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POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU PATRIMOINE
MONDIAL, CULTUREL ET NATUREL

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Point 7 de l'Ordre du jour provisoire: Etat de conservation de biens inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et/ou sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril

MISSION REPORT / RAPPORT DE MISSION

Doñana National Park (Spain) (685bis)

14 to 17 January 2015

This mission report should be read in conjunction with Document:
Ce rapport de mission doit être lu conjointement avec le document suivant:

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IUCN

**REPORT ON THE MISSION TO DOÑANA NATIONAL PARK, SPAIN
FROM 14 TO 17 JANUARY 2015**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission team would like to acknowledge the excellent support provided by the team from the Doñana National Park and all regional and federal authorities involved in the organization of the mission. Inputs provided by a variety of stakeholders and experts were extremely valuable and provided useful insights to the different conservation and development issues discussed. This support is most welcomed and highly appreciated.

Following the analysis of all material provided and the field visits and meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, the mission concludes that the state of conservation of the World Heritage property is satisfactory. The values for which the site has been inscribed under the World Heritage Convention are still present. However a number of issues related to the conditions of integrity have been noted by the mission, particularly those associated with: 1) the implementation of the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana; 2) the situation concerning the project for deepening the Guadalquivir River; 3) a number of gas projects; and 4) the proposed re-opening of the Aznalcóllar mine. The cumulative effects of these projects and other potential infrastructure projects that could be proposed outside of the World Heritage property could have an impact on the values and integrity of the site. The mission concludes that currently the Outstanding Universal Value of this World Heritage property is not in danger and hence at this time does not recommend the property's inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

However, the mission also recommends that if the State Party fails to urgently make a permanent and unequivocal commitment to abandon the plan to deepen the Guadalquivir River in accordance with Committee Decision **38 COM 7B.79**, it should lead to the inscription of this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The mission proposes the following recommendations to the State Party:

Recommendation 1:

Prepare a detailed implementation plan for the “Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana” as soon as possible in a participatory manner to obtain the consensus and commitment of all key stakeholders including managers of Doñana National Park. Implementation should ensure the ecological needs for the conservation of Doñana are met whilst providing options to address social conflicts potentially arising from it, as noted in the IUCN mission report.

Recommendation 2:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79** of the World Heritage Committee, and responding to the decision of the Supreme Court of Spain on the matter, requests the State Party to urgently make a permanent and unequivocal commitment to abandon plans for the deepening of the Guadalquivir River. An absence of such a commitment should be seen as a trigger to inscribe the property in the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Recommendation 3:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79**, and following the decision by the regional government of Junta de Andalucía to suspend issuing a Unified Environmental Authorization for gas extraction and storage projects proposed in the vicinity of the property, until an Environmental Impact Assessment with a detailed evaluation of the possible individual and cumulative impacts is prepared, urges the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts on the Outstanding

Universal Value, including the integrity of the property, are thoroughly assessed in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

Recommendation 4:

Noting with utmost concern the decision to re-open the Aznalcóllar mine, the State Party should ensure that potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property are thoroughly assessed prior to any recommencement of operations, in line with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and ensure that no impacts to the property arise from the use of water by the mine, and that a clear risk preparedness plan and associated resources are in place to enable a rapid response in case of any accidents.

Recommendation 5:

Expand the research activities taking place in Doñana by the Doñana Biological Station to better assess the status and trends of ecosystem and the key attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property, and assure the necessary resources to support this research are provided.

Recommendation 6:

Assess the potential impacts from climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and define adaptation and mitigation measures required to maintain the conditions of integrity of the property, particularly in the processes associated with the long-term hydrological regime of the property.

