

Europe / North America

LENA PILLARS NATURE PARK

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

LENA PILLARS NATURE PARK (RUSSIAN FEDERATION) – ID No. 1299 Bis

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lena Pillars Nature Park (LPNP) (1,272,150 ha in area) was inscribed on the World Heritage List at the 36th Session of the World Heritage Committee (Decision 36 COM 8B.11). An earlier nomination of the Lena Pillars Nature Park was withdrawn prior to the 33rd Session of the Committee, and had included an area that corresponds to (though is smaller than) the area that is proposed now for inclusion in the property. In its decision to inscribe the property, the 36th Session of the Committee, *inter alia*, requested the State Party to “consider including the Sinyaya component of Lena Pillars Nature Park, and relevant areas of the Lena River that are necessary to strengthen the integrity within the property”. In addition to the evaluation missions, an advisory mission by an IUCN-recommended expert was also conducted to the property in 2009. Thus this property, and the area that is subject to the proposed modification, has been considered by three different missions to date (two evaluation missions and one advisory).

2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

The proposed modification to the boundaries responds to the above mentioned request of the Committee, and involves an area of roughly 115 000 hectares located in the downstream section of the Sinyaya River basin, a left bank tributary of the Lena River. It thus would correspond to an increase in the property of c.9%. The nomination refers to the area to be added as the Sinsky Plot, and this is synonymous with the area that was termed the Sinyaya component in the decision of the World Heritage Committee.

The area concerned is somewhat larger than the similar area included in the withdrawn 2008 nomination, which was 80,970 ha. Adding the Sinsky Plot to the inscribed World Heritage property would result in LPNP becoming a serial site, because it is on the other side of the Lena River, on the left bank, about 5 km away from the nearest boundary of the World Heritage property on the Lena right bank. The small settlement of Sinsk is situated at the confluence of the Sinyaya with the Lena and an unpaved road runs parallel to the Lena River through the settlement. The downstream end of the Sinsky Plot does not end at the confluence, but is a kilometre or so upstream from it, thus avoiding the settlement. Sinsky Plot is defined by natural watershed boundaries along each side until its upstream limit, where the boundary then cuts across the river valley following an administrative rather than natural boundary.

The documentation provided is clear and well organised, and addresses the main questions to be considered in relation to the proposal.

3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

IUCN has reviewed the proposal, and has considered input from both of the experts responsible for the two most recent missions (evaluation for 36 COM and advisory in 2009). IUCN’s evaluation report to 33COM also considers this area.

The justification for modifying the boundaries as cited in Section 3 of the report is fully consistent with the request by the World Heritage Committee. The proposed addition has also been previously recommended by IUCN.

The Sinyaya River basin contains the visually most impressive and geomorphologically the most instructive examples of carbonate pinnacles in the region, and these are included in the proposed addition to the property. They add to the already impressive pillar landscapes that are included in the much larger existing area of LPNP. The inclusion of the Sinsky Plot will improve the integrity of the property, primarily by protecting the most impressive area of carbonate pillars in the Lena Pillars region and the surrounding karstic area. The addition protects further values including additional areas of middle taiga forest ecosystem and the type-site of fossil fauna of the early Cambrian Sinsk Formation, which is noted of significance in the statement of Outstanding Universal Value.

Legal protection appears secure because the additional area is protected under the same Federal Law of the Russian Federation as the existing inscribed property, and is managed by the same local organisations.

The Nature Park is managed under the jurisdiction of Federal Ministry for Nature Conservation of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), which performs general management and coordination. The proposal foresees that a Science and Engineering Board will be created to be responsible for scientific, nature protection, recreational and outreach activities under the control of the Nature Park’s management. Traditional use of the area is also in place by the Evenki, and a Nature Park committee will be created to consider “any issues related to Evenki ancestral communes’ activities.” The committee will include “representatives of each ancestral community, Nature Park administration, and other stakeholders.” This will provide a mechanism, if required, to consider any disputes “related to commercial hunting, licensing, tourism, territorial

zoning, additional transportation routes preparation and management, usage of natural resources by the local residents in amounts exceeding the approved ones, matters of traditional natural territory management, employment policy and other Nature Park activity matters which are related to interests of Evenki ancestral communes.” It will be important that these management structures, which are already required in relation to the existing property are promptly implemented, and that they ensure that traditional rights continue to be recognised and respected within the management of the area.

During the field evaluation in 2011, the potential of increased visitor pressure after inscription was pointed out because there were quite a lot of rafting activities within the nominated property. IUCN considers the State Party should carefully manage this issue, and undertake appropriate monitoring.

Sinsky Plot has no buffer zone but for all practical purposes this is not necessary, because almost uninterrupted Siberian taiga extends for many kilometres in all directions. IUCN considers it important to note the need for logging or mining to not be permitted in the upstream part of the Sinyaya Basin in the foreseeable future in order to avoid negative impacts on the downstream areas that are the subject of the proposal.

4. OTHER COMMENTS

The property has an adopted statement of Outstanding Universal Value, that would require some adaptation if the boundary modification was approved, and it is proposed that those amendments would be undertaken directly between the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, in consultation with the State Party, and reported to the 40th Session of the World Heritage Committee.

