Item 12 of the provisional agenda: Requests for International Assistance

A. NATURAL HERITAGE

A.1 Technical Assistance

A.1.1 Sangay National Park, Ecuador

Background: Sangay National Park was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1983. It was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger at the sixteenth session of the World Heritage Committee in Santa Fe. There will be a special monitoring report on the site by regional officials of IUCN. Ecuador has received considerable funding from the World Heritage Fund, primarily for Galapagos World Heritage site. US $ 20,000 were given to Sangay National Park for promotion in 1985. A training course in Sangay National Park was provided in 1985. (US $ 10,000).

Description of the Request: The original technical assistance request was for US$ 30,000, however, since it was submitted further funds have been received from the GEF programme. Thus, the project has been revised down to US$ 28,500, outlined in a detailed budget proposal for US$ 25,500 and an additional letter concerning certain communication equipment (US $ 3,000). Specifically, the request involves communication equipment in the form of radios and solar panels as well as three walkie talkies. In addition, they wish to purchase six burros, and to carry out a study of land ownership in cooperation with local peoples, as well purchasing some graphic materials for interpretation and public communication.

Amount requested from the Fund: US $ 28,500, national contribution is US $ 22,000.
Ecuador has paid its dues to the Fund up to 1992.

**Action by the Committee:** The Bureau recalled that Sangay National Park was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger at the sixteenth session of the World Heritage Committee in Santa Fe. The Bureau deferred a decision on this **US$28,500** project and recommends the Committee to consider this request taking into account the monitoring report that will be presented to the seventeenth session of the Committee.

### A.1.2 Mount Nimba, Guinea

**Background:** The World Heritage Centre has received a technical assistance request from the Government of Guinea on 30 November 1993. Mount Nimba was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger at the sixteenth session of the World Heritage Committee. At the request of the Committee, a multidisciplinary mission was carried out from 15 to 30 May 1993. The recommendations of this mission were tabled and accepted by the Bureau at its meeting in June 1993. The Government of Guinea was requested to provide a revised nomination indicating the new boundaries of the site.

The Government of Guinea was also requested to establish an administrative centre for the site and to submit a further technical assistance project beyond the US$30,000 approved by the Bureau in June. A revised nomination has been received and a project proposal leading to the establishment of a new administrative centre has also been received. It should be noted that the pilot project managed by UNESCO/UNDP will be terminated by 31 December 1993.

**Description of request:** An original request for US$45,000 was received. The technical assistance project has been designed to ensure a continuity for on site management between the close-down of the pilot project and the anticipated start up of a further UNDP/FAO project. The project will provide for consultant services, operational equipment and on-site protection in addition to assisting in the implementation of the new administrative centre for which legislation is being prepared. A consultant will arrange a donors meeting to identify funding sources for the on-going management of the site.

**Amount requested from the Fund:** US$ 45,000, additional national contribution is US$ 15,000.

Guinea has paid its dues to the World Heritage Fund including 1992 and partly for 1993.

**Action by the Committee:** The Bureau examined the request for US $45,000 for the World Heritage site in Danger. It recommended a
reduction of the project to US $30,000 and deferred a decision until the monitoring report is presented at the seventeenth session of the Committee.

A.1.3 Komodo National Park (KNP) (Indonesia)

Background: The Komodo National Park (KNP) was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1991. It is the single most important habitat for the endangered Komodo Dragon, as well as a significant coral reef site. The flora and fauna of KNP are excellent representations of the evolutionary richness of the Indo-Malayan realm. Since the inscription of the site on the World Heritage List, the number of visitors has increased from 14,000 in 1990 to 17,000 in 1992. A visitor interpretation plan is being finalized, however its implementation is subject to the availability of funds. A management plan exists and there is a staff of 89 persons working in KNP. The annual budget has increased from US$ 70,000 to US$ 200,000 in 1992.

