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# World Heritage 37 COM

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**Thirty-seventh session**

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia**
**16 – 27 June 2013**

**Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda: Establishment of the World Heritage List and of the List of World Heritage in Danger**

**8B. Nominations to the World Heritage List**

**SUMMARY**

This Addendum contains the Statements of Outstanding Universal Value not adopted by the World Heritage Committee of 4 properties inscribed at the 36th session (Saint Petersburg, 2012).

**Draft Decision: Section I.**

# I. STATEMENTS OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE NOT ADOPTED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE OF FOUR PROPERTIES INSCRIBED AT THE 36TH SESSION (SAINT PETERSBURG, 2012).

***Draft Decision: 37 COM 8B.56***

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-13/37.COM/8B.Add.2,*
2. *Adopts the Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for the following World Heritage properties inscribed at the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (Saint Petersburg, 2012):*

   *-Brazil: Rio de Janeiro: Carioca Landscapes between the Mountain and the Sea;*

   *-India: Western Ghats;*

   *-Palestine: Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem;*

   *-Russian Federation: Lena Pillars Nature Park.*

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| Property | **Rio de Janeiro: Carioca Landscapes between the Mountain and the Se** |
| State Party | **Brazil** |
| Id. N° | **1100 Rev** |
| Dates of inscription | **2012** |

**Brief Synthesis**

The city of Rio de Janeiro, shaped by interaction with mountains and sea, lies in the narrow strip of alluvial plain between Guanabara Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Its exceptionally dramatic landscape is punctuated by a series of forested mountains that tower over the city, rising to the uppermost peak of the Tijuca massif at 1,021 m high, and cascading down to the coast where the steep cone shapes of Sugar Loaf (Pão de Açúcar), Urca, Cara de Cão and Corcovado frame the wide sweeps of Guanabara Bay that shelters Rio de Janeiro from the Atlantic Ocean.

Cradled between these mountains and Guanabara Bay, the urban landscape of the city has been shaped by significant historical events, influenced by a diversity of cultures, is perceived to be of great beauty, and is celebrated in the arts, through painting and poetry in particular.

The property encompasses all the key natural, structural elements that have constrained and inspired the development of the city. These stretch from the highest points of the mountains of the Tijuca National Park with its restored Atlantic forest, down to the sea, and include the Botanical Gardens established in 1808, Corcovado mountain, with its statue of Christ, and the chain of dramatic steep green hills, Sugar Loaf, Pico, Leme and Glória, around Guanabara Bay, as well as the extensive designed landscapes on reclaimed land along Copacabana Bay which, together with Flamengo and other parks, have contributed to the outdoor living culture of the city.

The boundary includes all the best view points to appreciate the way nature has been shaped to become a significant cultural part of the city as well as the Guanabara Bay system of historic fortifications that gave Rio de Janeiro the character of a fortified city.

The city's densest buildings sit on the narrow strips of alluvial land between the mountains and the sea laid out in irregular clusters of tall white blocks which contrast vividly with the green vegetation of the mountains and the blue of the sea. None of these buildings are included in the property, but a significant number are included in the buffer zone.

**Criterion (v):** The development of the city of Rio de Janeiro has been shaped by a creative fusion between nature and culture. This interchange is not the result of persistent traditional processes but rather reflects an interchange based on scientific, environmental and design ideas that led to innovative landscape creations on a major scale in the heart of the city during little more than a century. These processes have created an urban landscape perceived to be of great beauty by many writers and travellers and one that has shaped the culture of the city.

**Criterion (vi):** The dramatic landscape of Rio de Janeiro has provided inspiration for many forms of art, literature, poetry, and music. Images of Rio, which show the bay, Sugar Loaf and the statue of Christ the Redeemer have had a high worldwide recognition factor, since the middle of the 19th century. Such high recognition factors can be either positive or negative: in the case of Rio, the image that was projected, and still is projected, is one of a staggeringly beautiful location for one of the world's biggest cities.

**Integrity**

The property encompass all the key natural, structural elements that have constrained and inspired the development of the city of Rio, stretching from the highest points of the Tijuca mountains down to the sea, and including the chain of dramatic steep green hills around the Guanabara Bay, as well as the extensive designed landscapes on reclaimed land around the Bay, that have contributed to the outdoor living culture of the city.

