
Mount Wuyi (China) No 911 Bis

1 Basic data

State Party

China

Name of property

Mount Wuyi

Location

Wuyishan City, Fujian Province
China

Inscription

1999

Brief description

Mount Wuyi is the most outstanding area for biodiversity conservation in south-east China and a refuge for a large number of ancient, relict species, many of them endemic to China. The serene beauty of the dramatic gorges of the Nine Bend River, with its numerous temples and monasteries, many now in ruins, provided the setting for the development and spread of neo-Confucianism, which has been influential in the cultures of East Asia since the 11th century. In the 1st century B.C. a large administrative capital was built at nearby Chengcun by the Han dynasty rulers. Its massive walls enclose an archaeological site of great significance.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

10 March 2017

2 Issues raised

Background

Mount Wuyi (Fujian) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1999 under criteria (iii), (vi), (vii), (x). The original nomination included only the southern, albeit larger, side of the Mount Wuyi mountain ecosystem and excluded the now proposed added Northern components which are located in another province, Jiangxi. The Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for this property was adopted by the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee in 2012 (Decision 36 COM 8E). The World Heritage Outlook analysis undertaken by IUCN in 2014 concluded that there was a "great need for better coordination across the province divide and Mount Wuyi would be greatly strengthened if Jiangxi sections could be added". The report urged the State Party to extend the site across the provincial boundary to include valuable and somewhat richer habitats on the Jiangxi province side of the mountain.

Modification

The proposed modification consists of the inscribed Mount Wuyi World Heritage property (1999) and the direct extension of Mount Wuyi to its north slopes, located in Jiangxi Province. The State Party proposes to add an additional area of 7,069 ha to the property boundary (extending from 99,975 ha to 107,044 ha) which corresponds to 7.1% of the revised enlarged property and an additional area of 6,721 ha to the buffer zone (extending from 34,050 ha to 40,170 ha).

The proposal for this modification is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the new added Northern components make the property more complete to represent South East China's sub-tropical mountains: adding wilder natural habitats, best habitats for some endemic and rare species, inclusion of many species of the Yangtze watershed, and overall enhancing the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of Mount Wuyi. The assessment of the impact of the proposed minor modifications to the boundary in relation to the natural dimension of the Outstanding Universal Value of this property remains IUCN's responsibility. However, ICOMOS notes that the property was inscribed as a mixed site and therefore, the proposed minor modifications to the boundary need to be also assessed in considering how the proposed modification contributes to a reflection of the cultural dimension of the Outstanding Universal Value. In this regard, ICOMOS considers that while the boundary modification proposed by the State Party emphasise the integrity of natural heritage, it gives little consideration to cultural heritage. For example, the heritage related to Chinese neo-Confucianism development such as Ehu Academy of Classical Learning could make significant contribution to the integrity of the Wuyi Mountain cultural heritage; however, it is not reflected in this minor boundary modification proposal.

The State Party holds that most of the modified extension to the property was already included within the buffer zone described and mapped in the original nomination and that all cultural sites and artifacts identified in the modified property are inventoried and properly protected at different levels of administration. However, ICOMOS observes that the proposed boundary modification includes areas of the Jiangxi Province that were not part of the original nomination as it is clearly illustrated on the map on revised boundaries and buffer zone of the property. Therefore, ICOMOS is of the view that the consideration for the integrity of cultural values of the property should be added to this proposal, including an inventory of cultural heritage sites within the extended area not covered in the original nomination.

The minor boundary modification proposal indicates that farmland, villages, and cooperative lands of the Wuyishan National Nature Reserve of Jiangxi province experimental zone are not included in the revised property but are included in the buffer zone to ensure some control of activities around the site. In this regard, ICOMOS notes that it is not fully clear what has been the rationale for the proposed new boundary delineation in relation to the

current villages (i.e. Dayan and Xikeng) and the northern section of Yanshan River. ICOMOS therefore considers it necessary that a more detailed explanation of how the buffer zone in the extended area is drawn up.