In its evaluation of the nomination, IUCN noted a number of maintenance requirements and equipment needs. There is a need to improve the number and quality of coastal patrols in the marine sector of the Park. There is no written state of conservation of the site available, however an oral report can be presented at the session of the Committee.

Description of the Request: The project has been prepared by the Komodo National Park authorities and reviewed by relevant Indonesian Government authorities as well as by the Indonesian Committee for implementing the Convention and UNESCO’s ROSTSEA Office. The request has three objectives: to upgrade crucial equipment and infrastructure requirements in order to strengthen patrolling and communication capacities; secondly, to improve staff skills essential to monitoring and conservation and to carry out a study on population in adjacent villages. Major costs are a patrol boat (US $12,000), ten solar power generators for guard posts (US $10,000) staff training for maintenance and operations, marine surveys and census techniques for animals (US $11,000).

Amount requested from the Fund: Technical assistance is requested for three items: equipment purchases US $32,000 (including one speed boat, radios for the guard posts, antennas, solar generators, construction of wells to provide water supply to guard posts etc.), staff training US $11,000, social-economic studies US $5,000, and miscellaneous costs US $1,500 for a total of US $49,500.

Indonesia has paid its dues to the World Heritage Fund until the end of 1992.
Action by the Committee: The Bureau reviewed the request for US$ 49,500 for Komodo National Park and recommended that the Committee approve US$37,000, deleting a proposal for staff training. It was noted that the authorities of the Park have already established a training programme for 1994/95.

A.2. Training

A.2.1 School for the Training of Wildlife Specialists (Cameroon)

Background: The School for Training of Wildlife Specialists in Cameroon is the primary regional institute for training managers of wildlife and protected areas from Francophone Africa. The World Heritage Fund has supported the training of managers from Congo, Guinea, Niger, Senegal and Zaire, at this School, at a total cost of US$ 76,000. The World Heritage Fund also provided, in 1986, US$ 8,000 to support the participation of the Director of the School at the 20th International Seminar on National Parks and Equivalent Reserves in USA/Canada. In 1988, the Fund supported the participation of the Principal of the School at the IUCN General Assembly in Costa Rica, at a cost of US$ 4,000. Furthermore, the Director of the School participated in the World Heritage Workshop held during the Fourth World Parks Congress, in Caracas, Venezuela, in February 1992, and presented a paper on the training programmes offered by the School.

Description of request: The Director of the School has submitted a proposal for organizing a sub-regional (Francophone Africa) seminar for managers of World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves. The seven-day seminar is scheduled to take place during January or February 1994. The seminar will discuss information gathered in a number of projects conducted in the protected areas of Cameroon, including Dja Faunal Reserve (World Heritage site and Biosphere Reserve) and the Waza Biosphere Reserve. The seminar will be held in the Waza Biosphere Reserve and address issues pertaining to characteristics of World Heritage sites and biosphere reserves, their importance in national and regional protected area networks, management of biosphere reserves, international conventions for protected areas and the importance of tourism development in protected area management. Participants from the following countries are to be invited: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Madagascar, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, and Zaire. UNESCO, IUCN and WWF will also be invited to send representatives to the seminar. Although the request has been submitted on forms used for preparing a proposal for a training workshop, the nature of the activity foreseen resembles a regional seminar of technical experts rather than a training exercise.
Amount requested from the Fund: A sum of US$ 43,667 is requested to cover the following expenses: international air-travel (US$ 17,697), per-diem to international participants (18 in total; US$ 11,450), per-diem for 5 Cameroon participants (US$3,365), local transport and field visits (US$ 8,230), organizational, secretarial and other miscellaneous expenses (US$ 2,925).

National contribution: The Director of the School has indicated that national contributions, in kind, are foreseen but does not provide any details. He has also indicated that he is seeking contributions from other organizations, although he does not mention their names.

Action by the Committee: The Bureau discussed the training request of US$ 43,667 and recommended to the Committee the approval of a sum of up to US$35,000 which would only be released upon the receipt and approval by the Centre of a more detailed information on the programme of the course and the justification of the estimated costs.

