

## Executive Summary

<b>State Party</b>	The People's Republic of China
<b>State, Province or Region</b>	Jiangkou County, Yinjiang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County and Songtao Miao Autonomous County, Tongren City Guizhou Province
<b>Name of Property</b>	Fanjingshan
<b>Geographical coordinates to the nearest second</b>	Central coordinates: N27°53'44", E108°40'48" Extreme point coordinates: North: N28°03'10", E108°45'25"    East: N27°53'13", E108°47'51" South: N27°45'06", E108°39'32"    West: N27°53'28", E108°30'41"
<b>Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property</b>	The Fanjingshan World Natural Heritage Nominated Property is easily recognized on satellite photos as a lush green island standing prominently in an "ocean" of surrounding less vegetated karst hills. The geologic setting of the nominated property creates a naturally functioning terrestrial island biogeography. It is therefore not a remnant of a previously once much larger forested system. The boundary of Fanjingshan aligns with the natural topography and physical boundaries (ridges, valleys, rivers, etc.) of this island biogeographic unit. The nominated property protects the spatial distribution of all the elements with Outstanding Universal Value including the most important landscapes, representative vegetation types and entire habitats of numerous endemic and endangered species. The nominated property falls inside Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve and Guizhou Yinjiang Yangxi Provincial Nature Reserve except for a small extension of its northeast tip which is protected as National Non-Commercial Forest.





	<p>The northern boundary overlaps with the watershed ridge line of Taipinghe River basin, which is also the boundary between Yinjiang and Songtao County. The eastern boundary starts from Banpotai Village in Songtao County. After passing the Niujiaodong, it follows the intermediate protection zone of Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve. In the south, it arrives at Kuaichang Village in Jiangkou County after following the western edge of Taipinghe and Taohuayuan villages. The southern boundary coincides with the boundary of the intermediate protection zone of the reserve, passes Kuaichang Village and extends towards the south through the river confluence of the Macaohe and Taipinghe rivers. The boundary turns to the north after reaching the southern point being the divide of Heiwanhe River and the upstream basin of Minxiaohe River in Gaofeng Village, and arrives at Bamei Village in the eastern Dewang Town. The western boundary of the nominated property overlaps with the western boundary of the core protection zone of Yangxi Provincial Nature Reserve without any gap. After reaching Dianchang Village in Luochang Town, the boundary passes through Yuanjialin Village, Damianpo and Doucoulin in Ziwei Town and enters the intermediate protection zone of Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve.</p> <p>The Fanjingshan nominated property is encircled by a World Heritage buffer zone between 1 to 2 kilometers. The buffer zone is an area which strengthens the spatial sense of the landscape aesthetics and provides further protection to the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. Moreover, the buffer zone of the nominated property provides enhanced habitat connectivity and improved resilience for key species in the nominated property.</p>
<p><b>A4 or A3 size map(s) of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone (if present)</b></p>	<p>Map 1.1 Location of the nominated property of Fanjingshan in China (attached)</p> <p>Map 1.2 Detailed map of the nominated property of Fanjingshan (attached)</p>

<p><b>Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)</b></p>	<p>(vii) To contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.</p> <p>(ix) To be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.</p> <p>(x) To contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation.</p>
<p><b>Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value</b></p>	<p><b>a) Brief Synthesis</b></p> <p>The nominated property of Fanjingshan, with an area of 40,275 ha and a buffer zone of 37,239 ha, is located in Guizhou Province in Southwest China. It is situated in the transitional zone from the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau towards the Western Hunan Hills. In the nominated property, Fenghuangshan Peak which is the main peak of the Wulingshan Range in China is 2,570 m in altitude, giving the property a vertical elevation range of more than 2,000 m. It forms the upper watersheds of the Wujiang and Yuanjiang Rivers. The nominated property is in the Oriental Deciduous Forest biogeographic province, as defined by Udvardy, and in the middle of the subtropical zone, influenced by the Indian Ocean monsoon from the southwest, the Pacific Ocean monsoon from southeast and northwest cold air flows. Therefore, Fanjingshan exhibits transitional features from the south subtropical and north subtropical zones of China. Its climate is mild with relatively high levels of precipitation. The nominated property displays pronounced mountain vertical climate zone, and it provides shelter and spatial evolution for many relict, endemic and endangered species.</p> <p>Physically, the nominated property is a great dome of metamorphic rocks surrounded by the Fengcong karst plateau in Southwest China. The geological age of this area is over 1 billion years. In the early Proterozoic, Fanjingshan rock was formed by volcanic movements in oceanic plates. After more than 700 million years in the Triassic Period, Fanjingshan's rock base was immersed in an ancient ocean. It was covered by</p>





