

Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO

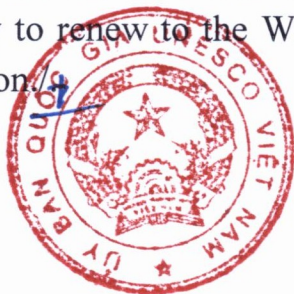
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The Vietnam National Commission for UNESCO presents its compliments to the World Heritage Centre and has the honor to submit herewith the report on the State of Conservation of the Trang An Landscape Complex (C/N 1438 bis) in compliance with the request by the World Heritage Committee relating to this property on the Decision 42 COM 7B.62 at its 42nd meeting in 2018.

The Vietnam National Commission for UNESCO avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the World Heritage Centre the assurances of its highest consideration.



Hanoi, 29th November 2019

UNESCO Heritage Centre
7, Place de Fontenoy
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FRANCE

TRANG AN LANDSCAPE COMPLEX, NINH BINH PROVINCE, VIET NAM

STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT

Property: Trang An Landscape Complex

State party: Việt Nam

Ref: 1438bis

I. Introduction

This State of Conservation Report is a response to the World Heritage Committee from the State Party of Vietnam to requests made at the 42th Session of the Committee in 2018, in Decision 42 COM 7B.62.

In Paragraph 4: The Committee notes that visitation is anticipated to increase to 3.5 million visitors per annum by 2020, and urges the State Party to continue the necessary studies to enable a better understanding of impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) from high and rapidly increasing visitation, and to establish and enforce a strict limit to visitation to ensure it does not exceed the carrying capacity of the property.

In Paragraph 6: The Committee requests the State Party to further strengthen the regulations for tourism facilities for ascertaining that a balanced approach be made considering aspects relating tourism, heritage management and nature conservation as a whole; also to undertake further assessment of the facilities and services required to adequately service current and future visitation, and further develop staff training and capacity building, so that the national human resources are continuously provided to ensure a long term and successful management of the archaeological heritage of the property;

In paragraph 7: Also requests the State Party to continue to provide adequate financial and human resources for systematic environmental monitoring, as an integral part of management planning and operations of the Management Board;

In paragraph 8: Further requests the State Party to ensure that any heritage promotion and marketing undertaken within the property is consistent with interpretation of its OUV;

In paragraph 9: Requests furthermore the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to contribute to the property management plan.

In paragraph 10: Noting that the State Party has no intention to construct a new university in the Bai Dinh area, nevertheless reiterates its request to the State Party to

submit detailed information on any proposed development projects within the property, its buffer zone and setting for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies prior to any decisions being taken

In paragraph 11: Also urges the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for any major developments within the property and the buffer zone, and to take into account potential impacts on the OUV of the property;

In paragraph 12: Encourages the State Party to continue to work with the Advisory Bodies on further refining its efforts, including the integration of biodiversity conservation into management and decision making;

These concerns and requests of the Committee are all addressed in this State of Conservation report. Also in this report are details of some other important developments in the property that are contributing to improved management for the protection and integrity of the OUV of the property.

II. Response to World Heritage Committee Decision 42 COM 7B.62

In paragraph 4. The Committee notes that current visitation has already increased beyond the previously anticipated two million visitors per annum and is further anticipated to increase to 3.5 million visitors per annum by 2020, and urges the State Party to continue the necessary studies to enable a better understanding of impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) from high and rapidly increasing visitation, and to establish and enforce a strict limit to visitation to ensure it does not exceed the carrying capacity of the property, in order to conserve its OUV, as well as its biodiversity as a key part of its aesthetic value;

There are six main tourism sites in the Trang An Landscape Complex, including: (1) Hoa Lu Ancient Capital; (2) Trang An Eco-tourism site; (3) Tam Cốc – Bích Động area ; (4) Thạch Bích – Thung Nắng; (5) Thung Nham Bird Garden Eco-tourism site; (6) Galaxy Grotto. At five of the six tourism sites (except for Hoa Lu Ancient Capital) visitors remain passive during boat tours on fixed tourist routes. Thus there is essentially no natural impact and little opportunity for social impacts. Facility construction is very good and is regularly maintained and upgraded to meet visitor expectations. (see paragraph 6 of this report). The inequality in the number of visitors between the peak season (the first 3 months of the lunar year) and the other months is reducing, and better dispersal of visitors among additional destinations in the property has prevented any undesirable overcrowding. As shown in Table 1 of this report, According to table of the average annual growth rate of visitors was 9,7% in the four years from 2015 to 2018. The total number of visitors in 2018 was approximately 2.9 million, so at the current growth rate the total number of visitors by