A.2.2 Training Course at Côte d'Ivoire

Background: This training course is provided by the "Ecole nationale du génie rural, des eaux et des forêts" (ENGREF). In 1993 US $ 30,000 were provided to ENGREF to organize a training seminar which was held in the Baoule Biosphere Reserve in Mali in February 1993. The Committee instructed the Centre to request the organizers (a) to incorporate a component on the philosophy and work of the Convention in the course curriculum, (b) to undertake an evaluation of the course covering the last 5-years period and providing information on the return of the participants to African States Parties to assume responsibilities concerned with natural heritage protection and (c) that future field course should take place at an African natural World Heritage site. The report on the training course covered (b) and (c) stating, in particular, that 53 out of the 60 participants of the course are working in the field of natural resources management and seven, more specifically on protected areas. Item (a) was discussed directly with the course organizer.

Description of the Request: The ENGREF has requested the assistance of the World Heritage Fund to carry out a training course in the World Heritage site Tai National Park in Côte d'Ivoire which was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1982. The course will focus on the following ecological themes and conservation issues: wild fauna, vegetation and research on natural resources and spatial use.
The course will include 25 students from different nationalities including Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Senegal and Tchad as well as Belgium, France, and Canada and will be carried out in cooperation with national partners (Ministry for Agriculture, regional authorities etc.)

**Amount requested from the Fund:** The revised total of the budget amounts now to US$ 71,917, including the organization of the course (US$ 3,595), the teachers and personnel (US$ 25,466) and transportation (US$ 35,483) as well as other expenses including photocopies for the participants etc. (US$ 10,526). The Ecole National Superieure Agronomique (ENSA) in Abidjan will provide two vehicles. A sum of US$ 40,000 is requested from the World Heritage Fund.

**Action by the Committee:** The Bureau discussed the request for US$ 40,000 for the organization of a training course provided by the "Ecole nationale du génie rural, des eaux et des forêts" (ENGREF). There was considerable discussion about this course. The Bureau raised concerns about cost effectiveness of the programme and the results in relation to the management of World Heritage sites. While ENGREF had responded to the requests of the sixteenth session of the Committee it was felt that the details submitted were not sufficient to make a decision at this time. The Bureau requested the Centre to contact the course director immediately for further information to be given to the Committee. A decision was taken that if further information was received from the Director of the course the proposal could be reviewed by the Committee.

**B. Cultural Heritage**

**B.1 Technical co-operation**

**B.1.1. Serra da Capivara National Park (Brazil)**

**Background:** The cultural site of Serra da Capivara National Park was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1991. To date, Brazil has received US$ 45,000 for Technical Assistance and a considerable amount for training. No assistance has been provided so far to the site of Capivara.

Brazil has paid voluntary contributions to the World Heritage Fund including the 1992-1993 period.

**Description of the request:** The Fundacao Museu do Homem Americano collaborates with the national and local authorities in the management and conservation of the Park. The request, that has been presented by the Foundation and has been endorsed by the national authorities through the Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, consists of two elements:
1. Assistance for taking measures in three of the most visited sites in the Park (Toca do Baixao do Perna I, Toca do Baixao da Vaca and Sitio do Meio) with the double objective of protecting the paintings and at the same time to better control and facilitate visits to the sites. Protective structures would be installed at the three sites (request for US$ 20,000) and two guards would be appointed for supervision and protection (US$ 5,000). As a result of this assistance the increased visitation to the site would be better managed while securing proper conservation of the rock paintings.

2. Assistance for the purchase of equipment for the inventory and documentation of the rock paintings (US$ 28,000). This assistance will be complementary to a considerable national financial contribution for training and technical services. The result of this project would be a complete register of the rock paintings as well as the recuperation through computer methods of the paintings that cannot be observed by a human eye.

National contribution: The total costs of the project amount to US$ 155,000, of which US$ 67,000 will be covered by the national authorities and US$ 35,000 by the Fundo Nacional do Meio Ambiente.