None of these elements is under threat, although the interface between these natural elements and the built-up city is vulnerable to urban pressures, the higher peaks are marred by a profusion of antennae and the Rodrigo da Freitas Lagoon (in the buffer zone) and the sea are subject to a degree of water pollution.

**Authenticity**

The mountains and open green areas of the Tijuca National Park, together with Corcovado and the hills around the Guanabara Bay still retain a similar combination of forest and open observation points as at the time of colonisation and allow access to vistas of the city from many high vantage points that demonstrate very clearly the extraordinary fusion between culture and nature in the way the city has developed.

The Botanical Gardens have retained their original neoclassical design with its special alignments and the fortresses keep alive the memory of the Portuguese settlements, engraved and described by the travellers that navigated the marine routes that focused on Rio de Janeiro.

The landscape designs of Burle Marx around almost the entire coast of Guanabara Bay, comprising Flamengo Park and the redesign of Copacabana beach conserve entirely the landscape morphology of their original designs and still confer high social benefits to the city.

However, in some instances elements of the designed landscape are vulnerable to incremental change – such as the paving and planting along Copacabana and Flamengo Park,

where missing trees and mosaics need replacing, and in the Botanical Garden where the Imperial Palms along the main avenue are dead and need replacing.

**Protection and Management Requirements**

The Tijuca National Park was created by Federal Decrees in 1961. The Research Institute of the Botanical Garden was created by a federal autarchy under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment by a Law of 2001, which establishes its legal statutes, objectives, its structure of management and administration. The Pão de Açúcar (Sugar Loaf) and Urca were declared national monuments under the Law Nº 9.985, of June 18 of 2000.

The Institute of the National Historical and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN) and its predecessors have catalogued, since 1938, the entirety of the sites and defined individual structures for national protection. They include as well as Tijuca National Park and the Botanical Gardens, the Parque Lage mansion, Flamengo Park, Cara de Cão, Babilônia, Urca, Sugar Loaf, Dois Irmãos and Pedra da Gávea hills, São João fort, Santa Cruz fort, and the urban landscape of Leme, Copacabana, Ipanema and Leblon beaches.

The Decree of IPHAN Nº 127 of 30 April 2009 – established the designation of Brazilian Cultural Landscapes and a request has been made to designate Rio de Janeiro Landscape, as a Brazilian Cultural Landscape.

In the 20th century, high buildings were regulated through the creation of a norm establishing that it was not allowed to build more than twelve stories in height. In the 1970, planning instruments were adopted to control urban growth toward the hills in order to protect the nature conservation areas, sanctioned in 1976. This means that construction is not allowed beyond 60 meters above the sea level in the surroundings of the Pão de Açúcar (Sugar Loaf) and in Urca and the limit of no more than 100 meters above the level in the other hills of the city, considered areas of forest reserve.

A new Master Plan for Sustainable Urban Development of the City of Rio de Janeiro came into force in February 2011.The Plan establishes that the Landscape of Rio de Janeiro represents the most valuable asset of the city.

The Plan includes principles and guidelines to promote sustainable development as a means to promote economic development, social equity, and environmental and landscape preservation; sustainable use of the environment, landscape, and natural, cultural, historical, and archaeological heritage in the city's development and management; and conditioning of urban occupation to the preservation of the city's identity and cultural landscapes.

The Plan also allows for land use and occupation to be regulated by limitations of density, of economic activities, of the right to enjoy the natural landscape of the city, and of the quality of the urban environment. Heights of buildings shall be defined by the preservation and conservation of the integrity of the natural landscape.

The implementation of the Plan needs to progress through the adoption of its policies in the different areas of the city, including through specific laws.

The protection offered by the buffer zone needs strengthening with stricter guidelines on preservation, and, if found necessary by the Management Committee, more restrictive soil use and occupation parameters. The buffer zone needs to ensure the protection of views and the broad setting of the property as well as the interface with the property.

All areas of the buffer zone needs to be designated as Cultural Environment Protection Areas (APACs) and management plans for individual APACs developed accordingly further clarification is needed as to what is to be managed within the buffer zone.