2020 could be between 3.0 and 3,5 million. Based on experience to date, the Management Board foresees no problem in managing this increase in visitation without incurring any undesirable natural or social impacts. The Board and its tourist business partners will manage, maintain and upgrade tourism facilities and services to meet tourist’s expectation and to continue to avoid any significant impact on the OUV of the property. (See Table 2 of this report).

	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average annual growth rate %
Domestic	1,773,557	1,865,313	2,014,887	2,309,162	9.3%
International	437,047	529,485	591,882	614,636	12.3%
Total	2,210,604	2,457,798	2,606,769	2,923,798	9.7%

Table 1: Number of visitors to the Trang An Landscape Complex

Currently, the Management Board is cooperating with international and domestic experts to conduct a research project entitled “Determining the visitor carrying capacity of the Trang An Landscape Complex – World Heritage Property, Ninh Binh.” The research will be conducted over a three-year period from November 2019 to November 2021, to confirm management objectives, establish carrying capacity levels, and identify the necessary infrastructure and services required for tourist visitor management. By late December 2019 the project will have finished determining visitor carrying capacity of two key areas: the Trang An Eco-tourism site and the Tam Coc – Bich Dong area

In paragraph 6. Requests the State Party to:

- a) Further strengthen the regulations for tourism facilities,*
- b) Ensure the establishment of an appropriate consultation mechanism within the Management Board and among all stakeholders of the property, in order to:*
 - (i) Ascertain that a balanced approach be made considering aspects relating tourism, heritage management and nature conservation as a whole,*
 - (ii) Apply a clearer reporting protocol concerning any new and major developments within the property and ensure the necessary prior consultation of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines,*

- c) Ensure that current measures remain in place to limit overcrowding, including the maximum daily quota for peak and normal visitation days,*
- d) Undertake further assessment of the facilities and services required to adequately service current and future visitation, taking into account of the substantial current numbers and the revised future estimates, including the extrapolated festival-day peaks of up to 50,000 visitors,*
- e) Further develop the sections within the Management Plan concerning archaeological heritage, in particular staff training and capacity building, so that the national human resources are continuously provided to ensure a long term and successful management of the archaeological heritage of the property;*

To further strengthen the regulations for tourism facilities:

* On 19/6/2017, the Vietnamese National Assembly issued Tourism on Law No. 09/2017/QH14.

* On 21/9/2017, the Vietnamese Government issued Decree No 109/2017/NĐ-CP on protection and management of world cultural heritage and natural heritage in Viet Nam.

From the time the Trang An Landscape Complex attained World Heritage status the Ninh Binh Provincial People's Committee has always given much attention and effort to managing and promoting the OUV of the property. The Provincial People's Committee has issued several important regulations on management and protection of the property as follows:

* On 16/11/2015, the Committee issued Decision No 1261/QĐ-UBND on approving The Management Plan of the Trang An Landscape Complex for the period 2016 – 2020, vision to 2030. The plan comprehensively specifies the vision, basic principles, objectives and actions for protection, sustainable use, preservation and promotion of the values of the property, especially tourism management and archaeological site management.

* On 17/8/2016, the Executive Committee of the Provincial Party issued Resolution No 02-NQ/TU on conserving and promoting the values of the World cultural and natural heritage of Trang An Landscape Complex in tourism development in the period 2016 – 2020. This Resolution determines that the OUV of the property have to be respected, preserved, conserved and promoted to the highest standards. Protection and effective and sustainable use and promotion of the values of the property are the responsibilities of the local authorities, related agencies, enterprises and people in the province.