Amount requested from the Fund: A sum of US$ 25,000 is requested for the protective measures (see point 1 above) of which US$ 5,000 for salaries for guards. A sum of US$ 28,000 is requested for the purchase of the video and computer equipment that is not available within the country (see point 2 above).

Action by the Committee: As to the first component of the request, the Bureau considered it necessary that preparatory assistance be provided to study in detail and in cooperation with international experts which measures would be the most appropriate. The Bureau recommends the Committee, therefore, not to approve the first component of the request, but to allocate instead an amount of US$ 15,000 under preparatory assistance in order to study the most appropriate protection of the rock paintings.

As to the second component of the request, the Bureau recommends the Committee to approve the amount of US$ 28,000 for the purchase of equipment that is necessary for the documentation and inventory of the rock paintings in this site.

B.1.2. Old Havana and its fortifications (Cuba)

Background: The site of Old Havana and its fortifications was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1982. To date Cuba has received training assistance for the participation of three students in the Inter-regional Course on the Conservation of

Cuba has paid its contributions to the World Heritage Fund.

**Description of Request:** The efforts of the Cuban Government for the conservation of Old Havana concentrate on the integral rehabilitation and restoration of the square of La Plaza Vieja. An International Campaign for the Safeguarding of La Plaza Vieja was launched by UNESCO in 1989.

In March 1993, a severe hurricane struck Cuba which caused considerable damage to the buildings that had been newly restored to date and to the structures that were awaiting rehabilitation. Upon the request of the Cuban Government, emergency assistance was provided under the World Heritage Fund for the amount of US$ 20,000 for urgent repairs to the buildings around the square. This assistance is presently in implementation through the National Conservation Centre in Havana in collaboration with the UNESCO office in Cuba.

The Cuban Government continues to give the highest priority to the rehabilitation and restoration of La Plaza Vieja. Works are foreseen for 1993 and 1994 in three of the buildings around the square (Cine Havana, Cafe Taberna and Colegio del Santo Angel). A request for US$ 55,000 has been submitted by the Cuban Government as a contribution to these works, following up the emergency repairs now under implementation. The amount requested will be exclusively used for restoration and consolidation works.

**National Contribution:** all expenses related to project preparation, skilled and unskilled labour, non-expendable equipment, supervision, project management and the costs for the adaptation of the buildings for contemporary use, will be borne by the national authorities. These expenditures amount to US$ 800,000.

**Amount requested from the Fund:** A sum of US$ 55,000 is requested for the purchase of expendable equipment and materials that will be necessary for the consolidation and restoration of three of the buildings around the square.

**Action by the Committee:** The Bureau decided to bring this request forward to the Committee with the recommendation to consider this request on the basis of the results of the monitoring mission that was undertaken this year and on which a report will be presented to this Committee session.
B.1.3 Cliffs of Bandiagara - Land of the Dogons (Mali)

Background: Mali ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1977. Three Mali properties are inscribed on the World Heritage List: Timbuktu, Old Town of Djenné and the Cliffs of Bandiagara. Mali has received preparatory assistance for the preparation of nomination files of the three sites (in 1981, 1988 and 1989) and for the elaboration of a technical cooperation request in 1990 for the site of Bandiagara. Furthermore, in 1991 US$45,000 was approved for the restoration of the Mosques of Timbuktu. Finally, two training fellowships were granted to Malian trainees in 1992 for an amount of US$8,400.

Mali is up to date with the payment of its contribution to the World Heritage Fund.

