



Ministerio de Turismo
Administración de Parques Nacionales
Ley N° 22.351

Report

Iguazú National Park (Argentina) (N 303)

Indicative Format

1. Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee’s Decision, paragraph by paragraph.
 2. Other current conservation issues identified by the State (s) Party(ies).
 3. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, please describe any major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) envisaged within the protected area and its buffer zone and/or corridors.
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1.

Response from the State Party to the World Heritage Committee’s Decision, paragraph by paragraph.

We transcribe the decision and we refer paragraph by paragraph.

Decision: 38 COM 7B.81

The World Heritage Committee

1. Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision 36 COM 7B.28, adopted at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012),
3. Regrets that the brief joint State Party report only commented on transboundary cooperation and did not address important conservation issues, including issues of transboundary significance, such as water flows and alien invasive species (AIS);
4. Also regrets the lack of tangible progress in formalizing and operationalizing transboundary cooperation with the neighbouring property of Iguazu National Park in Brazil, and reiterates its request to the States Parties of Argentina and Brazil to formalize



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transboundary cooperation between the two contiguous World Heritage properties to politically confirm and technically guide cooperation and coordination;

- 5. Requests the State Party to ensure full coordination with the State Party of Brazil in updating both management plans, addressing in particular law enforcement, AIS, public use communication, education and awareness;*
- 6. Also requests the State Party, in consultation with the State Party of Brazil, to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2015**, 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.*

Response

- 1. Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B,
Formal aspect.*
- 2. Recalling Decision **36 COM 7B.28**, adopted at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012),
Formal aspect.*
- 3. Regrets that the brief joint State Party report only commented on transboundary cooperation and did not address important conservation issues, including issues of transboundary significance, such as water flows and alien invasive species (AIS);*

We assume that with the report included in comment 6 we fulfil the previous lack of information pointed by the Committee. The report includes topics related to Planning; Control and patrols; Public Use; Cooperative work with the environment; Research and Biodiversity Monitoring.



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4. Also regrets the lack of tangible progress in formalizing and operationalizing transboundary cooperation with the neighbouring property of Iguazu National Park in Brazil, and reiterates its request to the States Parties of Argentina and Brazil to formalize transboundary cooperation between the two contiguous World Heritage properties to politically confirm and technically guide cooperation and coordination;

We agree with this but we consider that from Argentina Republic we started the process sending to Brazil our proposal of signing an agreement, including a text of a potential document to be signed. Nevertheless, in the comment to 6 we include our joint efforts in terms of sharing information and advances related to different aspects of our work, despite not having a formal agreement. From our side, and considering an imminent renew of authorities at the highest level of the Administration, we will insist with the importance of this agreement.

5. Requests the State Party to ensure full coordination with the State Party of Brazil in updating both management plans, addressing in particular law enforcement, AIS, public use communication, education and awareness;

The point is included in the comment to .6. For this point we can say that in terms of a general frame of the point requested, the Iguazu National Park invited the brazilian counterpart to attend in meetings and workshops being conducted in the process of management plan. Also the Major and the Head of the Department of Conservation and Environmental Education of Iguazu National Park, have been appointed as counselors of the Advisory Board of Iguazu National Park (COMPARNI). We have to improve on this.



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6. Also requests the State Party, in consultation with the State Party of Brazil, to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2015**, 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.

Here we include the Updated Report required.

UPDATED REPORT ABOUT THE STATUS OF CONSERVATION OF THE SITE

Executive Summary

According to the commitment of the National Parks Administration, we produce this report that includes some of the main milestones related to the state of conservation of the Iguazu National Park (Argentina). The information is presented addressing the following points:

- Planning
- Control and Surveillance
- Public Use
- Cooperative work with the environment
- Biodiversity Monitoring and Research

After 24 years, the Iguazú National Park began updating its management plan hiring a consultant specialized in environmental issues to lead the workshops and edit the document. The plan will be presented in June 2016.

In terms of control and surveillance patrols we remained organizing patrols every week, covering a significant area of the park. Anyway, it is necessary to expand the number of rangers to increase the frequency.

In the last years we did significant advances in the field works related to public use. In 2013 it was inaugurated the The Old Cataratas Hotel and in 2015 it becomes to work as an alternative visitor center and also allow us to move part of our team to the National Park. Moreover we inaugurated 600 m of new walkways, contributing with the better flow of the visitors.