* On 22/10/2018, the Provincial People's Committee issued Decision No 28/2018/QĐ-UBND on managing, conserving and promoting the values of the Trang An Landscape Complex. The Decision is based on Decree No 109/2017/NĐ-CP dated 21/9/2017 by the Prime Minister on managing and protecting World Heritage Sites in Việt Nam and it is made to replace Decisions which were already issued immediately after the Trang An Landscape Complex became a World Heritage property. Those Decisions comprise: Decision No 83/QĐ-UBND dated 21/01/2015 by the Provincial People's Committee on issuing a provisional Regulation on Construction Management in the protected area of the Trang An Landscape Complex; Decision No 26/2015/QĐ-UBND dated 24/8/2015 by the Provincial People's Committee on issuing the Regulation of Cooperative Management of natural resources and environmental protection of the Trang An Landscape Complex; Decision No 32/2015/QĐ-UBND dated 24/11/2015 by the Provincial People's Committee on issuing the Regulation on Managing and Exploiting Caves for Tourism Activities in Ninh Binh Province; Decision No 34/2015/QĐ-UBND dated 14/12/2015 by the Provincial Peoples's Committee on issuing the Regulation on Managing, Protecting and Promoting Values of Classified Historical and Cultural Relics and Scenic Landscapes in Ninh Binh Province; Decision No 35/2015/QĐ-UBND dated 17/12/2015 by the Provincial People's Committee on issuing the Regulation on Managing and Protecting Archaeological sites, Geological sites and the Scenic Landscape of the World cultural and natural heritage Trang An Landscape Complex.

A new Regulation (2018) which surmounts the weakness of the old Regulations, addresses specific principles about: construction management; natural resource management; protection of environment landscape; management and conservation of historical – cultural relics, archaeological sites, geological sites; tourism management and promotion of the values of the property; responsibilities and cooperation mechanism among the Management Board, other departments, related agencies, People's Committees of districts and communes inside the property.

* On 11/6/2018, the Ninh Binh Department of Tourism issued Decision No 119/QĐ-UBND on establishing a Management and Scientific Advisory Committee for the Trang An Landscape Complex. Members of the Advisory Committee comprise: international and domestic experts and scientists; National Council for Cultural Heritage; heads of the departments in Ninh Binh province; and representatives from tourism companies in the property. The Advisory Committee's task is to provide advice to Ninh Binh Department of Tourism and the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board on management, conservation and promotion the values of the property; to advise on science and technology applications for conducting research in the property; and to promote active

cooperation among State agencies, research institutes, business enterprises and local communities.

Regulations, including those at both national and local levels, on management and conservation of the property basically ensure the establishment of an appropriate consultation mechanism within the Management Board and among all stakeholders of the property, in order to ascertain that a balanced approach be made considering aspects relating tourism, heritage management and nature conservation as a whole. In the coming time, the Board will explore the possibility of developing a heritage conservation plan to submit for the Government's approval in accordance with the Decree No 166/2018/ND-CP dated 25/12/2018 by the Vietnamese Government, regulating the competence, order and procedures for project's approval in the World Heritage site.

More than five years following the Trang An Landscape Complex inscription, the management, protection and promotion of the values of the property have experienced very positive outcomes: The OUV has been well preserved from impacts and fully respected; the awareness of protecting, preserving and promoting the values of the property has been raised within authorized agencies and the local community; there has been a close-knit cooperation of heritage management among authorities, departments, related agencies, enterprises and local communities; historical and cultural relics have been well protected; security, public order, environmental sanitation, and tourism infrastructure have been fully maintained in good condition; there has been an increase in the number and the qualification of the human resources for heritage management; and protection and tourism exploitation of the property have achieved their sustainable balance. Above all, the property has benefited the local people and has become an important part of their lives.

Undertake further assessment of the facilities and services required to adequately service current and future visitation: Up to June, 2019, within the six tourism sites in the property there are 3,930 boat rowers, 95 on-site tour guides, and 140 rangers and security officers (Table 2 of this report). The boat rowers also conduct environmental sanitation work, and they act as visitor guides, which ensures that tourist activities do not cause any undesirable impacts on the natural environment or any social disruption. All basic facilities and services are provided so that tourists may have an enjoyable and safe visit to the property.