Description of the Request: The Mali authorities submitted a request based on the recommendations of an expert report resulting from preparatory assistance received in 1990. The request was initially for US$220,000 to establish a systematic inventory of the site, which includes about three hundred villages (houses, ethnographic equipment and typological study of the villages), and at the same time train local staff and implement a public-awareness programme for the inhabitants. The sum requested and the amount of work foreseen is largely in excess of what can be financed from World Heritage funds and with support only from the Fund, the World Heritage Centre organized a meeting with the national authorities and the expert, author of the preparatory assistance report, to define a more modest request likely to be approved by the Committee. At present, the project now consists of choosing three villages, each one representative of one of the human settlements of the three zones that characterize the site, the plateau, the eroded cliffs and the plain, and then to make thorough inventories of them: architectural record of the principal buildings, record of sculptured ornaments, topographical records, establish the types of different buildings, state and description of restoration required, required, establish model record and description sheets to be used in other villages at a later date, etc. This work will provide a scientific description of the buildings indispensable for the planning and implementation of the necessary measures for protection, conservation and restoration.

The applied methodology and the training of local staff who will participate in the project could then provide solutions for the other villages at the site and the possible elaboration of a larger project for financing by other sources than the World Heritage Fund, e.g. UNDP.

National contribution: Following the expert report of 1990 financed by preparatory assistance, and in accordance with its recommendations, a Cultural Office was set up in the Land of the Dogons by the Mali authorities. This Mission constitutes six
permanent members, including an historian, an archaeologist and an ethnologist. The Mali Government will place this staff, reinforced by six technicians and two drivers, as well as all available equipment, at the disposition of the project, which will represent a national contribution of about FF.110,000, approximately US$22,000, for the salaries of the personnel alone.

Amount requested from the Fund: US$42,000 is requested from the World Heritage Fund, with the following breakdown:

Necessary equipment: two cameras (about FF. 20,000); a tape recorder (FF. 5,000); special equipment for recording (FF. 10,000), camping equipment (FF. 5,000), totalling FF.40,000, approximately US$8,000.

Gathering of information from documents, photographs, films, etc. in Paris (Musée de l’Homme and Museum of African and Oceanic Art): about a month and a half by a young researcher, US$2,000.

Mission to the site by two international experts for four months:
an anthropologist (P5 x 4 months = US$16,000)
a specialized draughtsman (P3 x 4 months = US$11,000)
travel (2): US$2,000. Total: US$29,000

Training activities: The five local staff who will work at the project will acquire on-the-job training. Furthermore, it is proposed that, for short periods of time, persons from Bamako responsible for heritage protection will also gain on-the-job training (about ten persons, travel and lodging, approximately FF. 15,000, or US$3,000).

Action by the Committee: The Bureau decided to recommend the Committee to approve the amount of US$ 42,000 for a pilot inventory project in three of the 300 villages in the site, each one representative of the three human settlements zones that characterize the site (the plateau, the eroded cliffs and the plain).

B.2. Training

B.2.1. Regional training course of Maghreb architects for the conservation and protection of cultural monuments and sites (1994 and 1995, Tunisia)

Background: The Maghreb countries involved in this regional training project, which include Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia, possess numerous cultural sites and monuments inscribed on the World Heritage List, including the medinas, which are part of an architectural heritage of great importance. But today the towns and monuments of the region are threatened by many factors which accelerate their degradation, especially the lack of
local professionals specializing in the needs of cultural heritage conservation and the methods of analysis and intervention in Islamic urban surroundings.

The conservation of this built or archaeological heritage necessitates the continual intervention of specialized architects in accordance with the international recommendations, particularly those of UNESCO, ALECSO and ICOMOS.

The Maghreb Ministers of Culture of the five countries concerned adopted the principle of a regional training course for architectural conservation in June 1993, and requested the National Heritage Institute of Tunisia to ensure its implementation.

Preliminary preparatory assistance for the finalization and the implementation of a training course amounting to US$ 15,000 was granted for 1993 by the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee.