In terms of cooperative work with the environment, despite we have no formal agreement with Brazil in terms of conservation, we start working together in planning,



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joint patrols and conflict animals. Moreover we strengthen our links with the Argentina Army and Arauco Argentina SA, both owners of nature reserves in our boundaries.

National Park Administration continues supporting research, through extending permits every year and supporting key projects. In 2015 we mainly supported a fish inventory and the research on jaguar, a threatened species that is recovering in the Green Corridor and in the Iguazu National Park too. Moreover we are updating the Vertebrate Species of Special Value (EVVE) of Iguazú National Park to identify species of conservation importance, directing efforts for their protection, monitoring and research and intensify the sanctions of infringements on these species.

Other actions related to management are some alien species control activities, the campaign “Animal, watch out” and the detailed environmental impact analysis conducted by the Administration in order to guarantee the conservation status of our park.

Planning

Management Plan. After 24 years, the Iguazú National Park began updating its management plan hiring a consultant specialized in environmental issues to lead the workshops and edit the document. At the moment, there is an advanced document that includes characterization, diagnosis, zoning and buffer zone. At this time the planning team is setting the programmatic information. The plan will be presented in June 2016.

Annual plans. The annual work plans of the area and Measurements of Management Effectiveness, which are the main administrative management tools, are being developed on time.

Control Services. The Iguazú National Park reorganized the supervision of the Joint Venture Iguazu Argentina removing the Committee of Control and assigning its duties to a Supervisory Unit integrated by the PN Iguazú, the Argentine Northeast Regional Delegation and professionals supervised by the General Administrative Direction. This mechanism helped to reduce unnecessary costs and made more practical the daily control of the services.

Control and Surveillance

In terms of control and surveillance patrols we remained organizing patrols every week, covering a significant area of the park. Anyway, it is necessary to expand the number of agents to increase the frequency.



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Public Use

In this period we did significant advances in the field works related to public use.

The Old Hotel. In 2013 it was inaugurated The Old Cataratas Hotel which becomes an alternative visitor center and also allow us to reorganize the functionality of the team, moving offices Public Use and Chief Ranger, from the city of Puerto Iguazu to the National Park. This hotel is a precious heritage of the protected area.

Walkways. In July 2015 new walkways, called Return of the Superior Iguazú, comprising about 600 m that facilitates the enjoyment and comfort, improving the flow of visitors and allows a different approach to other views and emotions of the Falls Area.

Cooperative work with the environment

Agreement with PN do Iguazu. The National Parks Administration exchanged with the Brazilian counterparts a memorandum of understanding as a frame of joint actions. The Brazilian authorities sent this document to Brasilia but we don't have a formal response. Moreover, the managers of both National Parks changed and this involved new inductions for them to motorize the cooperative work as part of its institutional agenda. Nevertheless, despite not having a formal instruments, we comment several actions that reflect the spirit of the cooperative work between the two World Heritage Sites.

Management Plans. The Iguazu National Park invited to attend the Brazilian counterpart in meetings and workshops in the process of management plan. Also the Major Ranger and the Head of the Department of Conservation and Environmental Education of Iguazu National Park, have been appointed as counselors of the Advisory Board of Iguazu National Park (COMPARNI). At the moment the neighbor park is starting the process to evaluate and update the management plan, that will start next year. In this context of exchange, we actively participate in the meetings of the COMPARNI and in workshops that Iguazu National Park is organizing to discuss its planning process.

Joint patrols. Both National Parks have conducted one joint patrol by land and water, integrating teams in safeguarding the common heritage. The number of patrols should be increased year by year.

Conflict with animals. Coatimundi. The problem of feeding the wildlife is a matter of high priority. The Iguazu National Park, which receives more than 1.300.000 visitors a year, is leading the campaign "Your food is killing me" which aims to reduce the interactions



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generated between visitors and wildlife due to the human food. This problem is originated in part by the large amount of waste generated by restaurants and visitors. The animal species most involved are the monkeys and coatimundi that approach people without any suspicion and steal food. This unnatural behavior of wildlife generated a significant change in the behavior of animals. They stopped looking for their food in the jungle and surprise visitors attacking handbags and backpacks and fight among themselves generating serious injuries and sometimes hurting visitors in their search for food (bites and scratches).