Tourism site	Number of boats	Parking lots	Ticket offices	Restaurants/cafes	Displays	Shops	WC
Tràng An	2000	1	2	55	1	70	15
Tam Cốc	1500	1	1	30	0	18	6
Bird Valley	150	1	1	15	0	5	4
Sunshine Valley	130	1	1	2	0	0	3
Galaxy Grotto	150	1	1	5	0	2	4
Hoa Lư Ancient Capital	0	1	1	25	1	12	3
Total	3930	6	7	132	2	107	35

Table 2: Number of tourist facilities in the property

Investment in facilities is calculated relevant to the growth rate of visitors. It corresponds to the Board's plans for improving and upgrading tourism infrastructure and services to meet expectations and improve visitor experience, especially during the peak season. Experience to date shows that the balance between facilities and tourist numbers is appropriate, but the situation is monitored continually so that management can respond to any significant changes in visitation.

In Paragraph 7: Also requests the State Party to continue to provide adequate financial and human resources for systematic environmental monitoring, as an integral part of management planning and operations;

About the quality of human resources (Table 3 of this report): The Board encourages and supports its employees to conduct research and take part in professional training courses to enhance their knowledge and expertise. Annually, the Board holds conferences and training courses for its employees, and Board members also take part in management and conservation workshops which are held by domestic and international organizations. Moreover, close cooperation with universities (e.g. Cambridge University, Queen's University Belfast, National Economics University, and Forestry University); research institutes (e.g. Viet Nam Institute of Archaeology, Viet Nam Institute of Geosciences and Mineral resources, and Institute for Forest Ecology) also help the Board's employees enhance their skills and expertise. Many of the staff have a university qualification.

Major subject area	Master's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Associate
Culture	03	08	01
Tourism	01	05	0
Landscape and environmental management	02	07	0
Project management	03	09	0

Table 3. Qualification of the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board's employees

About financial resources: As shown in Table 4 of this report, the Management Board has a large and steadily growing budget, in excess of \$US 5 million annually. The budget funds are allocated to action plans within nine different programme areas. Allocation levels, priorities and plans are determined by the Board in consultation with related Departments and local authorities, with the aim of maximizing the effective protection and use of the property and its OUV.

No	Programme area	2017 (USD)	2018 (USD)	2019 (USD)
1	Improve infrastructure	1.450.000	1.500.000	1.200.000
2	Protect cultural value	1.100.000	1.200.000	1.350.000
3	Protect natural value	180.000	230.000	250.000
4	Protect environment and biodiversity	200.153	293.065	271.000
5	Tourism management	575.000	612.758	630.000
6	Sustainable development management/ Residential area management/trade and mining activities	450.700	530.500	623.000
7	Promotion and awareness raising activities	450.260	560.731	555.158
8	Capacity building activities of the Board	250.000	368.450	370.255
9	Research activities	500.010	500.500	600.230
Total		5.156.123	5.796.004	5.849.643

Table 4. Financial resources for management, conservation and promotion of the OUV of the property.

Provide adequate financial and human resources for environmental monitoring and management: The Management Board has established for teams of three persons each

to patrol several different zones in the property. The task of these teams is to discover in a timely manner any violations against the regulations of management and conservation of the property and handle the violations or report the violations to authorities. This has ensured that environment and landscape of the property are well managed and protected as required. The system of caves, karst mountains, and special-use forests are fully protected, and any actions such as cutting for firewood, hunting of wild animals, exploiting rocks or removing construction materials are completely prohibited. Those factors causing environmental pollution such as waste water and garbage from tourist activities and residential uses by local inhabitants are carefully treated and the natural ecosystem is healthy. No comprehensive biological surveys have yet been conducted and accurate survey data are not yet available. However, anecdotally according to local people, the number of birds, storks and monkeys has increased significantly, thus indicating that the habitats and ecosystems are in good and improving condition. Beginning in November, 2019 the Management Board is co-operating with experts and university based researchers to conduct a research project in order to assess the environmental and social impacts from tourist activities. The Management Board is also mobilizing resources to respond to environmental changes caused by natural and human-induced effects such as extreme weather events and climate change.

