



WHC/24/46.COM/INF.8B2.ADD

# IUCN World Heritage Evaluations 2024

ADDENDUM: IUCN Evaluations of nominations of natural  
and mixed properties to the World Heritage List



IUCN REPORT FOR THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE, 46TH SESSION, NEW DELHI, INDIA, 21-31 JULY 2024

Cover photo: Lençóis Maranhenses National Park, Brazil  
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# ADDENDUM

## IUCN Evaluations of Nominations of Natural and Mixed Properties to the World Heritage List

### A. Natural Properties

#### A2. Referred Nominations of Natural Properties

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#### A3. Minor Boundary Modifications of Natural Properties

##### **Africa**

Benin/Burkina Faso/Niger – W-Arly-Pendjari Complex

5

Lesotho/South Africa – Maloti-Drakensberg Park

9



## **A. NATURAL PROPERTIES**

### **A3. MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATIONS OF NATURAL PROPERTIES**



**AFRICA**

**W-ARLY-PENDJARI COMPLEX**

**BENIN / BURKINA FASO / NIGER**





# WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

## W-ARLY-PENDJARI COMPLEX (BENIN/BURKINA FASO/NIGER) – ID No. 749ter

### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The W-Arly-Pendjari Complex World Heritage property was first inscribed on the World Heritage List as W National Park of Niger (property area of 220,000 ha) under natural criteria (ii) and (iv) (today criteria (ix) and (x)) in 1996 (Committee Decision 20 COM VIII.A). In 2017, the World Heritage Committee (Decision 41 COM 8B.3) approved the extension of the property to Benin and Burkina Faso to become the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex transboundary World Heritage property (property area of 1,714,831 ha), designated under criteria (ix) and (x).

In its extension decision, the World Heritage Committee recommended “the State Party of Niger to consider designating the buffer zones which exist for the W National Park, Niger as formal World Heritage buffer zones through the submission of a Minor Boundary Modification in order to provide a consistent approach to buffer zones across the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex as a whole”. This has been reinforced through several requests by the World Heritage Committee to the State Party to submit a minor boundary modification, including in Decisions 44 COM 7B.79 and 45 COM 7B.3.

IUCN’s previous evaluations are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/749/documents/>.

### 2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

A minor boundary modification has been submitted by the State Party of Niger, with support from the States Parties of Benin and Burkina Faso, to formalise the addition of a buffer zone to the Nigerien component of the property (W National Park in Niger).

The proposed buffer zone has an area of 230,926 ha and comprises the entire Tamou Total Wildlife Reserve (RTFT) and part of the Dosso Partial Wildlife Reserve (RPF) (both classified as IUCN Category IV protected areas). In line with previous World Heritage Committee decisions and state of conservation reports, the proposed buffer zone coincides with the existing national buffer zone of W National Park of Niger and the UNESCO W Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.

This additional buffer zone supplements the existing buffer zones of the Beninese and Burkinabe components of the property and would increase the total buffer zone area to 1,332,147 ha (from 1,101,221 ha).

The buffer zone development process involved several consultations with local stakeholders, including riparian communities, and delimitation of the boundaries in a participatory manner.

### 3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

In line with IUCN’s 2017 evaluation, the proposed buffer zone submitted in this minor boundary modification proposal would strengthen the integrity of the property, and enhance the preservation of the property’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). According to the minor boundary modification dossier, the buffer zone contains complementary ecosystems, which are beneficial to populations of large mammals (a key attribute under criterion (x)), especially during the dry season, whose habitat and range extend further than the boundaries of the property.

The surrounding buffer zone will also provide an additional layer of protection through reducing the proximity of the property boundary to the attributes of OUV. Thereby, according to the State Party, assisting in mitigating the impacts of potential threats, such as illegal intrusions and the extension of small-scale agriculture.