A Management Committee to coordinate the management of the serial sites was established by Decree No. 464 of 29 December 2011 to develop and deliver an overall Management Plan for the property. The Management Committee, chaired by IPHAN, draws together the key stakeholders at the Federal, State and Municipal levels involved in the management of the different areas of the property. The Committee will determine the joint management structure and develop the joint management plan for the property and its buffer zone.

The Management Committee will ensure the adoption of possible additional protection measures for the sites, enforced through enhanced preservation structures.

A Management Plan needs to be finalized for the property and its buffer zone that addresses potential threats and possible remaining gaps in protection .so that preservation of the overall cultural landscape might be achieved.

As a basis for the Management Plan, there is a need to put in place a system for defining, recording and inventorying the key components of the overall cultural landscape and for defining monitoring indicators related to the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value.

The management of the property needs to address the issue of water pollution around Guanabara Bay through monitoring and positive action. In order to conserve both long views and the individual details of the property, there is a need to develop an overall Conservation Plan or Conservation approach for the property and for Conservation projects at various sites in order to conserve their important details.

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| Property | **Western Ghats** |
| State Party | **India** |
| Id. N° | **1342** |
| Dates of inscription | **2012** |

**Brief synthesis**

The Western Ghats are internationally recognized as a region of immense global importance for the conservation of biological diversity, besides containing areas of high geological, cultural and aesthetic values. A chain of mountains running parallel to India's western coast, approximately 30-50 km inland, the Ghats traverse the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat. These mountains cover an area of around 140,000 km² in a 1,600 km long stretch that is interrupted only by the 30 km Palghat Gap at around 11°N.

Older than the great Himalayan mountain chain, the Western Ghats of India are a geomorphic feature of immense global importance. The Outstanding Universal Value of the Western Ghats is manifested in the region's unique and fascinating influence on large-scale biophysical and ecological processes over the entire Indian peninsula. The mountains of the Western Ghats and their characteristic montane forest ecosystems influence the Indian monsoon weather patterns that mediate the warm tropical climate of the region, presenting one of the best examples of the tropical monsoon system on the planet. The Ghats act as a key barrier, intercepting the rain-laden monsoon winds that sweep in from the south-west during late summer.

A significant characteristic of the Western Ghats is the exceptionally high level of biological diversity and endemism. This mountain chain is recognized as one of the world's eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity along with Sri Lanka. The forests of the Western Ghats include some of the best representatives of non equatorial tropical evergreen forests in the world. At least 325 globally threatened (IUCN Red Data List)

species occur in the Western Ghats. The globally threatened flora and fauna in the Western Ghats are represented by 229 plant species, 31 mammal species, 15 bird species, 43 amphibian species, 5 reptile species and 1 fish species. Of the total 325 globally threatened species in the Western Ghats, 129 are classified as Vulnerable, 145 as Endangered and 51 as Critically Endangered.

**Criterion (ix):** The Western Ghats region demonstrates speciation related to the breakup of the ancient landmass of Gondwanaland in the early Jurassic period; secondly to the formation of India into an isolated landmass and the thirdly to the Indian landmass being pushed together with Eurasia. Together with favourable weather patterns and a high gradient being present in the Ghats, high speciation has resulted. The Western Ghats is an "Evolutionary Ecotone" illustrating "Out of Africa" and "Out of Asia" hypotheses on species dispersal and vicariance**.**

**Criterion (x):** The Western Ghats contain exceptional levels of plant and animal diversity and endemicity for a continental area. In particular, the level of endemicity for some of the 4-5,000 plant species recorded in the Ghats is very high: of the nearly 650 tree species found in the Western Ghats, 352 (54%) are endemic. Animal diversity is also exceptional, with amphibians (up to 179 species, 65% endemic), reptiles (157 species, 62% endemic), and fishes (219 species, 53% endemic). Invertebrate biodiversity, once better known, is likely also to be very high (with some 80% of tiger beetles endemic). A number of flagship mammals occur in the property, including parts of the single largest population of globally threatened 'landscape' species such as the Asian Elephant, Gaur and Tiger. Endangered species such as the lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Tahr and Nilgiri Langur are unique to the area. The property is also key to the conservation of a number of threatened habitats, such as unique seasonally mass-flowering wildflower meadows, Shola forests and Myristica swamps.