Monitoring the impact of construction activities: The growth in numbers of tourists and of the local population has led to increased construction of accommodation facilities and residential houses. This requires that the Management Board enforces regulations regarding construction and land use. Previously, local people would renovate or build new houses to operate homestay and small guest house businesses without permission from authorities. Currently, the most local people have followed the regulations of construction, and construct or renovate their houses only after they receive permission from the local authorities. In the period 2015-2018, the Management Board collaborated with the local authorities in issuing permits for more than 200 construction projects and successfully promulgated more than 50 violation documents. The case of the illegal construction of a walkway on Cai Ha Mountain in 2018 was also prosecuted, and the walkway has been removed with the natural landscape essentially returned to its natural state.

Prior to approval of any development and construction projects in the buffer zone, the Management Board advises the Provincial People's Committee to consult with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Scientific Committee of the Departments, other related agencies, local authorities, experts, scientists and others in assessing the suitability of the project according to heritage management regulations in the property. Examples of these regulations are Decision 230/QD-TTg dated

February 4, 2016 by the Prime Minister on approving the Master Plan, and the property Management Plan, and the Decree No. 166/2018/ND-CP dated December 35, 2018 by the Government regulating the competence, order and procedures for approval of projects in the World Heritage site.

In paragraph 8: Notes that the temporary replica film set will be removed; Further requests the State Party to ensure that any heritage promotion and marketing undertaken within the property is consistent with interpretation of its OUV

In early August 2019, the Trang An Management Board requested the Director of the Board of the Trang An Eco – Tourism Area to dismantle and remove the temporary replica village. On 20/09/2019 the movie set was removed completely as required by the World Heritage Committee (Photo 1a and 1b of this report). Currently, the Management Board is cooperating with the Xuan Truong Enterprise and experts from Queen’s University in Belfast to establish on the site an indoor-outdoor archaeological exhibition and storage facility. It is intended that this will include the use of dioramas and other static exhibits to demonstrate the story of pre-historic life in Trang An, which is the principal element of the cultural OUV of the property. This new plan is in full accordance with the request from the World Heritage Committee that heritage promotion and marketing be consistent with interpretation of the OUV.



Photo 1a: The movie set before the replica village was dismantled.



Photo 1b: The movie set site after the replica village was dismantled.

In August, 2019, the Management Board cooperated with Viet Nam Institute of Archaeology to design and assemble an archaeological display on the topic of “History of prehistoric human inhabitation in the Trang An Landscape Complex” (photo 2). Artifacts retrieved from excavations at more than 30 archaeological sites in the area of Tràng An Landscape Complex (Tràng An) in the display are a source of important data confirming the outstanding values of the human heritage. They demonstrate a story of occupancy and the human use of land and sea in the face of severe fluctuations of the natural environment over a period of 30,000 years, through three stages associated with the periods before, during and after changes in sea level.



Photo 2: Archaeological artefact display in the Trang An Boat wharf visitor centre.

In paragraph 9: Requests furthermore the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to contribute to the property management plan.

The Management Board invited the Reactive Monitoring Mission of the World Heritage Centre to visit Trang An Landscape Complex from 28/9/2019 to 03/10/2019. The Participants of the mission were: Mrs. Nao Hayashi, UNESCO Program Specialist in Asia and the Pacific region; and Mr. Andrew Sneddon, ICOMOS Specialist and Mr. Brian Clark – IUCN Specialist.

Contents of the mission programme : (1) General assessment of the state of conservation of the property according to criteria for which the Trang An Landscape Complex was recognized as a World Heritage. (2) Assessment of the implementation of the Decisions from the World Heritage Committee, specifically Decision 38 COM 8B.14, Decision 40 COM 7B.67 and Decision 42 COM 7B.62; (3) Consultation and support to the management and monitoring of state of conservation and changing trends of important cultural and natural values of the property.

