2018/71965393-UNESCO DT/22692551

Paris, 4 December 2018

Dear Mrs. Anatole-Gabriel,

In accordance with the decision “41 COM 7B.51” adopted at the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee held in Krakow, we have the pleasure to convey herewith the State of Conservation (SOC) Report of the “Ephesus” for the examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session in 2019.

Please have access to the above-mentioned SOC report via the link: https://wetransfer.com/downloads/e2451f3f606be26d465c5ceee919c45e20181204091305/d29b64fd0ca8fa11f7e3e60f35eef4f220181204091305/3e4d54

Please accept, Mrs. Anatole-Gabriel, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Elif Okutucu
Counsellor
Permanent Delegation of Turkey to UNESCO

Ms. Isabelle Anatole Gabriel
Chief of Europe and North America Unit
the World Heritage Center, UNESCO

Cc: Ms. Gwenaelle Bourdin
Director
ICOMOS Evaluation Unit
1. **Executive Summary of the Report**

This report on the state of conservation of the Ephesus World Heritage Site responds to the World Heritage Committee’s decision 41 COM 7B.51.

The legal protection status of the buffer zone has been improved with the changes made in the existing level of protection degrees and new registration decisions. A cooperation protocol has been signed between Selçuk Municipality and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in order to revise the Site Management Plan of Ephesus. There has been no concrete progress in preparation of a Heritage Impact Assessment for the ropeway project, as there is no agreed specific line or project yet.

2. **Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee**

During the 41th session (Decision: 41 COM 7B.51), World Heritage Committee has requested works to be carried out for Ephesus. The works conducted about each request has been stated below.

a) **Requests the State Party to confirm that the legislative protection sought for the entire buffer zone has been achieved;**

It was stated in our previous report that a field survey had been initiated by the Directorate of İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage in order to define the most proper status for the area. As a result of this field survey, the legal protection status of the buffer zone has been improved with the changes made in the existing level of protection degrees and new registration decisions taken by the Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage. These decisions are as follows:

With the decision of the İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage, dated 10.05.2017, numbered 5979; in the Arvalya Region, which is located Southwest of the current 1st degree archaeological site of Ephesus and South of the Ancient Canal of Ephesus, some areas where archaeological data obtained have been declared as a 1st degree archaeological site, while a large area in the region has been declared as a 3rd degree archaeological site.

With the decision of the İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage, dated 11.09.2018, numbered 7997; considering the archaeological value of the urban protected area between the 1st degree archaeological site of Ephesus and Atatürk Street, this area has been declared as urban protected area + 3rd degree archaeological site in order to control the works on the ground. The area without protection status on the East of the urban protected area + 3rd degree archaeological site has been declared as Interaction Transition Zone to be taken into consideration during conservation planning for the adjacent conservation site. Urban Conservation Plan prepared by Selçuk Municipality is in the process of review and approval.
With the decision of the İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage, dated 31.10.2018, numbered 8167; protection status of a part of the 3rd degree archaeological site, located on the southeast of 1st degree archaeological site of Ephesus, in Atatürk neighbourhood has increased to 2nd degree, as a result of the archaeological remains found during the excavations carried out by the Ephesus Museum.

There exists a part within the buffer zone on the south of the ancient channel with no conservation site status as there are no archaeological remains found. However, this part, as can be seen from the base map, is a forestry area which is under protection of Forestry Act. The low-density seasonal settlement area on the edge of the buffer zone at this part dates back to the pre-determination of buffer zone boundary.

The map showing final situation of the legislative protection in the buffer zone, after the above mentioned decisions of the regional conservation council is presented as annex.

b) Recommends that the State Party take into account the matters raised in Decision 39 COM 8B.37 in the earliest possible revision of the management plan, and also requests the State Party to confirm the planned date for completion of this revision and to submit the revised version of the management plan to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, as soon as it becomes available;

As mentioned in the previous report, in accordance with the related legislation in Turkey, comprehensive revision of a management plan is held at every 5 year following its approval. In this direction, five-year implementation period of the management plan shall expire on September 11, 2019.

With the amendment in Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation Law numbered 2863 in 2016, the authority to prepare site management plans for all heritage sites in Turkey has been granted to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Accordingly, the site manager has been reappointed by the Ministry on December 7, 2016 and the members of the Advisory Board and Coordination Supervision Board have been reappointed by the Ministry on January 23, 2017.

As the revision date is approaching, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, together with the site manager, has already conducted a legal monitoring of the management plan and reported the issues to be taken into consideration when revising the plan. This analysis, which can be regarded as the first stage at the revision process, was based on the matters raised in Decisions 39 COM 8B.37 and 41 COM 7B.51, ICOMOS recommendations during nomination process, changing legal, administrative and conservation status at the site as well as the level of implementation of the action plan. This plan is to be evaluated by the Supervision and Coordination Board by the forthcoming months.

Meanwhile, a cooperation protocol was signed between Selçuk Municipality and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism on November 16, 2018 in order to define the legal responsibilities during the revision of the Site Management Plan of Ephesus. Therefore, the studies for revising the management plan will be launched following the approval of the monitoring report by the Supervision and Coordination Board, and the estimated due of the approval of the revised plan is September 2019. The revised plan will be shared with WHC and ICOMOS once its approval is finalized.
c) Further requests the State Party to submit details about the cable car project as well as the results of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of this project to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, as soon as they become available, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, well before any irrevocable decisions are taken about the construction of the cable car;

From the last report to the present day, two different route proposals related to the ropeway project were presented to the İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage and these proposals were not found appropriate. Decisions related to this subject are as follows:

In its decision dated 10.05.2017, numbered 5996, İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage it was decided that, the ropeway line offers in the ancient city so far are not suitable. Due to the fact that the Ancient City of Ephesus and the House of Virgin Mary are on the World Heritage List, pursuant to the relevant articles of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention the impact assessment of the projects that may affect the outstanding universal value of the site should be done and sent to the World Heritage Centre Secretariat, following the views of the secretariat, a new assessment would be made by the council on this subject.

In its decision dated 29.03.2018, numbered 7317, İzmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage it was declared that, despite the change in the route in question, it is understood that some parts of the ropeway (boarding station, the first 5 poles and the last pole of the landing station) still remains in the first degree archaeological site as well as the evaluation of World Heritage Centre, which is requested by the Decision dated 10.05.2017 and numbered 5996, has not been received yet, therefore the request regarding the new route of ropeway planned between Ephesus Ancient City and Virgin Mary’s House cannot be evaluated at this stage.

As none of the alternatives submitted to the Regional Conservation Council was considered appropriate in terms of location decisions, there has been no improvement in the finalization of the cable-car project and thus in the HIA analysis.

3. **Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property’s Outstanding Universal Value**

   There are no other conservation issues identified by the State Party which may have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the site.

4. **In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.**

   No major restoration, alteration and/or new construction which may affect Outstanding Universal Value of the property are intended within the world heritage property or buffer zone, except a project that targets the modernization and rehabilitation of entrances at both gates.
5. **Public access to the state of conservation report**

The full report can be open to public access on the World Heritage Centre’s State of Conservation Information System (http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc).
6. **Signature of the Authority**

30/11/2018

[Signature]

Murat GÜRÜL

Director General for Cultural Heritage and Museums