Draft Decision: 43 COM 7B.12
The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/19/43.COM/7B,

2. Recalling Decision 41 COM 7B.33, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017),

3. Notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the State Party to address the management and conservation challenges faced by the property;

4. Welcomes that the decision of the State Party to abandon the construction of a cable car to the Son Doong and Hang En cave or any other similar project within the property and requests the State Party to take the necessary measures to avoid a further increase in the number of visitors to caves located within the property; and not to approve and implement any future infrastructure project in or near the caves without consultation with IUCN, World Heritage Centre and without the endorsement of the World Heritage Committee.

5. Expresses its utmost concern that other similar projects for the construction of infrastructure projects in or near other caves within the property appear to be still be under consideration within the property;

5. Considers that such projects significantly increase visitation to undisturbed or little disturbed caves in the property or alter their physical conditions and would
represent a clear potential danger to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;

6. Urges the State Party to unequivocally abandon all proposed cable car developments at Hang En cave and not to approve any future cable car projects in the Strictly Protected Area, the Ecological Restoration Area, the Nature and Heritage Tourism Zone, the Strict Ecotourism Zone, and areas not specifically zoned for tourism development;

67. Reminds that the State Party is invited to of its obligation to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information, including Environmental Impact Assessments, for any large tourism and/or development projects, which have potential to impact the OUV of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines before works commence or any irreversible decision is made;

78. Notes with serious concern the persisting poaching of key large mammal species and other wildlife species in buffer zones and in the property, which, combined with habitat degradation and disturbance by encroachment and ecotourism activities, have led to a significant reduction in populations of large mammal species as well as prey species, and Also acknowledges efforts of the State Party made for the past 2 years in stepping up law enforcement efforts and continuing wildlife monitoring activities; and requests the State Party to make further efforts.

89. Also notes with concern the propagation of 14 invasive alien species, including the previously highlighted expansion of Merremia boisiana covering 1,000 ha in the property, welcomes the State Party’s preventive and remedial measures and further requests the State Party to continue monitoring trends, strengthening measures for eradication and report on the monitoring results;

910. Reiterates its previous request to the State Party to revise Acknowledge the revision of the 2010-2020 Sustainable Tourism Development Plan and its integration with other key management tools, namely the 2013-2025 Strategic Management Plan and the 2013-2020 Operational Management Plan, as suggested by the 2018 mission, to enhance governance based on the overarching principles of sustaining OUV of the property, its sound preservation by paying careful attention to the balance between tourism development and biodiversity conservation, as well as increased benefit sharing among stakeholders;

1044. Requests furthermore the State Party to fully implement the other recommendations of the 2018 mission, in particular to:

a) Enhance governance with an integrated and updated management tool and through the possible empowerment of human and financial resources of the Management Board in a variety of fields concerned, described as above,

b) Clarify the functional zoning of the property,

c) Adapt management of caves according to their specific vulnerability and requirements,

d) Enhance further education and outreach activities for both staff, local populations
and tourists on the values of the property,
e) Consider the establishment of a mechanism to engage a wider range of stakeholders in the management and valorization of the property,
f) Continue its cooperation with Lao People’s Democratic Republic for strengthened preservation of biodiversity notably in transboundary protected area, and for the future nomination of Hin Nam No national protected area jointly with the property in Viet Nam;

1142. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2020, 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 45th session in 2021.