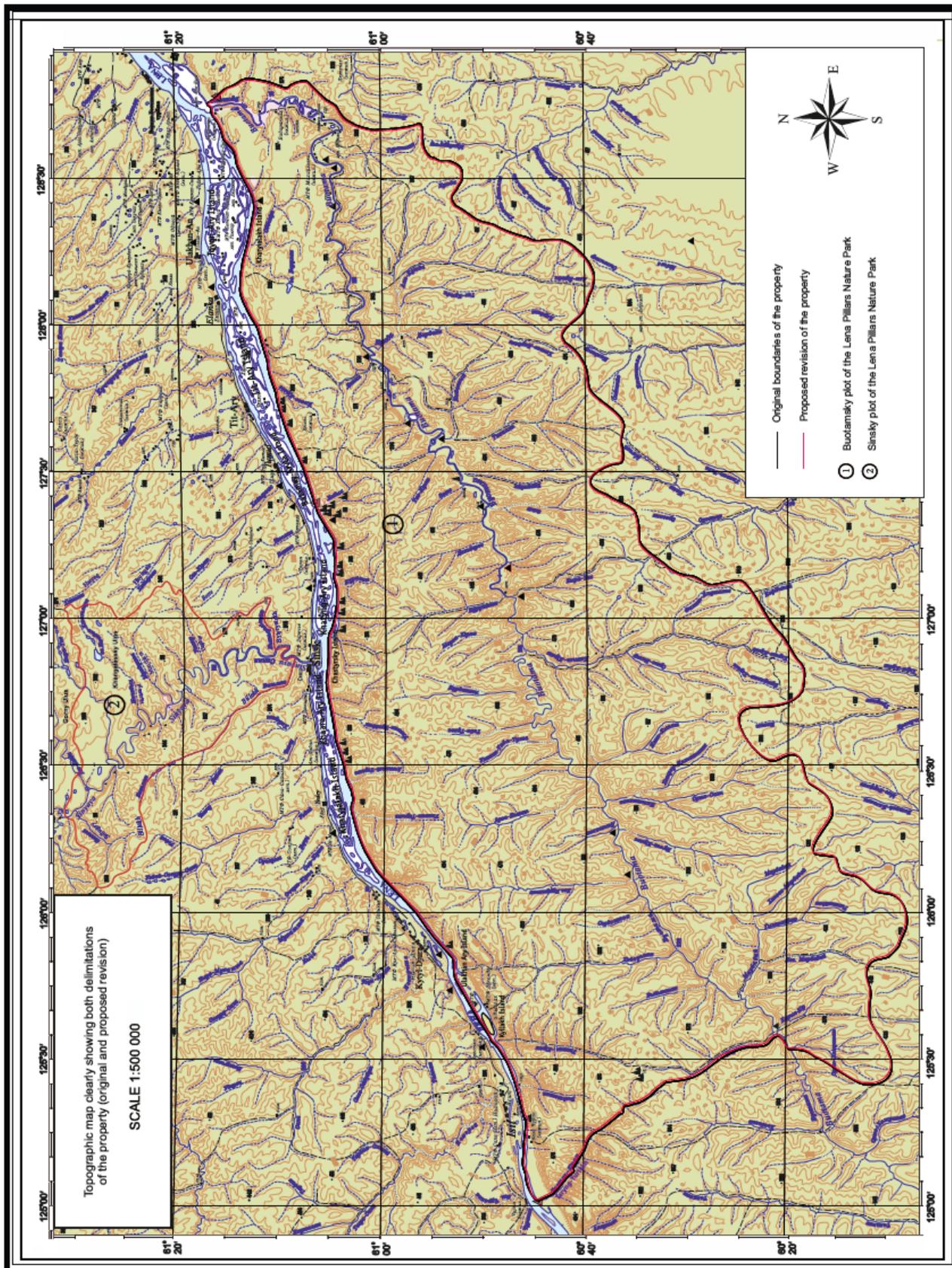
5. RECOMMENDATION

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopt the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-15/39.COM/8B.ADD and WHC-15/39.COM/INF.8B2.ADD;
2. Recalling Decision 36 COM 8B.11 taken at its 36th Session (St Petersburg, Russian Federation);
3. Approves the minor boundary modification of **Lena Pillars Nature Park (Russian Federation)**, to include the Sinsky Plot.
4. Expresses its appreciation to the State Party for their positive response to the Committee’s previous recommendation to include the Sinyaya component of Lena Pillars Nature Park into the property.
5. Requests that the State Party:
 - a) Establish the remaining management bodies foreseen for the property;
 - b) Ensure the continued recognition and respect of traditional rights within the property;
 - c) Not permit mining and forestry activities outside the property, within the Sinyaya catchment, unless it is demonstrated that these would have no impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including its integrity.
6. Also requests IUCN, in consultation with the State Party through the World Heritage Centre, to consider any necessary factual corrections to the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value of the property, to reflect the approval of this minor boundary modification.

Map 1: World Heritage property and proposed minor boundary modification



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