**Integrity**

The property is made up of 39 component parts grouped into 7 sub-clusters. The serial approach is justified in principle from a biodiversity perspective because all 39 components belong to the same biogeographic province, and remain as isolated remnants of previous contiguous forest. The justification for developing a serial approach rather than just identifying one large protected area to represent the biodiversity of the Western Ghats is due to the high degree of endemism, meaning that species composition from the very north of the mountains to 1,600km south varies greatly, and no one site could tell the story of the richness of these mountains. The formulation of this complex serial nomination has evolved through a consultative process drawing on scientific analysis from various sources. The 39 component parts grouped into 7 sub-clusters together reflect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and capture the range of biological diversity and species endemism in this vast landscape.

**Protection and management requirements**

The 39 component parts of this serial property fall under a number of protection regimes, ranging from Tiger Reserves, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, and Reserved Forests. All components are owned by the State and are subject to stringent protection under laws including the Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972, the Indian Forest Act of 1927, and the Forest Conservation Act (1980). Through these laws the components are under the control of the Forestry Department and the Chief Wildlife Warden, providing legal protection. 40% of the property lies outside of the formal protected area system, mostly in Reserved Forests, which are legally protected and effectively managed. The Forest Conservation Act (1980) provides the regulatory framework to protect them from infrastructure development.

Integrating the management of 39 components across 4 States is a challenge, for which a 3-tier governance mechanism is required that will operate at the Central, State and Site levels to provide effective coordination and oversight to the 39 components. A Western Ghats Natural Heritage Management Committee (WGNHMC) under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment of Forests (MoEF), Government of India to deal with coordination and integration issues is already functional. All 39 components in the 7 sub-clusters are managed under specific management / working plans duly approved by the State/Central governments. The livelihood concerns of the local communities are regulated by the Forest Rights Acts, 2006 and their participation in governance is ensured through Village Ecodevelopment Committees (VECs).

| Property | **Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem** |
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| State Party | **Palestine** |
| Id. N° | **1433** |
| Dates of inscription | **2012** |

**Brief Synthesis**

Bethlehem lies 10 kilometres south of the city of Jerusalem, in the fertile limestone hill country of the Holy Land. Since at least the 2nd century AD people have believed that the place where the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, now stands is where Jesus was born. One particular cave, over which the first Church was built, is traditionally believed to be the Birthplace itself. In locating the Nativity, the place both marks the beginnings of Christianity and is one of the holiest spots in Christendom. The original basilica church of 339 AD (St Helena), parts of which survive below ground, was arranged so that its octagonal eastern end surrounded, and provided a view of, the cave. This church is overlaid by the present Church of the Nativity, essentially of the mid-6th century AD (Justinian), though with later alterations. It is the oldest Christian church in daily use. Since early medieval times the Church has been increasingly incorporated into a complex of other ecclesiastical buildings, mainly monastic. As a result, today it is embedded in an extraordinary architectural ensemble, overseen by members of the Greek Orthodox Church, the Custody of the Holy Land and the Armenian Church, under the provisions of the *Status Quo of the Holy Places* established by the Treaty of Berlin (1878).

During various periods over the past 1700 years, Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity have been, and still are, a pilgrim destination. The eastern end of the traditional route from Jerusalem to the Church, known as the Pilgrimage route, marks the road that connects the traditional entrance of Bethlehem, near King David's Wells with the Church of the Nativity, and extends along the Star Street through the Damascus Gate, or *Qos Al-Zarara,* the historical gate of the town, towards the Manger Square. The Route continues to be celebrated as the path followed by Joseph and Mary during their trip in Bethlehem during Christmas ceremonies each year, and is followed ceremonially by Patriarchs of the three churches at their several Christmases, and during their official visits to Bethlehem.

The outstanding universal value of the Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem, lies, in its association with the birthplace of the founder of a great religion, which for Believers saw the Son of God made man in Bethlehem.

And for the way the fabric of the Church of the Nativity and its associations have combined to reflect the extraordinary influence of Christianity in spiritual and political terms over 1500 years.

**Criterion (iv):** The Church of the Nativity is an outstanding example of an early church in a remarkable architectural ensemble; which illustrates two significant stages in human history in the 4th-6th centuries AD the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, which led to the development of the Church of the Nativity on the site believed to be associated with the birth of Jesus; and to the power and influence of Christianity in the period of the Crusades that led to the embellishment of the Church of the Nativity and the development of three major convents in its environs.