For this, the National Park is relaunching its campaign of communication not only within the protected area but also in the city of Puerto Iguazú, spreading our message through a variety of promotional material (posters, flyers, banners, audiovisual, radio and other audio) for knowledge and awareness.

Iguaçu National Park shares the same problem. For this reason we organized a specific meeting where we exchanged communication material and scientific information in order to find right solutions.

Travel for capacity building

From October 24 to November 6 2015 two people from each park, do Iguaçu and Iguazu, in the framework of the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services in the Binational Corridor Iguaçu National Park participated in a trip aimed to share learning between managers of the parks located in areas of international borders to improve the processes of cooperation for conservation and management institutions.

Organized by the World Wildlife Fund, the committee was formed by the Atlantic Forest Program Coordinator of WWF Brazil Anna Carolina Lobo; Coordinator Program Paranaense Rainforest Argentina Wildlife Foundation Argentina Manuel Jaramillo, the WWF Conservation Analyst Brazil Fabricio S. Matheus; Consultant Company Tamoios Fernando de Sousa; Mayor Ranger Iguazu National Park (Argentina) Sergio Arias Valdecantos; Chief Ranger Sandra Muñoz Iguazu National Park (Argentina); Manager Iguaçu National Park (Brazil) - Ivan Bapstiton and Analyst do Iguaçu National Park Luiz Felipe Pimenta de Moraes (Brazil). The above people participated in the Europarc Conference and also visited transfrontier parks in Portugal - Spain and Italy - Slovenia.

Natural Reserve of Defense. Restoration experience. The Argentine Army is a neighbor of the Iguazú National Park. Several years ago we started working on a restoration program that involves replacing monocultures (*Pinus*) by native plants. With funding from the so-called Law of Forests under the Land Management of the Province of Misiones, the National Parks Administration has initiated a second period of work and, in addition to



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monitoring the previous work, we are involved in the design and construction of a native plants nursery tree focused on research.

Arauco Argentina (formerly Alto Parana SA). Dialogue between institutions. During 2014 - 2015 at the behest of private forest company, that also owns about 16,000 hectares of native forest next to the southern boundary of Iguazú National Park, called San Jorge Reserve, National Park Administration's agents actively participated in interdisciplinary meetings on conservation and development that included key topics for the protected area, such as pine and eucalyptus crop land in the National Park boundaries close to shared streams that start in the private property and then run through the National Park. Moreover, we began sharing ideas about consolidating the protection of San Jorge Nature Reserve over the time, which would expand the protected area in the north of Misiones, key in the Green Corridor.



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Biodiversity Monitoring and Research

Projects in general. During 2015 the Northeast Regional Delegation extended authorizations to 26 research studies, some of them are renovations and others are for new projects.

Fish Inventory. Coordinated by Dr. Jorge Casciotta and Dr. Adriana Almiron, from the University of La Plata, with the key and active participation of Liliana Cioteck and Paul Giorgis, from Otamendi Nature Reserve and the enthusiastic collaboration of Yasmín Croci, Ariel Bridges and Martin Montes, we started a fish survey for the protected area. During the first field trip, supported by the Regional Delegation NEA and the Iguazú National Park 16 locations corresponding to the Iguazu River basin above the falls and 5 locations in the area below them were surveyed. For each locality GPS points, pictures of the sites and plankton samples were taken. At each site they placed fishing tools according to the environment. Each species obtained was photographed in high quality in order to be used in a final product as a poster or guide.

This is the first trip with the goal of completing a baseline of fishes in the National Park. The number of species recorded for the area is around 85. In the recent trip, 14 species are new in the park. Of these, 6 are new records for Argentina and two of them are also new species for science. The total work is planned for the next three years with at least three surveys by season, to prospect both Iguazu River and its tributaries. These results again highlight the remarkable diversity of fish in the Iguazu River basin with its numerous endemic species and the importance of having a protected area to ensure its conservation.

Apepú Station. Since 2012 DRNEA drives survey campaigns in an intangible place called Apepú Headquarter, located about 40 km from the Falls Area. Thus, we updated baseline information on wildlife. Two campaigns (winter and summer) in which external researchers are invited and supported by the Administration and the rest of the divisions of the National Park are involved with the work schedule.