All proposed buffer zone areas are legally protected under national legislation and controlled by respective management units under the supervision of the Director General of Water and Forests. Following inscription of the new buffer zone, strengthened collaboration between these units and that of W Niger National Park would be expected. IUCN notes that the technical and financial capacity of the respective management bodies should be strengthened for the buffer zone to fulfil its purpose, as outlined above.

In conclusion, IUCN considers this minor boundary modification would reinforce the integrity, and protection of the OUV, of the property, in line with paragraph 104 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Therefore, IUCN recommends that the Committee approve the minor boundary modification proposal, in line with previous Committee decisions.

### 4. RECOMMENDATION

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopts the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

#### 1. Having examined Documents

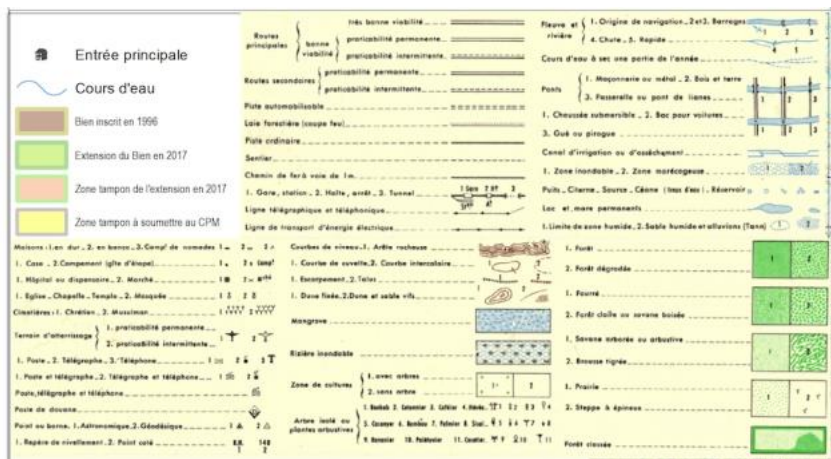
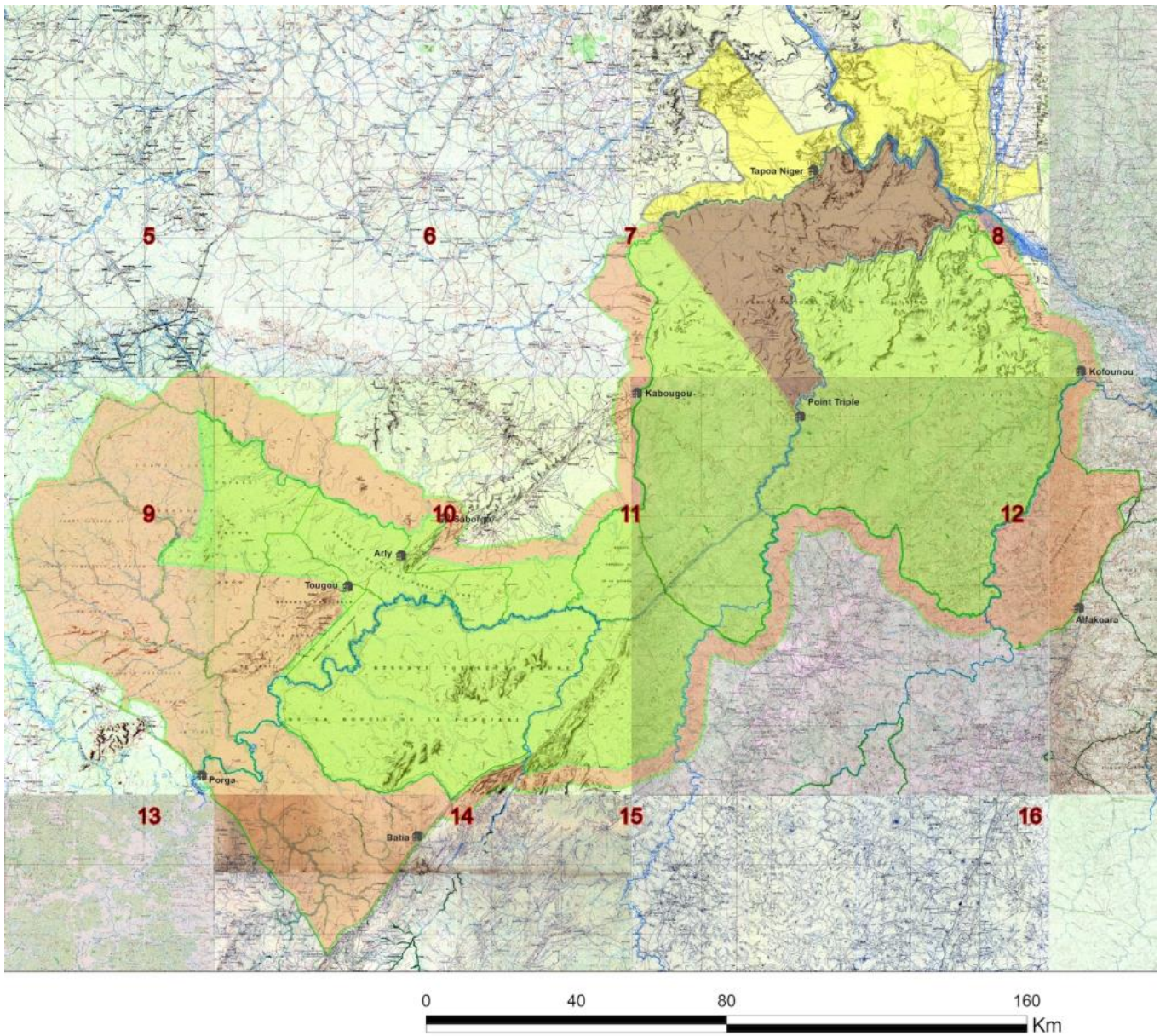
WHC/03/27.COM/7B, WHC/03/27.COM/7B.Corr,  
WHC-04/28.COM/15B, WHC-05/29.COM/7B.Rev,

WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add, WHC/23/45.COM/7B.Add.2, WHC/24/46.COM/8B and WHC/24/46.COM/INF.8B2,

2. Recalling Decisions 20 COM VIII.A, 41 COM 8B.3, 44 COM 7B.79, and 45 COM 7B.3 adopted at its 20<sup>th</sup> (Merida, 1996), 41<sup>st</sup> (Krakow, 2017), 44<sup>th</sup> Extended (Fuzhou/Online,2021), and 45<sup>th</sup> Extended (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,

3. Approves the proposed minor boundary modification for **W-Arly-Pendjari Complex** (Benin/Burkina Faso/Niger).

Map 1: World Heritage property and proposed minor boundary modification





**AFRICA**

**MALOTI-DRAKENSBERG PARK**

**LESOTHO / SOUTH AFRICA**



# WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

## MALOTI-DRAKENSBERG PARK (LESOTHO/SOUTH AFRICA) – ID No. 985ter

### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage property was first inscribed on the World Heritage List, as “uKhahlamba/Drakensberg Park” (area 242,813ha) under cultural criteria (i) and (iii) (today criteria (i) and (iii)) and natural criteria (iii) and (iv) (today criteria (vii) and (x)) in 2000 (Committee Decision 24 COM X.B1). In 2013, the World Heritage Committee approved the extension of the property to include the Sehlabathebe National Park, Lesotho, to become the “Maloti-Drakensberg Park” World Heritage property (current area 249,313 ha), designated under criteria (i), (iii), (vii) and (x).

The 2013 IUCN evaluation recommended the States Parties to finalise “without delay the formal gazettal of the buffer zones surrounding the property”. This was reiterated in the World Heritage Committee Decision 37 COM 8B.18 with the request to formalize the buffer zones surrounding the property. This has been reinforced through several requests by the World Heritage Committee for the State Party to submit a minor boundary modification, including in decisions 39 COM 7B.33, 41 COM 7B.38 and, 43 COM 7B.38.