**Criterion (vi):** The Church of the Nativity, and the Pilgrimage Route to it, are directly associated with the birth of Jesus, an event of outstanding universal significance, through the buildings of which were constructed in the 4th century AD and re-constructed in the 6th century AD. These are a strong symbol for more than 2 billion Christian believers in the world; and are Holy to Christians as well as to Muslims.

**Integrity**

The property encompasses the Church of the Nativity and its architectural ensemble, which is composed of the Armenian, Franciscan and Greek Orthodox Convents, as well as an area of terraced land to the east and a short stretch of the Pilgrimage Route. It thus includes all the buildings that form the focus of pilgrimage and the cave that is believed to be the birthplace of Jesus. It thus includes all the buildings that form the focus of pilgrimage and the cave that is believed to be the birthplace of Jesus.

The small area of land to the east that is directly associated with the ensemble, is known to contain as yet systematically unexamined and largely undisturbed evidence of occupation and burial from the early centuries AD back to at least the mid-2nd millennium BC.

The approach to the Church via Star Street and Paul VI Street retains the street width and line fossilized by urban development since c. 1800 AD. This 'width and line', as well as defining a working street in a busy town, now formalize a commemorative route for a religious ceremony. The traditional 19th and 20th yellow limestone buildings either side of this route incorporate traditional design and appearance, with living accommodation above and workshops at street level opening out on to the street. These are not part of the property but need to be protected and conserved as part of the approach to the church.

The roof structure of the main Church is highly vulnerable to lack of maintenance and repair. The sharp increase in the number of vehicles, inadequate parking, and small industries within the historic town have produced a polluted environment that is negatively affecting the façades of both the Church of the Nativity and the buildings along the Pilgrimage Route.

Great urban pressure is acknowledged in the surrounding urban areas, to which largely unregulated tourism and traffic contribute. New constructions, some large, are disturbing the traditional urban fabric near the Church of the Nativity and are having a negative impact on views to and from the property ,and on its sense of place and spiritual associations.

**Authenticity**

Located on the spot believed to be the Birthplace of Jesus Christ for some 2000 years, the Church of the Nativity is one of the most sacred Christian sites in the world since at least the 4th century AD up to the present. The sanctity of the site is maintained by the three churches occupying it. The construction of the church in 339 AD above the grotto, and its reconstruction in 533 AD, commemorates the birth of Jesus and attests to seventeen hundred years-long tradition of belief that this grotto was indeed the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

The association of the place that was believed to be the birthplace of Jesus is documented from the 4th century AD and from then on the buildings added to it have been constructed to enhance this religious significance. The majority of the existing church today dates beck to the 6th century AD, but retains part of the 4th century floor and some parts of its walls and columns, and have 12th century and later additions that are obvious in the icon painting on the columns of the church. The 12th century additions reflect the Crusades that led to one of the upsurges in pilgrimage activity.

From medieval times the church has been supported by monastic communities for which there is strong material evidence. The buildings of one of the monastic complexes date back to at least the 12th century while there is evidence under the others for earlier monastic buildings dating to the 12th century. Apart from the Armenian Convent, most of their current apparent structures date from the 19th and 20th centuries.

All elements of the church associated with the original church, its re-building in the 6th century, and its alterations in the 12th century need to be clearly identified and a conservation plan agreed to ensure repair and restoration respect as much as possible of the existing fabric that is crucial to understanding its significance.

The Church of the Nativity and its monastic complexes and the town of Bethlehem developed in tandem over the centuries. The current lack of control of development, traffic and tourism in the immediate urban surroundings of the Church is threatening this relationship and the ability of the property to convey fully its spiritual links. The exceptionally high number of people within the Church of the Nativity at any one time is impacting adversely on the conservation of the fabric The sharp increase in the number of vehicles, inadequate parking, and small industries within the historic town, have produced a polluted environment that is negatively affecting the façades of both the Church and the buildings along the Pilgrimage Route.