The Management Board prepared TOR and sent it to members of the Reactive Monitoring Mission one month beforehand as required; meanwhile the Board was also preparing a plan of working in the Trang An Landscape Complex. During the time working in Viet Nam, The Mission consulted with leaders of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNESCO office in Ha Noi, IUCN office in Ha Noi, Ninh Binh Provincial People’s Committee, local Departments, local authorities and local people in the property. The Mission visited the main tourist sites in the property, several archaeological sites and related areas, including the Cai Ha mountain walkway site and Kong Skull Island movie set.

Subsequently, the Monitoring Mission gave positive feedback and acknowledged the efforts of the Management Board for managing, conserving and promoting the values of the property, and the implementation of requests and recommendations from the World Heritage Committee.

In paragraph 10 Noting that the State Party has no intention to construct a new university in the Bai Dinh area, nevertheless reiterates its request to the State Party to submit, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, detailed information on any proposed development projects within the property, its buffer zone and setting for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies prior to any decisions being taken that could be difficult to reverse, including new parking infrastructure;

Regarding a new university in the Bai Dinh area: Pursuant to Point b, Clause 4, Article 1 of Decision no1266/QĐ-TTg dated 28/7/2014 by the Prime Minister approving General Urban Planning of Ninh Binh to the year 2020, vision to 2030 about development of urban space, the Bai Dinh area, which is in the buffer zone of the property, is planned to be a spiritual tourism site and new urban university area,

and the population is anticipated to be 20,000 by 2030. However, this is a broad strategic plan only. On 04/02/2016 the Prime Minister issued Decision no 230/QĐ-TTg approving the Master Plan of the Trang An Landscape Complex, Ninh Binh Province. Neither this Master Plan nor the property Management Plan make any mention of building a new university or urban area in the buffer zone, and no plans or regulations have been issued related to such development.

According to the Regulation on Management and Conservation of Heritage and current laws and regulations, before approval and deployment of any new development projects in the property and the buffer zone, the proposers of projects have to follow the regulations of the Decree no 166/2018/ND-CP issued on 25/12/2018 by the Central Government. This Decree regulates the competence, order and procedures of approving new projects in World Heritage sites, beginning with consulting the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, experts and scientists. The projects are also subject to an environmental impact assessment report (EIA) before being approved. The EIA reports have to consider every possible impact on the integrity and OUV of the World Heritage sites. The EIA reports also have to take note of the instructions from IUCN and ICOMOS and they will be submitted to the Secretariat of the World Heritage Committee and Advisory Bodies in accordance with the regulations of the *Operational Guidelines*.

In paragraph 11. Also urges the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for any major developments within the property and the buffer zone as a timely and appropriate method of assessing both individual and cumulative impacts of current and planned developments on this small and fragile property, taking into account potential impacts on the OUV of the property in line with the IUCN and ICOMOS guidelines on impact assessments for the proposed projects, prior to allowing any such developments to take place;

As mentioned in paragraph 11, undertaking Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for any major development within the property and the buffer zone are priorities for the Management Board. The Management Board also adheres strictly to provisions in the Management Plan (Part VII and Part VIII of the Management Plan), which establish policies and the aims and objectives of management, anticipate the environmental impacts, determine the benefits and challenges for the local community's involvement, identifies the correct solutions in assessing the impacts from the projects before allowing them to take place.

In paragraph 12. Encourages the State Party to continue to work with the Advisory Bodies on further refining its efforts, including the integration of biodiversity conservation into management and decision making.

To implement the Heritage Management Plan effectively, the Management Board requested the Ninh Binh Department of Tourism to issue Decision no 119/QĐ-UBND dated 11/06/2018 on establishing a Management and Scientific Advisory Committee to provide advice to the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board on management, conservation and promotion of the values of the property; to advise on science and technology applications for conducting research in the property; and to promote active cooperation among State agencies, research institutes, enterprises and local communities. (See Clause 6 of this report and clause III of the Reintroduction of the Delacour's Langur Project). The Board regularly keeps in touch with the Advisory Bodies, and the UNESCO office in Ha Noi. The Board endeavors to catch up with new policies, ideas and solutions for conserving and promoting the values of heritage, learn new initiatives and experiences of managing and conserving heritage from other world heritage sites around the world.

