in the Western Buddha niche, whose consolidation remains urgent. It is also noted that the site security has been entirely relying on the international funds such as the Funds-in-Trust established by Japan and Italy. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to commit cost for site guard(s) in the government's annual budget. Restoring site security is the precondition for fully implementing the corrective measures and maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to work with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to review the timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures.

The recommendations made by the 2014 ICOMOS technical Advisory mission are particularly welcomed, and it is therefore recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to implement them. Long-term treatment of the Buddha niches should take into account an overall agreed approach to the conservation and presentation of the property, an appropriate conservation philosophy based on the OUV of the property, as well as on the technical and financial feasibilities as requested by the Committee in its previous decisions.

The continued commitment of UNESCO and the international community to the safeguarding and conservation of the property, through financial and expertise assistance, is appreciated and the international community should continue these efforts, not only for the Buddha niches, but for all component parts of the property.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7A.39

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7A.Add,*

2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7A.15**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Regrets that no updated state of conservation report has been submitted by the State Party, in particular regarding recent large scale of development projects;
4. Reiterates that the World Heritage Committee shall be notified prior to any major restoration and or new construction which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse in accordance to Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines and requests the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre, as a matter of urgency and prior to undertaking the work, detailed information, including a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), on the proposed Bamiyan Culture Centre and Museum, as well as proposed visitors facilities, for review by the Advisory Bodies;
5. Urges the State Party to incorporate the Cultural Master Plan into the Urban Development Master Plan for the Bamiyan Valley to mitigate development pressure, and to enforce building codes and regulations on development in the buffer zones of the property and other areas protected under the 2004 Afghan Law on the Protection of Historical and Cultural Properties;
6. Also urges the State Party to finalize and adopt the comprehensive Management Plan within an overall strategy of managing the property as a cultural landscape;
7. Requests the State Party to take all necessary measures to restore site security and commit cost for site guard(s) in the government's annual budget so as to fully implement the corrective measures and maintain the OUV of the property and further urges the State Party to review, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, the timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures and submit this to the World Heritage Centre for consideration by the Committee;
8. Also requests the State Party to elaborate and implement, with the support of international donors, a capacity building programme to strengthen local and national capacity in heritage conservation and management, including developing the capacity of local communities to contribute to safeguarding the property;
9. Welcomes the recommendations of the ICOMOS technical Advisory mission to the property undertaken in 2014, and encourages the State Party to implement them to mitigate the extensive intervention work carried out on the foot of the Eastern Buddha of the property so as to ensure its future protection;
10. Takes note of the need to consider future reconstruction policies for the Buddha niches, and reiterates its request to the State Party, when considering options for the treatment of the Buddha niches, to ensure that proposals are based on feasibility studies which include:
 - a) an agreed overall approach to conservation and presentation of the property,
 - b) an appropriate conservation philosophy based on the OUV of the property,
 - c) technical and financial feasibilities for the implementation of the project proposals;
11. Calls upon the international community to continue providing technical and financial support for the protection and management of the entire property, in order to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);

12. *Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2016**, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016;*
13. ***Decides to retain the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley (Afghanistan) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***