carbonate sediments with a thickness up to six kilometers. From late Triassic to Jurassic, Fanjingshan was uplifted and became dry land with the great thickness of the seabed sediment. When the India plate and Eurasian plate collided during the Jurassic Period again, the land was raised to a karst plateau, and it was gradually revealed in the lime rock layer, affected by erosion effect, and formed its dome mountain ladder structure. Along with the rapid uplift of the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau in the Pleistocene, it was eventually emerged like a huge island from the “ocean” of the surrounding karst hills. Karst strata of the peripheral Fanjingshan were further eroded by high rainfall. The landscape of the nominated property is a record of large-scale tectonic movements that East Asia has experienced since the Paleozoic Era, resulting in the living communities which are a kind of Noah's Ark of ancient relict species. Fanjingshan became a shelter for Tertiary paleo plants, affected by the geological movement and climate change during the Tertiary and Quaternary periods. It possesses a unique and diverse ecosystem characterized by species of differing geologic and climatic origins.

The nominated property belongs to the core zone of Himalayan - Japanese flora located in the mid-subtropical zone. It exhibits both tropical and temperate characteristics in equal measure as well as elements of the floristic transition from the tropical to temperate zone. In this ecological context, the nominated property, in a relatively compact area, hosts more than 3,000 species of vascular plants and more than 2,000 species of animals. It is one of the most diverse hot spots for species in the Oriental Deciduous Forest biogeographic province and has irreplaceable value for in-situ conservation of endangered species providing critical habitats for species such as *Rhinopithecus brelichi* and *Abies fanjingshanensis*.

Fanjingshan carved through the ages a unique combination of rare beauty: peculiar peaks and weathered stone features, pristine rivers and waterfalls, thick forest and stunning wildflower displays all enveloped by dynamic metrological phenomena. The wealth of diverse natural beauty in Fanjingshan profoundly impacts on the human experiences in the place. It has inspired spiritual beliefs, and holds a special place as a famous Chinese Buddhist region.

In summary, East Asian plate tectonic movements and Tertiary and

Quaternary period climate change have combined to leave a huge and distinctive mark on this nominated property which can be clearly seen on the earth's surface. Fanjingshan retained an extremely rich biodiversity in the process, and today it remains a vital refuge for many ancient relict, rare, endangered and endemic species. The mountains, rock forms, forests, water bodies, weather effects and other natural elements, together with the long-term evolution of dynamic changes in Fanjingshan, have provided the foundation for this beautiful awe-inspiring landscape.

### **b) Justification for Criteria**

#### **Criterion (vii)**

Fanjingshan's outstanding aesthetic value derives from its great diversity of landscapes, which exceeds that of many other natural sites. The nominated property exhibits a rare and superlative combination of spectacular geologic features and landforms, scenic mountains, wonderful panoramas, jewel like wetlands, spectacular waterfalls, varied high quality forests, unusual meteorological phenomena and wildlife spectacles.

Fanjingshan's size and elevation range result in that the landscapes are very different from the bottom to the top of the mountain. The valleys and gorges alternate with the mountains, developing many steep knife-like ridges, shaded by evergreen forests. In the valleys, rocks, cliffs, peaks and column landscapes have developed on the outcropping metamorphic detrital rocks. At the top of the mountain, there are peculiar stone peaks, which offer astonishing views and highlight a spectacular landscape of many distant and steep mountains. Some of the peak bases are broken, and some have collapsed, leaving only a lonely isolated peak, which appears to the human eye as if defying gravity. The rivers of Fanjingshan spread radially from the top of mountain, a phenomenon locally known as the "99 rivers". These rushing watercourses manifest in diverse water features and many stunning waterfalls. The landscape provides a canvas for the rich flora and fauna, which provide a great range of pleasing biotic landscapes. Especially admired are the beautiful butterflies, vibrant pheasants and many





ornamental plants, such as Rhododendron, Chinese dove tree *Davidia involucrata*, Chinese little leaf box (*Buxus*), *Abies*, hemlock *Tsuga chinensis* and *Juniperus squamata*.

The aesthetic qualities of the nominated property are heightened by constantly changing weather landscapes, including seasonal and daily weather variations. These add a dimension to the human response to this landscape for example through phenomena such as cloud seas, rainbows, mirages and the spiritually important “Buddha light” brought about instantaneous changes of the moving air.

A part of Fanjingshan’s beauty also relates to the stark seasonal contrasts, which express themselves in the vertical vegetation zones and differing geographical contexts. Depending on the elevation there are different forest landscapes consisting of distinct beautiful plant groups, especially the flowering plants such as the delicate *Davidia involucrata*, stately Firs (*Abies*) and azaleas (*Rhododendron*). Flowers of all sorts bloom in a riot of colour in spring; and the mountains show many different seasonal faces: the luxuriant growth of vegetation in summer; the golden palate of colours in the fall; and the pristine snow-blanketed landscape of mid-winter.