Recommendation 7:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79** of the World Heritage Committee, prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guadalquivir River Basin, particularly in relation to water supply scenarios, and agricultural, industrial and commercial development, to enable the State Party to identify key measures to strengthen planning, regulation and implementation of development projects located outside of the property in order to avoid impacts to its OUV including the integrity of the property. Such assessment has the potential to facilitate preparing regular updates on the State of Conservation of the property.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The mission team would like to acknowledge the excellent support provided by the team from the Doñana National Park who organized the mission and all logistical arrangements including a number of meetings with key stakeholders very effectively. The support provided by authorities and experts from Junta de Andalucía (General Direction of Natural Spaces and Public Participation) and from the General State Administration (Ministry of the Agriculture, Food and the Environment) was excellent. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, Sub-direction of Heritage Protection, provided excellent coordination and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the mission. It is also important to acknowledge the time, valuable information and insights provided by all of the participants to the different meetings that took place during the mission. The Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention was invited to this mission and although the Secretariat could not participate due to unforeseen circumstances, Ramsar provided valuable technical information that was very valuable in the context of discussions on water management and agricultural development.

1 BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

1.1 Inscription history

The World Heritage property of “Doñana National Park” (Spain) was inscribed on the World Heritage List as a natural site under natural criteria (vii), (ix), and (x) by the 18th session of the World Heritage Committee (Phuket, 1994). In 2005, the extension of the property was approved by the Committee at its 29th session (Durban 2005) to bring the boundaries of the World Heritage property in line with the extended National Park as proposed by the State Party of Spain.

1.2 Inscription criteria and World Heritage values

The Committee inscribed this site as an exceptional example of a large Mediterranean wetland with diverse habitats such as marshes, forests, pristine beaches, dunes and lagoons, which supports high faunal diversity, particularly large numbers of migratory birds of the palearctic region.

Criterion (vii): Numerous authors have commented on the exceptional beauty, solitude and unspoilt nature of Doñana, particularly its vast flat expanses of wilderness containing diverse habitats (marshes, forests, beaches, dunes, lagoons). Its 38 km long beach is completely pristine, and it possesses spectacular colonies of nesting birds.

Criterion (ix): The marshes of the Guadalquivir River constitute an example of geological processes during the Pleistocene. Doñana contains the last marshes of the Guadalquivir unaltered by agriculture or development. The marshes result from a subsidence of the continental plate in the Upper Miocene and Lower Pliocene, which caused a depression later filled by fluvial and aeolic deposits. Deposition of a coastal sand bar and mobile dunes continue today. These dunes, among the largest in continental Europe, advance at speeds of 4-6 m per year. Primary and secondary successional stages are evident in the vegetation of the area.

Criterion (x): The Park has high fauna diversity, notably an avifauna consisting of 360 species of breeding and migratory birds. It contains breeding populations of several globally threatened animal (marbled teal, white-headed duck, Imperial eagle, and Iberian lynx) and plant species. It is an important wintering site for wildfowl, receiving hundreds of thousands of migratory duck and geese every year. Doñana includes one of the last large stretches of undeveloped pristine coastline in Spain, and its largest wetland.

1.3 Integrity/authenticity issues raised in the IUCN evaluation report at time of inscription

At the time of inscription the Committee alerted the Spanish authorities of the continuing threats to the integrity of the site arising from hydrological projects, and encouraged them in their ongoing efforts to restore disturbed parts of the Park. IUCN in its evaluation report indicated that the conditions of integrity for all three of the criteria are met but noted that the main concern for the conservation of the property would be to ensure its long-term hydrological integrity.

1.4 Examination of the State of Conservation by the World Heritage Committee

Doñana National Park (Spain) has been subject to numerous state of conservation reports and the key issues identified by the World Heritage Committee are highlighted as follows:

22nd session of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee (Kyoto, 1998)

In April 1998, toxic spill from the Aznalcóllar mine led to significant damages to the areas surrounding the property, and the Bureau requested that EIAs be carried out for each step should the mine be re-opened.

23rd session of the World Heritage Committee (Marrakesh, 1999)

Mitigation measures taken by the State Party to contain the toxic spill were noted, and were commended for their clean-up efforts of the Guadiamar Basin and affected areas. However concerns were expressed for the re-opening of the mine, and the State Party was encouraged to take the WCPA Position Statement on mining activities and protected areas into account.