IUCN’s previous evaluations are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985/documents/>.

### 2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

A minor boundary modification has been submitted jointly by the States Parties of Lesotho and South Africa to formalise the creation of a buffer zone along the eastern side of the property within the Republic of South Africa.

The proposed buffer zone has an area of 283,279 ha and is divided into two sub-zones, called layers, which have been determined based on a sensitivity gradient relating to the property’s values. The First Layer (69,754 ha) is directly adjacent to the property and is regarded as highly sensitive by the State Party. Its primary purpose is to preserve - or rehabilitate the area to - the pristine state (or as close to pristine state) which supports the area within the property. The Second Layer (213,525 ha) borders the First Layer and is regarded as less sensitive given its distance from the property. Its primary purpose is the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources while maintaining its value. According to the State Party, the wider purposes of the buffer zone are to better protect the OUV of the property (including the attributes and areas that contribute to this) while enabling local

communities to secure sustainable benefits from the property and buffer zone itself. Within the first layer, the management authority must be party to all decision making, whereas in the second layer, the authority has the right to advise, be consulted and, if necessary, appeal all decisions.

This additional buffer zone supplements the existing buffer zone to the southwest of the property in Lesotho and would increase the buffer zone’s total area to 329,909 ha (from 46,630 ha).

The buffer zone development process involved an extensive public consultation process, including engagement with local communities, and the State Party plans to co-manage the proposed buffer zone with communities through a cooperative governance framework.

### 3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The minor boundary modification proposal is part of broader conservation efforts by the States Parties to address threats and management issues highlighted in various state of conservation reports. This includes, but is not limited to, the potential construction of a cable car, and oil and gas exploration (both within the boundaries of the proposed buffer zone). IUCN notes that, with the addition of the buffer zone and associated policies, these proposed activities appear to be incompatible.

In line with IUCN’s 2013 evaluation, the proposed buffer zone would enhance the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. The boundaries of the proposed buffer zone have been designed to foster the protection of the property’s OUV, which also depends on the integrity of adjacent areas for natural and cultural attributes linked to the property’s OUV, including the viewshed, in support of the property’s aesthetic values under criterion (vii), and the catchment, in support of criterion (x).

The buffer zone will also provide an additional layer of protection through a new buffer zone policy. This policy would guide land use activities, by promoting compatible land use activities with minimal impacts on OUV, whilst implementing stronger control measures on negative activities. The policy, together with a spatial development framework, plans to identify appropriate land use activities to promote positive incentives for the local community thereby enabling the sustainable benefits of the property to be more widely experienced by the broader community.

In conclusion, IUCN considers this minor boundary modification would reinforce the protection of the OUV of the property, in line with paragraph 104 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and assist in the mitigation of threats, such as development pressures. Therefore, IUCN recommends that the Committee approve the minor boundary modification proposal, in line with previous Committee decisions.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATION

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopts the following draft decision, noting that this will be harmonised as appropriate with the draft recommendations of ICOMOS regarding their evaluation of this mixed site nomination under the cultural criteria and included in the working document WHC/24/46.COM/8B.Add.

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopts the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents

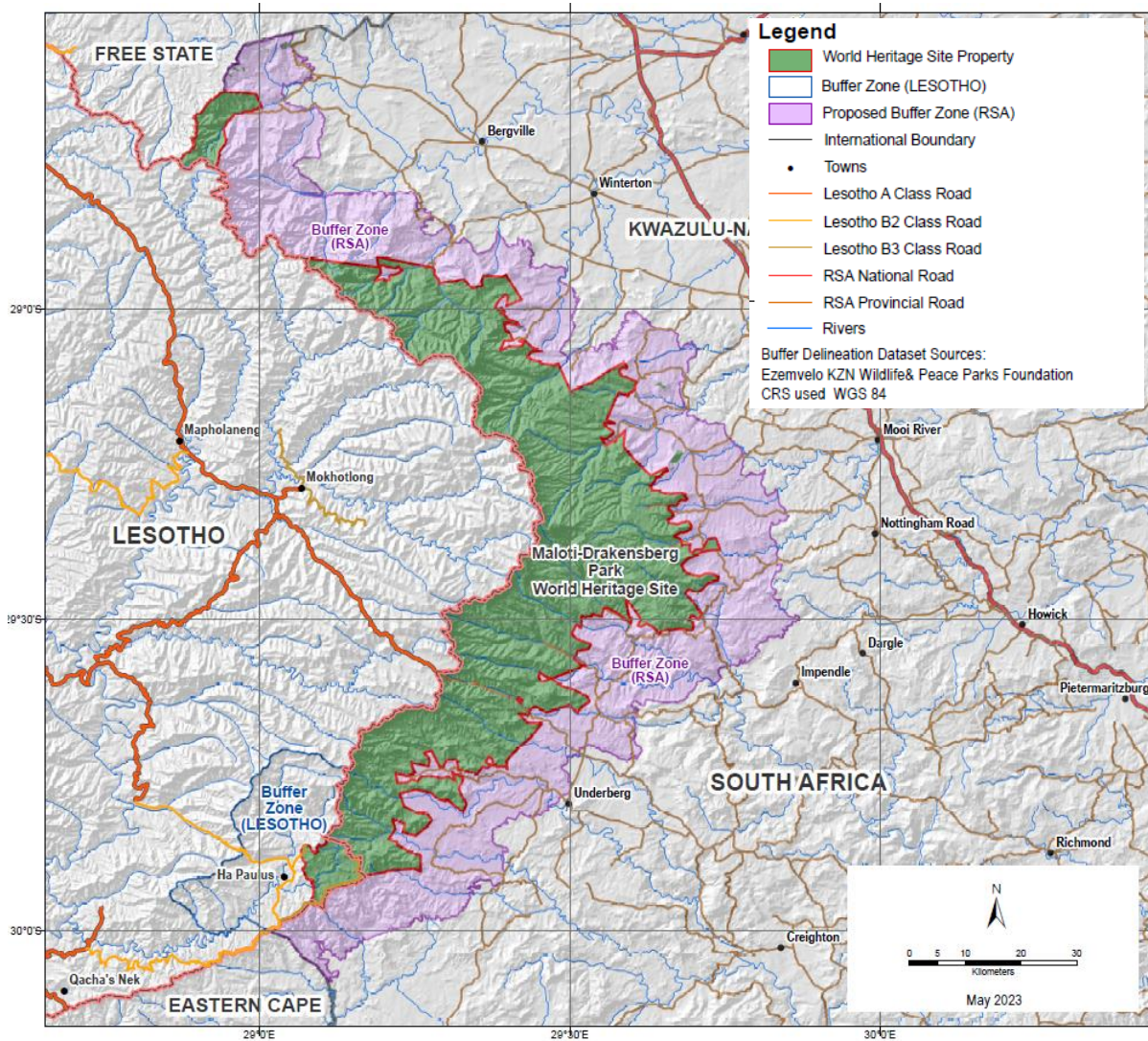
WHC/2000/CONF.204/21, WHC/13/37.COM/INF.8B2, WHC/14/38.COM/16, WHC/15/39.COM/7B, WHC/17/41.COM/7B, WHC/19/43.COM/7B, WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add, WHC/23/45.COM/7B.Add, WHC/24/46.COM/8B and WHC/24/46.COM/INF.8B2,

2. Recalling Decisions **37 COM 8B.18, 39 COM 7B.33, 41 COM 7B.38, 43 COM 7B.38, 44 COM 7B.170, and 45 COM 7B.101** adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 43rd (Baku, 2019), Extended 44th (Fuzhou/Online, 2021) and Extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,

3. Approves the proposed minor boundary modification for **Maloti-Drakensberg Park** (Lesotho/South Africa).



**Map 1: World Heritage property and proposed minor boundary modification**







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