III. Development and considerable improvement of heritage management

SUNDASIA Project: SUNDASIA is a research programme that seeks to provide a better understanding how communities responded to past climate and environmental change, but also how that evidence can contribute to addressing the effects of anthropogenic-induced changes to today's environment. The primary objectives of the project are also directly relevant to **UN Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 11 and 13**; SUNDASIA's spin-out projects are extending that coverage to other UN Sustainable Development Goals, notably goals 6 and 15. The project has completed seven seasons of fieldwork between August 2016 and December 2018. The principal research focuses on digital terrain mapping, palaeoenvironmental reconstruction, and archaeological excavation. The outcomes of the research are the baseline data which the Management Board has used to build an archaeological exhibition with models of prehistoric humans and history of their inhabitation in Trang An. They are also an important part of the Project on "Reintroduction of the Delacour's Langur in the Trang An Landscape Complex" in early 2019.

The Management Board cooperated with the Viet Nam Institute of Archaeology to build a small archeological display in the visitor center of the Trang An boat wharf, the display tells the history of human inhabitation and adaptation to the strong fluctuations of the natural environment through three phases: Phase 1: from 30,000 years to 9,000 years ago, when the Trang An Landscape complex was a land area, humans lived in the caves, used primitive stone tools, went hunting and picked plants

on land as food. Their livelihood represent the features of the unique Paleolithic Period culture. Phase 2: from 9,000 years to 4,000 years ago, with high sea level, the Trang An Landscape Complex became a series of islands, people still lived in the caves, developed their stone grinding techniques, invented pottery, fished and collected marine molluscs. Their livelihood represents the features of early Neolithic culture in the Northern coastal zones; Phase 3: 4000 years ago, the sea level dropped again and humans moved out to the margins of the Trang An Landscape Complex, their livelihood depended on stable agriculture and they step by step adopted new technology, moving into the civilized society of the Bronze age. The display give visitors a better understanding about the traditional inhabitation, land use and sea use, which represents the culture and the interaction between humans and environment, especially during the transition time between Paleolithic and Neolithic time (see Clause 8 of State of Conservation Report).

Property boundary markers: The Management Board has determined the coordinates and finished setting up the boundary markers to clearly separate the property and its buffer zone. Up to the end of November, 2019, 475 boundary markers on the border of the property and 211 boundary markers on the border of the buffer zone have been set up on the ground, the average distance between every two boundary markers is 100m in the property and 200m in the buffer zone. Every boundary marker is numbered with its coordinate which is connected with a digital map. Also, the map of the boundary markers has been printed out and sent to local authorities in the property. Setting up boundary markers will help local government and local community in the property to know exactly the border between the property and its buffer zone, which is useful for management, conservation and promotion of the values of the property.



Photo 3: The Boundary makers to clearly separate the property and its buffer zone.

Promoting quality heritage tourism: The Board has cooperated with UNESCO office in Ha Noi, and Xuan Truong Enterprise to deploy the Project: Promote quality heritage tourism in Trang An. The objectives are: Improve quality of heritage management; Improve quality of heritage interpretation and public awareness; diversify heritage tourism products and promote involvement of the local community. The Project comprises four components: (1) Improve quality of heritage management; (2) Improve quality of heritage interpretation and public awareness; (3) diversify heritage tourism products; (4) Convene an International Conference and sharing experience. The project will commence in November, 2019 and finish in November, 2021. The project will contribute to attaining **UN Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 11 and 13**

Conclusions

Managing, conserving, exploiting and promoting the values of the World Heritage Trang An Landscape Complex is the responsibility of the nation, the local authorities, related agencies and local people in the province (according to Resolution 02-NQ/TU issued on 17/8/2016 by the Executive Committee of the Ninh Binh Provincial Party). Based on the implementation of the Heritage Management Plan, experience on heritage management, specific solutions and actions in the State of Conservation Report, the Visitor Management Action Plan, the Archaeological Site Management Action Plan and implementation of the recommendations from the World Heritage Committee, Ninh Binh Province is strongly committed to protect the integrity, authenticity and the OUV of the World Heritage and to hand down to the later generations in accordance with the spirit of the World Heritage Convention.