**Description of the request:** This two-year (1994-1995) post university course is aimed at about twenty Graduates from the region and will be organized by the National Heritage Institute of Tunisia in close pedagogical and technical collaboration with ICCROM and ICOMOS. The course aims at training highly specialized architects capable of preserving and prolonging Maghrebian cultural life in all its historical and cultural forms, including historical (Greco-Roman, Turkish and Spanish) as well as modern (Italian and French) influences. Emphasis will especially be given to the study of properties, parks, buildings and historical centres in a context of urban development and integrated rurality.

a) The teaching body (approximately thirty persons over a period of two years, chosen with ICCROM) will be composed of Tunisian experts and international specialists for the fields not represented in Tunisia.

b) The programme established with ICCROM will cover two university years (one semester per year, in 1994 and 1995) in Tunis (INP) and in different training areas with:

- one year of courses and seminars (30 hours x 25 weeks);

- one year of personal supervised studies adapted to the specific needs of each student, and resulting in the presentation of a thesis;

- internships in field work and research programmes of the Heritage Institute, particularly in Carthage and the Medina of Tunis, sites inscribed on the World Heritage List;
- the subjects taught will especially concern art history and intervention policies, documentation and methods of analysis, technical diagnosing and intervention, the built and natural environment, the various aspects of management, especially those of tourism and legislation for protection, as well as training in research methods and the preparation of a thesis;

- at the end of these two years, the student will receive a certificate or diploma allowing him/her to enroll for the Tunisian state examination for the recruitment of architects of historical monuments.

c) About twenty candidates will be recruited, half of them Tunisian and the others from countries of the Maghreb, selected every two years amongst the holders of a degree in architecture and with a minimum of two years' experience. The selection will be made in accordance with the profiles and after interviews with the candidates.

d) This course, which will be repeated, will first be aimed at architects of the Maghreb countries but could afterwards be extended to other Arab and Islamic countries.

The total budget for the 1994–1995 period is US$ 470,000 (of which $204,000 for operational expenses, $150,000 for a first, non-renewable investment, and $116,000 for scholarships and travel grants for the non-Tunisian students) of which US$ 370,000 will be covered by national and other contributions.

**National contribution and other contributions:** The Director of the INP (Institut National du Patrimoine) communicated to the Secretariat the following finance plan for the 1994–1995 period covering the remaining US$ 370,000:

- Tunisia: US$ 148,000 (professional fees for Tunisian teachers and logistics of the course in Tunis: buildings, office facilities, general expenses, secretariat...);

- Bilateral Tunisian-Italian cooperation:

  US$ 53,000 (requested by ICCROM and accepted by the Italian authorities in April 1993);

- Bilateral Tunisian-French cooperation:

  US$ 53,000 (project accepted in principle by the French authorities in March 1993);
- UNESCO Regular programme:

part of US$ 116,000 necessary for the travel and scholarships of the students could be financed by the Sector of Culture (CLT/CH) under the 1994-1995 biennium, as available.

**Amount requested from the Fund:** From a total budget of US$ 470,000 for 1994 and 1995 a total sum of $100,000 spread over two years ($ 50,000 per year) is requested under the Fund to cover the following expenses:

- **Pedagogical management:**
  - salary of the Director during the course period US$10,000

- **Remuneration of the architect coordinator** (US$ 3,000 x 24 months) US$72,000

- **Travel, living expenses and professional fees**
  - of 10 non-Tunisian teachers for five days each US$18,000

**Total:** US$100,000

**Action of the Committee:** The Bureau decided to recommend the Committee to approve the request for training for the amount of US$ 50,000 under the 1994 budget for a two-year (1994-1995) post university course for about twenty graduates from the region of the Maghreb that will be organized by the National Heritage Institute of Tunisia in close pedagogical and technical collaboration with ICCROM and ICOMOS, with the understanding that a request for the same amount for 1995 will be presented to the Committee at its eighteenth session.

**B.2.2. International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)**

**Background:** ICCROM has requested US$ 75,000 for the organization of three training courses in 1994. The courses are in the fields of Architectural Conservation, Mural Painting Conservation and Scientific Principles of Conservation, to be held in ICCROM, Rome in 1994. ICCROM has requested a sum of US$ 25,000
for each of the three courses which will be used to support the participation of specialists from the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. Details on the estimated expenditure for each trainee will be provided in due course. The courses, having a duration of approximately four months are attended by 15-20 participants who already have experience in restoration/conservation practices and are interested in broadening their knowledge through attending such international specialized courses.