**Criterion (ix)**

Because of the unique geological origin, Fanjingshan exhibits special evolution as an ecological green “island” on a metamorphic dome emerging from a vast ocean of karst landscape. The geological history and uplifting and eroding processes are well studied and documented and the mountain still rises today.

Having emerged as a contrasting habitat “island”, the patterns of species occurrence and distribution trace a complex history. One of colonization, extinction, local evolution of endemism is due to isolation and responses to changing climates over the long term. In South China, Fanjingshan is thought to be the first dry land to emerge from the sea, with the longest history of colonization by terrestrial species. Today, 75% of the flora in Fanjingshan truly behaves like an island.

Paleo-spore pollen records are contained in the alpine wetlands that trace changes in tree communities since the Holocene whilst tree ring

cores from ancient trees preserved in the village fengshui (sacred forests) can give a detailed history of changing climate over the past thousand years.

In summary, Fanjingshan is a magnificent representative of subtropical mountain deciduous forest and an unusual example within the Oriental Deciduous Forest biogeographic province. It is a naturally functioning ecological island formed millions of years ago, a scenario which has given birth to a unique ecosystem of outstanding diversity. This relatively compact ecosystem has been in the process of species evolution since the beginning of Quaternary and continues to evolve today.

**Criterion (x)**

The unique geographical location and geomorphological features, favorable climatic conditions and little disturbance by human activities has made Fanjingshan extremely rich in biodiversity. It has been managed to preserve a large number of ancient relict, rare, endangered and endemic species. The area provides vital habitat for 230 species of rare and endangered plants and 115 species of rare and endangered animals, such as *Paulownia kawakamii* (CR), *Bretschneidera sinensis* (EN), *Andrias davidianus* (CR), *Moschus berezovskii* (EN) and so on. The nominated property also provides essential habitat for 46 species of endemic plants, 4 species of endemic vertebrates and 245 species of endemic invertebrates. There are 36 species of Gymnosperm and 791 species of Bryophyte in Fanjingshan. The nominated property has one of the richest concentrations of gymnosperm flora in the world. It is also the area of richest bryophytes in the Oriental Deciduous Forest biogeographic province.

Fanjingshan is the only natural habitat and therefore the most important in-situ conservation site for the globally endangered Guizhou snub-nosed monkey *Rhinopithecus brelichi* and the Fanjingshan fir (*Abies fanjingshanensis*). *Rhinopithecus brelichi* has a key position in understanding the evolution of primate species. Its population is less than other species (Golden monkeys) and its habitat area within the nominated property represents the smallest area in the world. *Abies fanjingshanensis* is one of the four *Abies* species located in the subtropical zone and is listed on the IUCN Red List as an endangered (EN) species. The nominated property preserves the only *Abies* dark







coniferous forest type in the subtropical zone.

Fanjingshan retains a large area of more than 15,600 ha of original beech (*Fagus*) forest which is considered to be the most important site for protection of *Fagus* forest as it contains the world's biggest and most contiguous primeval beech forest in the subtropical region. Fanjingshan's beech forest possesses outstanding conservation importance and scientific interest value as it serves as a globally precious gene bank and provides insights into how its suitable environment through subtropics evolved into temperate zone.

**c) Statement of Integrity**

The nominated property of Fanjingshan is composed of three contiguous areas - namely Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve, the north core area of Yinjiang Yangxi Provincial Nature Reserve, and a small area of National Non-Commercial Forest in the northeast, the boundaries of which are totally coincident without any gaps. Fanjingshan was also designated a UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve in 1986. The property includes all of a metamorphic rock dome and is thus quite different from the surrounding karst landscape of the Yunnan Guizhou Plateau. Fanjingshan is in fact a micro biogeographical unit in its entirety. The property is of adequate sizes to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance, such as the main aesthetic landscape elements and the habitat and current range of *Rhinopithecus brelichi*, the distribution area of *Abies fanjingshanensis* dark coniferous forest and the beech forest ecosystems mainly consisting of *Fagus longipetiolata*. Most of the nominated property remains primary forest, and a few residents live in the Tuanlong Village, Lingfeng Village and Dianchang Village relying on traditional farming. Fanjingshan is unusual in having been home to the different ethnic minorities who use forest resources in their own distinct cultural ways but all in a sustainable manner so that 90% of the forest coverage is still maintained.

The nominated property has been fully demarcated and the boundaries of the nominated property and corresponding buffer zone are all mapped and clearly marked on site. Boundaries follow topographical features, such as a mountain ridges, valleys and rivers, and thus support



ecological function.