**Protection and management requirements**

The Church of the Nativity is managed under the terms and provisions of the 'Status Quo of the Holy Places', which is implemented by the three churches occupying the place; the Greek Orthodox Church, the Custody of the Holy Land and the Armenian Patriarchate. The management is currently supplemented by an advisory committee formed by the Palestinian President. Each of the three adjacent Convents is maintained under its own arrangement: the Armenian Convent is controlled by the Armenian Patriarchate in the Holy City of Jerusalem; the Greek Orthodox Convent by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in the Holy City of Jerusalem; and the Franciscan Convent and the Church of St Catherine by the Custody of the Holy Land, Holy City of Jerusalem.

A technical plan for the restoration of the roof of the Church of the Nativity has been developed by the advisory committee that was formed by the Palestinian president in full cooperation with the three churches in charge of the church. Intervention to restore the roof of the church was indicated as a priority by the international team who worked

on the plan, and the works are expected to start during the year.

A Conservation Strategy needs to be developed for the Church of the Nativity to guide the repair and restoration of the roof and future conservation interventions in order to optimise retention of the fabric relating to the 4th, 6th and 12th century interventions. Such a Strategy should synthesize the conclusions of the detailed investigative reports into a clear statement of the significances of the various elements within a comprehensive conservation philosophy for the proposed work. Conservation Plans also need to be developed for the other ecclesiastical buildings.

The second main component, the Pilgrimage Route, principally Star Street, is part of the Municipality of Bethlehem and is therefore covered by the provisions of 'Building and Planning Law 30, 1996', of 'the 'Bethlehem Charter 2008', of the 'Guidelines for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of the Historic Towns of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour, 2010, and of the 'General Rules for the Protection of the Historic Area and Historic Individual Buildings, Bethlehem, 2006'. Protection', 'Conservation', and 'Rehabilitation' are the stated objectives of the last two enactments, and the 'Charter', which embodies a statement of principles as well as working practices to achieve those objectives. Nevertheless stronger controls are needed to ensure that the urban context of the property is not eroded. This area is now an Area under Planning, and any interventions are forbidden until the adoption the conservation and management plan and the bylaws that are currently being prepared by CCHP in cooperation with Bethlehem Municipality and MoTA.

A Management Plan will be developed for the overall property by the Committee set up to oversee the roof repairs and this should define an overall management system for the property. This Plan needs to address the urban pressure on the property, tourism and traffic management, protection of views, and the conservation of buildings along the pilgrimage route. The Plan also needs to address the better management of visitors, as the provision of facilities for visitors are impacting adversely on the fabric of the surrounding town.

The municipality of Bethlehem and the Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation in Bethlehem, in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Ministry of Local Government are working on preparing conservation and management plans for the historic town of Bethlehem. The works are being implanted under the Heritage For Development Project, which is being funded by the European Commission, are expected to finish in December 2013; upon the completion of the works a conservation plan for the historic town of Bethlehem that includes bylaws for intervention within the historic town, a management plan for the historic town and a manual for interventions shall be at indorsed by Bethlehem municipality. In addition, the team of the municipality is involved in the planning process, and is expected to have the full capacity for the handling of the outputs of the project.

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| Property | **Lena Pillars Nature Park** |
| State Party | **Russian Federation** |
| Id. N° | **1299** |
| Dates of inscription | **2012** |

**Brief synthesis**

Comprising a vast area of 1,272,150 ha, the property of the Lena Pillars Nature Park occupies the right bank of the middle part of Lena River in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) of the Russian Federation. The Lena Pillars Nature Park displays two features of significant international interest in relation to the Earth sciences. The large cryogenically modified pillars in the region are the most notable pillar landscape of their kind known, whilst the internationally renowned and important exposures of Cambrian rocks tell us key stories about our planet and the early evolution of life during the entire Cambrian Explosion, and the story of the emergence of the frozen ground karst phenomenon.

**Criterion (viii):** The Lena Pillars Nature Park displays two features of significant international interest in relation to the Earth sciences. The large cryogenically modified pillars in the region are the most notable pillar landscape of their kind known, whilst the internationally renowned and important exposures of Cambrian rocks provide a second and important supporting set of values.

The celebrated pillars (up to c.200m in height) that line the banks of the Lena River are rocky buttresses isolated from each other by deep and steep gullies developed by frost shattering directed along intervening joints. The pillars form an outstanding discontinuous belt that extends back from the river's edge along the incised valley sides of some rivers in a zone about 150 m wide.

