



United Nations
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World Heritage

42 COM

AMENDMENT

Item of the Agenda	8B.9
Amended Draft Decision	42 COM 8B.9
Amendment submitted by the Delegation of	Hungary
Date	1 July 2018

TEXT

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC/18/42.COM/8B and WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B2,
2. ~~Approves~~Refers the significant boundary modification of **Central Sikhote-Alin, Russian Federation**, to include **Bikin River Valley**, ~~back to the State Party, taking note of the strong potential of the nominated significant boundary modification to meet criterion (x), in order to allow the State Party to:~~ in the property.
3. Takes note of the following provisional statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

Brief Synthesis:

The nominated extension extends from 200 to 1900 masl and is the most important intact and effectively protected forest on the western slope of the Sikhote-Alin, which is distinct from the slopes exposed to the Sea of Japan in terms of relief, climate, vegetation and landscape, and known to be more biodiverse than the eastern slope. It includes a vast area of practically undisturbed mountain taiga landscapes almost completely forested (more than 95%), with traces of ancient glaciations and volcanism, and a greatly partitioned relief of numerous deep ravines, scree steeps, rocky ridges, insular mountains, and greatly indented plateaus. The area includes valleys, mountain taiga, and forests. In particular, it contains one of the largest and best preserved broadleaf and pinebroadleaf far-eastern forests, the Ussuriyskaya Taiga.

Criterion (x):

The property holds globally significant biodiversity values. The vegetation of the Bikin River basin belongs to two botanical-geographical regions: the South-Okhotsk dark coniferous forests and the East-Asian coniferous broadleaf forests. There is a well-developed altitudinal zoning of the vegetative cover within the property, with

a mountain tundra belt, a forest belt of dwarf Siberian Pines, a forest belt of Erman's Birch, a fir-spruce forest belt, a spruce-pine forest belt, and a pine-broadleaf forest belt. The fauna of the nominated extension combines species from the taiga, found among the Okhotsk-Kamchatka flora, with representatives of southern Manchurian species. It comprises 52 mammal, 241 bird, 7 amphibian, 10 reptile and 48 inland water fish species. It hosts a number of notable and charismatic mammal species, including the Amur Tiger, Elk, Siberian Musk Deer, Wild Boar, Roedeer, Himalayan Black Bear and Brown Bear, Lynx, Wolverine, Sable, American Mink, Otter and Badger. In addition, the national park has a very uncommon bird species composition and ecologic structure, with 241 bird species, belonging to 17 families, including 171 nesting species. It includes notable nesting areas of the Scaly-sided Merganser and Blakiston's Fish-owl, as well as other rare bird species found in flood plain forests.

Integrity

The nominated extension is large and coincides with the boundaries of Bikin National Park. It covers substantial areas of intact forests, and represents a significant increase in both the scale and ecological representativeness of protected lands, in addition to the already inscribed property. The large scale, remoteness, high degree of naturalness, and inclusion of the entire middle and upper watershed of a major river ensure that the conditions of integrity are high. The spatial configuration of BNP follows the watershed boundaries of the middle and upper Bikin River. The nominated area is located entirely within the administrative boundaries of the Pozharsky District, an administrative unit of the Primorsky Krai. The national park borders with Khabarovsk Krai to the north, and the Terneysky and Krasnoarmeysky Districts to the east and southeast, respectively (both within Primorsky Krai). The national park covers 51% of the Pozharsky District. This is a positive aspect in terms of governance and management, as only one local counterpart is involved in the federally managed lands, although it is also substantively influenced by the local district as half of its territories are allocated to federal land use. Overall, the coincidence of the national park boundaries with the watershed and administrative boundaries is advantageous for communication, decision-making, and management effectiveness. Nevertheless, assuring the conservation of its values relies not only on the management of the area, but also the maintaining and strengthening of meaningful connectivity with the existing components of the World Heritage property, and other important neighbouring protected areas, and effective buffer zone arrangements for the proposed extension.

Protection and Management Requirements

The nominated extension enjoys a high level of protection, through the creation of Bikin National Park, in accordance with the Russian Federal Protected Area Legislation. The federal protected area category corresponds to an IUCN Category II protected area. BNP was formally created by federal Decree No. 1187 dated 03 November 2015. The regulations for BNP were approved by Order No. 429 of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation dated 12 August 2016. The Charter of Bikin National Park was likewise adopted in 2016.

The legislative framework includes strong and explicit provisions on the protection of rights of the indigenous peoples to use natural resources within substantial zones of the national park. However, these provisions are not derived directly from the federal law, but are legalized through a decree, which in principle could be changed or altered in the future. The territory of the nominated property is federally owned in its entirety under the authority of the Ministry of Natural Resources and

Environment of the Russian Federation and constitutes a “Federal State Budgetary Establishment”. In 674,184 ha (58.1%) of the national park, indigenous peoples are permitted to use natural resources for traditional economic activities, as a way of life and for subsistence, in line with the federal decree that established Bikin National Park, and subsequently established regulations. A good example of the strength and adequacy of the protection system for the nominated property is demonstrated by the strong federal protection status, which has brought an end to the possibility of industrial-scale logging for the foreseeable future, arguably addressing the most tangible threat to the integrity of the middle and upper reaches of the Bikin River watershed in the past.

4. Strongly recommends the State Party to

a) Complete the process of configuration and designation of the nominated property’s buffer zone in conformity with Clause 10 of Article 2 of Russian Federal Law and consistent with the requirements of Paragraph 104 of the Operational Guidelines, with the aim of providing the necessary protective measures to safeguard the property against current and foreseen anthropogenic impacts,

b) Finalize the preparation of the Integrated Management Plan for the nominated extension, to provide a single and cohesive framework for the management of Bikin National Park and the existing World Heritage property Central Sikhote-Alin as a whole;

53. Commends and encourages the continuation of the State Party’s efforts to strengthen the involvement of local indigenous people in governance, planning and management of the nominated extension through, inter alia, the establishment of the Council of Indigenous Minority Groups, and to build on the achievements of the Consultative Working Group;

64. Also encourages the State Party to develop and adopt a long-term vision in order to ensure connectivity of Amur Tiger habitat at the landscape level, through a range of strategies, including building enhanced connectivity with other protected areas, and investigating conservation connectivity strategies outside the formal protected area system. The State Party may also wish to consider the possibility of nominating further such areas as extensions to the nominated property in the future.

7. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2019 the Integrated Management Plan, including the necessary documentation regarding the configuration and designation of the buffer zone of the property.

8. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2019, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.