ICOMOS also suggests that in order to allow greater clarity on the precise definition of the proposed extended boundaries and the buffer zone, a topographical map to demonstrate the relationship between the modified boundaries with the boundary of Wuyi Mountain National Reserve (Jiangxi Province) is needed.

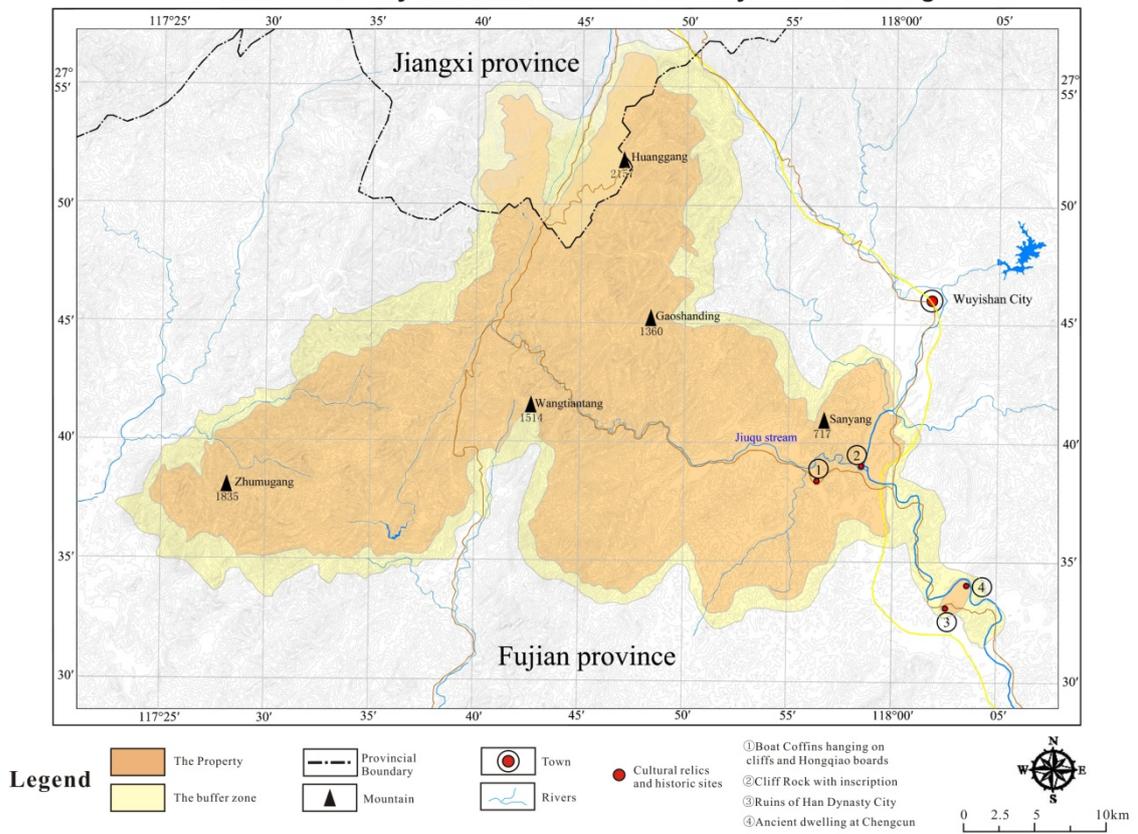
3 ICOMOS Recommendations

Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the examination of the minor modifications to the boundary and to the buffer zone of Mount Wuyi, China, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to:

- a) Provide a textual description of the cultural sites in the proposed extended area and detailed justification on how they also contribute to the maintenance of the cultural dimension of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and how they are protected,
- b) Explain in detail the rationale for the delineation of the buffer zone especially the relationship between the modified boundary and the current villages of Dayan and Xikeng and the northern section Yanshan River which are all excluded from the buffer zone,
- c) Provide a topographical map to demonstrate the relationship between the modified boundaries with the boundary of Wuyi Mountain National Reserve (Jiangxi Province);

Revised Boundary and Buffer Zone of Mt. Wuyi World Heritage



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property