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Jaguar Natural Monument. The Iguazú National Park and the Northeast Regional Delegation are directly involved in the management of this species. Records with camera traps, satellite tracking and traces as footprints and feces and sightings of rangers, technicians and visitors in the region indicate that the Iguazu National Park is an important site for the species. The latest reports of the researchers that lead the Jaguar Project (*Proyecto Yaguareté*) from CONICET-IBS, who work since more than 10 years in area and have the support of the National Parks Administration, confirm that in the limits of the Iguazu National Park Argentina, individuals are increasing, from 7 in 2006, 7 in 2008, 9 in 2010 to 13 in 2014. According to these and other research, new estimation of the population of jaguars for the Green Corridor of Argentina and Brazil that comprises 320,000 hectares, would be of 71 adult individuals. Until 2008, researchers estimated that the population was between 33 and 54 individuals.

Alien species

In recent years the Iguazú National Park rangers made an important effort in several zones of the park invaded by exotic species, mainly plants, and put in practice eradication techniques. The work, embodied in technical reports, focused on the Falls Area, and included both the ringed and removal of trees, mostly Guayabos and Uvenias and the coverage of grasses especially on riparian sites. In the last year, another exotic species was discovered: the Jumping Snail (*Ovachlamys fulgens*).

Run over wildlife



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The Iguazu National Park is developing concrete actions to attack this emerging conservation threaten. We launch “Animal, watch out” campaign, in conjunction with the National Highway Direction, Wildlife Argentina Foundation, Guirá Oga Recovery Centre, Ministry of Ecology and Renewable Natural Resources, CeIBA Foundation, Conservation Argentina Foundation and Red Yaguareté. Recently new signals at key sites were installed, reduction of speed in some sections of National Route 12, National Route 101 and access to Iguazú Airport and moreover the National Parks Administration established Speed Reduction Stations (ERVES) that have materialized in a number of effective interventions at key sites for wildlife crossing. Thus, both horizontal and vertical signs were installed in sections previously identified. At the same time, the Iguazú National Park hosted the Road Infrastructure and Biodiversity Workshop, organized by the Ministry of Federal Planning, Public Investment and Services and supported by the World Bank, with the participation of engineers and technicians of Provincial Highways Directions of 9 provinces supported by Norte Grande Vial. Thus the National Park and the province of Misiones could share the advances developed in the subject.

Environmental Impact Assessments

In the context of our particular regulations, during this period, the National Park Administration carried out three major technical assessments of infrastructure projects and services within the protected area. They are related to energy power; underground laying of optical fiber and navigations of the Iguazu River and related activities. This last work, specially focused on the Falls Area, merited the highest category of the Rules of the National Parks Administration, an Environmental Impact Study including the appointment of an Evaluation Committee and approval by Resolution of the Honorable Board of the National Park Administration. The work done, allowed the new competitive call for offers.

Vertebrate Species of Special Value (EVVE) of Iguazú National Park. Update.

The objective of these lists is to identify species of conservation importance, directing efforts for their protection, monitoring and research and intensify the sanctions of infringements on these species. Iguazú National Park list currently has 143 species; however, the Honorable Board Resolution No. 291/2013 established new criteria which led to the updating of the lists for each protected area in light of new records, progress in research and new observers of wildlife that work in the areas. From the new knowledge generated and increased threats to the conservation of the species, we estimate that the list will probably add over 100 species in addition to those already listed. The new classification criteria selected by the EVVE are: their degree of threat, endemism, little presence in protected areas of the national system, to be an ecologically keystone species, their cultural value and / or taxonomic uniqueness.



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2. Other current conservation issues identified by the State (s) Party(ies).

Most of them are Included in our point 1.6.

We raise our concern in relation to the Baixo Iguazu Dam Project that is being built next to do Iguacu National Park (Brasil) with the potential impacts to the environment, the Iguazú Basin and other effects to water level on Iguazú Falls.

3. In conformity with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, please describe any major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) envisaged within the protected area and its buffer zone and/or corridors.

The work done on these subjects is included in our point 1.6.

One of our main concern is the extension of the National Route 101 beyond the east boundary of Iguazú National Park, its paving with the direct risk for wildlife and the fragmentation of this key site for both parks because the area called Peninsula works as a natural corridor. Moreover it could be a pressure of paving the “red land” part of this road, an issue that was rejected several times by the Administration.