In the past years, financial contributions for fellowships, were provided to ICCROM by the World Heritage Fund, as follows:

**Architectural Conservation**
- US$ 20,000 (1988);
- US$ 30,000 (1989);
- US$ 20,000 (1990);
- US$ 20,000 (1991); and

**Mural Painting Conservation**
- US$ 20,000 (1989);
- US$ 4,000 (1990);
- US$ 40,000 (1991); and

**Scientific Principles of Conservation**
- US$ 20,000 (1989);
- US$ 10,000 (1990); and

**Description of Request:** ICCROM has requested The World Heritage Fund to continue its financial support in co-sponsoring the three courses organized for the 1994.

**Amount requested from the Fund:** a financial contribution of a total amount of US$ 75,000 (US$ 25,000 for each course) is requested.

**Action by the Committee:** The Bureau decided to recommend the Committee to approve the request for US$ 75,000 for fellowships for participants from States Parties (developing countries) for three regular courses at ICCROM (architectural conservation, conservation of mural paintings and scientific principles of conservation).
B.3. Emergency assistance

B.3.1 Old Walled City of Shibam (Yemen)


Description of the project: A large number of buildings in the Old City of Shibam have been damaged by serious flooding in December 1992 and January 1993, and in particular buildings of exceptional value such as the Bayt-Jarhum Museum and the Madrassa Al Fatha Wa Amdad. One of the houses situated at the south-west angle of the Old City has completely collapsed.

Weakening and cracks in the water retention system, insufficiencies in the sewage works which are often blocked and the overflow evacuation drainage, the lack of paved public space which leads to muddy areas unstable in times of flooding, the lack of maintenance of many houses and the lack of impermeability of their roofs which causes destructive leaking, are amongst the principle causes aggravated by the floods.

The Yemeni authorities have requested emergency assistance of US$50,000 to evaluate the damage undergone by the main monuments of the Old City, implement conservation measures to prevent further collapse and halt the degradation subsequent to the floods, prepare an initial action plan for urgent infrastructure work with costs (additional drainage around the Old City, evacuation of waste waters and rain water, paving of certain streets...).

In view of the extensiveness of the damage, the Yemeni authorities have also requested that the property be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Amount requested from the Fund: A first request for emergency assistance of US$9,500 was approved in 1993 by the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee, to finance a mission to the site in October 1993 of two consultants, a restoration architect and a socio-economist, who made an initial report on the general state of degradation of the buildings of the City, and some proposals for stimulating maintenance of the Old City by the local population.
The additional amount of US$40,500 will be used as follows:

1) initial emergency work:

- cleaning-up of the main drainage system in the Wadi Musa Dam area before the next rainy season (US$ 10,000);
- repair of a first zone of evacuation system of waste and running waters (US$5,000);
- cleaning the alleys and the sewage system of the Old City, creation of an outer depot zone and a rubbish incineration system, and purchase of a dumper (US$4.000);
- study and costing for paving the streets and implementation of a first trial test (US$5,500);
- underpinning of buildings in danger of collapsing on neighbouring ones (US$6,000).

2) The dispatch to the site of one or two missions of an expert on historical cities specialized in the conception and coordination of urban infrastructural work, the various networks and routes and urban planning, to implement this work with the competent local and national technical services, and to establish a more detailed and costed action programme (US$10,000).

National contribution: the national contribution has not yet been costed, but taking into consideration the nature of the damage and the project, the national and local technical services will provide at least a contribution in equipment and staff.

Action by the Committee: The Bureau took note of the results of an expert mission that was fielded to Shibam in October 1993 and subsequently decided to recommend the Committee to approve the amount of US$ 40,500 under emergency assistance for emergency measures regarding the drainage system in Shibam (US$ 30,500) and expert services in this field (US$ 10,000).