The Lena Pillars Nature Park property contains among the most significant record of events related to the ' Cambrian explosion ' which was one of the pivotal points in the Earth's life evolution. Due to platformal type of carbonate sedimentation within the tropical belt of the Cambrian Period, without subsequent metamorphic and tectonic reworking, and magnificent impressive outcrops, the property preserves an exceptionally continuous, fully documented, and rich record of the diversification of skeletal animals and other biomineralised organisms from their first appearance until the first mass extinction event they suffered. The Lena Pillars include among the earliest and the largest, in both temporal and spatial senses, fossil metazoan reef of the Cambrian world. The Lena Pillars shows exceptional processes of the fine disintegration of the rocks dominating the shaping of the carbonate pillar relief. These karst phenomena are enriched by thermokarst processes developed in the area of a great permafrost thickness (up to 400-500 m).

**Integrity**

The property has clear boundaries, which include significant stretches of pillars, and the main Cambrian fossil remains of the region. It is noted that the Sinyaya component of Lena Pillars Nature Park, and relevant areas of the Lena River that are necessary to strengthen the integrity within the property, could be considered for future inclusion in the property.

Through its size (1 272 150 ha) the property is large enough to support the functioning of nature complexes and to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey its significance. Besides, local and republican

resource preserves adjacent to the Park's boundaries give additional integrity guarantees for the nominated property.

The biophysical processes and landform features of the property are intact. Natural ecosystems, numerous nature monuments, and also evidence of human activity from ancient times have been sustainably preserved over a long period of time.

The area of the "Lena Pillars Nature Park" has passed a long and complex period of geological development since Early Cambrian. The property reflects both significant geological processes of surface development and outstanding geomorphological relief features. The significant relief and landforms of the property are interrelated and interdependent elements in their natural relationships.

**Protection and management requirements**

Lena Pillars Nature Park was established by the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in 1995. The property has the status of a Nature Park of the Republic Sakha and is owned by the Sakha Republic. There are some land parcels traditionally used by Evenki indigenous people. The boundaries of the land are well known and their validity is respected by the park administration. Limited traditional use of the land includes hay-making and hunting. Co-existence of traditional rights and use, and legal land ownership appears to be appropriately considered.

Lena Pillars Nature Park possesses the status of a non-profit legal entity and established in the form of state-operated nature conservation institution and financed by the state budgetary funds from the Sakha Republic. Legal instruments for the protection of the property are determined by the regulations of the Nature Park (referred as the "Statute of the State Enterprise Lena Pillars Nature Park" 2006 in the Annex B5 of the nomination document) confirmed by the Government of the Sakha Republic. The territory of the nature park is zoned and includes areas termed reserved zone, sacred places, restricted and active recreational zones, traditional nature management zone and zone of breeding for rare and extinct animals.

The whole territory in the limits of the Lena Pillars Nature Park is provided with professional guarding by the Park administration and the staff on the basis of laws and decrees of the Governments of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Sakha.

The property has an active management plan that is kept updated. This plan was developed in accordance with the Direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation. It identifies primary goals of the park and proposes activities on protection, scientific research, environmental education and recreation. The document is adequately guiding the management of the nominated property. The plan defines the sources of financing, which are mainly from the regional budget with a minor contribution from self-generated revenue. The total annual budget of the park appears to be adequate to conduct nature conservation, patrolling and monitoring activities, but it may need to be increased in the future. Lena Pillars Nature Park has a personnel of c.40 including state environmental inspectors, education and tourism specialists, and a range of administration and support staff.

A long-term strategy needs to be developed that would balance the increasing trend in tourism in one hand whilst respecting the capacity of the area, and realizing benefits to local communities.

Traditional nature management and licensed use of biological resources by local residents from eight communities of small nationalities of the North inhabiting the Park territory (and absolute absence of permanent settlements) ensure the conditions for conservation of nature monuments and biological diversity of ecosystems of the concerned territory.

As far as there is no economic activity around the property, a buffer zone is not required. Besides, the property's boundary on local special protected areas in the south – Verkhneamginsky, Kyrbykan, Munduruchchu resource preserves and republic special protected areas – Verkhneamginsky and Amma resource preserves which serve as buffer zone.