Challenges and threats to the integrity include human pressure from use of the nominated property by people living in and/or around it, and the pressures from tourism development. However many measures have been and are still being undertaken to address these issues. The natural environment and outstanding universal values within the nominated property are all well maintained. The buffer zone is designed to reduce human activities that may affect the value of the nominated property by regulating impactful developments such as tourism development, modern buildings, towns etc.

Belonging to a National and a Provincial Nature Reserve, the nominated property enjoys strict protections under national and local laws and regulations. To enable better coordinated management between the two nature reserves and to effectively protect Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property, additional local regulations and *Management Plan* have been formulated by the local governments. Moreover, village rules established by local residents also play an important role in protecting the local ecosystem and environment.

#### **d) Requirements for protection and management**

All land in the nominated property is state owned and designated as protected areas such as National and/or Provincial Nature Reserve and National Non-Commercial Forest. Fanjingshan is also protected as part of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve Network. The protected areas which constitute the nominated property have been protected by relevant local and national laws and regulations for many decades and by cultural beliefs and practices for centuries. A multi-level management system, from the national level to the local level, has been established to manage the nominated property. In addition, a co-operative system involving various sectors of the government, technical institutions, research institutions and local communities, has been set up. Both of these systems are assured of sufficient funds and staff. Each management department within the National and Provincial Nature Reserves has its own responsibilities and cooperates with each other to ensure that protection and management work is carried out in a good and synergic order. In addition, the unique and long Buddhism culture of Fanjingshan shapes the belief systems and environmental awareness of





	<p>indigenous people, allowing them to reach the agreement of folk groups to protect Fanjingshan’s natural values in daily life. Therefore, a more complete top-down protection management system for heritage protection has been built. Under the vigorous publicity initiated by the local administrative department, all local communities are aware of and support the inscription of Fanjingshan on the World Heritage List.</p> <p>Currently, the challenges for the protection and management of the nominated property include the following: narrow distribution range, small population and slow growth of <i>Rhinopithecus brelichi</i>; the ecosystem impacts arising from unreasonable lifestyle practices of few community residents, such as excessive use of fuel wood, grazing, logging, etc.; and lastly the development of the tourism industry has brought some pressure to the protection of the natural resources and ecological environment and needs strict control.</p> <p>In view of the threats above, the nominated property has formulated a long-term <i>Fanjingshan Management Plan (2016-2030)</i> which establishes the overall management framework to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and puts forward counter-measures and action plans based on the different values and challenges. The <i>Management Plan</i> promotes a participatory approach engaging rural communities and fostering sustainable development of tourism and other activities.</p>
<p><b>Name and contact information of official local institution / agency</b></p>	<p><b>Organization:</b> Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the People’s Republic of China</p> <p><b>Address:</b> No.9 Sanlihe Road, Beijing City, China, Postal code 100835</p> <p><b>Tel:</b>+86-10-58934062</p> <p><b>Fax:</b>+86-10-58933014</p> <p><b>E-mail:</b> zuoxp@mail.cin.gov.cn</p> <p><b>Web address:</b> <a href="http://www.mohurd.gov.cn/">http://www.mohurd.gov.cn/</a></p> <p><b>Organization:</b> Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of Guizhou Province</p> <p><b>Address:</b> No.2 West Yan’an Road, Guiyang, Guizhou, China, Postal code 550003</p> <p><b>Tel:</b> +86-851-85360262</p>

**Fax:** +86-851-85360267

**E-mail:** xgl9596@163.com

**Web address:** www.gzjs.gov.cn

**Organization:** Forestry Department of Guizhou Province

**Address:** No. 91 Middle Yanan Road, Guiyang City, Guizhou Province, China, Zip code 550001

**Tel:** +86-851-86570806

**Fax:** +86-851-86570806

**E-mail:** yaosichao\_201@163.com

**Web address:** <http://www.gzforestry.gov.cn/>

**Organization:** Administration of Guizhou Fanjingshan National Nature Reserve

**Address:** No.17 West Sanxing Road, Jiangkou County, Tongren City, Guizhou Province, China, Post code 554400

**Tel:** +86-856-6620157

**Fax:** +86-856-6620157

**E-mail:** fjshanzwy@aliyun.com

**Web address:** <http://www.fanjingshan.cn>

**Organization:** Administration of Guizhou Yinjiang Yangxi Provincial Nature Reserve

**Address:** No.313 Fanjingshan Road, Yinjiang Tujia and Miao Autonomous County, Tongren City, Guizhou Province, China, Postal code 555200

**Tel:** +86-856-6222385

**Fax:** +86-856-6222385

**E-mail:** yjLyj6222385@163.com

**Web address:** <http://www.fanjingshan.cn>





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Map 1.1 Location of the nominated property of Fanjingshan in China





Map 1.2 Detailed map of the nominated property of Fanjingshan