26th session of the World Heritage Committee (Budapest, 2002, 26 COM 21B.21)

The State Party was urged to prioritise integrated regional land-use planning in order to minimise impacts related to irrigation and road design, construction and management around the site.

35th session of the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2011, 34 COM 7B.27)

The 2011 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission concluded that the property's OUV was still present, but that a number of proposed projects could be of threat. The State Party was requested to ensure the implementation of the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones (located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana), and urged not to authorise the dredging of the Guadalquivir River.

37th session of the World Heritage Committee (Phnom Penh, 2013, 37 COM 7B.27)

The cumulative impacts of a number of threats to the property's OUV were reiterated. The State Party was urged not to permit any deepening dredging in the Lower Guadalquivir River, and regarding the proposed gas extraction and storage project in the vicinity of the property, was requested to consider the potential impact on the OUV of the property in its EIA. The State Party was also requested to approve and implement the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zone (located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana) without further delay.

38th session of the World Heritage Committee (Doha, 2014, 38 COM 7B.79)

The State Party was requested to make a permanent commitment to not permit plans for deepening dredging in the Guadalquivir River. Utmost concern was raised for: 1) the continued decline in the condition of the Doñana aquifer; 2) reported plans to increase water use for irrigation of rice paddies upstream of the property; 3) proposal to legalise illegal water use under the revised Strawberry Plan; 4) dam construction on the Guadamar River; and 5) absence of a plan of action to address unsustainably high water extraction. The State Party was urged to ensure that impacts on the property's OUV from mining and gas exploitation and storage projects in its vicinity are thorough assessed. The Committee further urged the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guadalquivir River Basin in order to prepare revised plans and actions for water management and use in the river basin, which will provide long-term protection of the OUV of the property. Finally, it was requested that a reactive monitoring mission to the property is held to assess its potential threats.

1.5 Justification of the mission

As noted above the Committee at its 38th session (Doha, 2014) through Decision **38 COM 7B.79** requested the State Party to invite an IUCN reactive monitoring mission to the property, including an invitation to the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, to assess its state of conservation as well as potential threats to its OUV. Subsequently the State Party sent an invitation letter, and Terms of Reference for the mission were adopted (enclosed in Annex 1). Whilst a representative of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention could not participate in the mission Ramsar was represented by the focal point from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment. The programme for the mission is enclosed in Annex 2 and participants are listed in Annex 3.

2 NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

2.1 Protected area/national legislation

The legal framework for the protection and management of Doñana National Park is provided by the following laws and regulations:

- *Law 91 of 28 December 1978* which established the National Park;
- *Special Plan for Doñana National Park of 1986*;
- *Law 2 of 18 July 1989* which established the inventory of natural protected spaces of Andalucía and additional measure towards their protection;
- *Law 8 of 27 October 1999* on the Natural Space of Doñana;
- *Decree 48 of 10 February 2004* that approved the Management Plan for Doñana National Park;
- *Decree 97 of 11 April 2005* which established the territorial planning for Doñana National Park and Doñana Natural Park;
- *Law 30 of 3 December 2014* which established overall regulations for the Network of National Parks of Spain.

In addition, the natural property is protected by the following laws and legal provisions:

- Coastal zone law 22/1988;
- Law 42/2007 (No 299, of 14 December 2007) on Natural Heritage and Biodiversity;

- Law 5/2007 (No 81, of 4 April 2007) on the Network of National Parks;
- Law 1803/1999 (No 209, of 1 September 1999) on the Plan Director;
- Habitat Directive (92/43/CEE) of 1992;
- Declaration of Zone of Special Protection of Birds (ZEPA);
- Agreement of the Council of Ministers of 1982, which authorizes the inclusion of the site into the list of wetlands of international importance of the Ramsar Convention (1971) - Boletín Oficial del Estado (BOE) nº 199, de 20 de agosto de 1982;
- Law 5/2005 of 26 May 2005 concerning the Conservation of spaces of environmental relevance (LECO).

2.2 Institutional framework and management structure

The responsible body for the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in Spain is the Spanish Ministry of Culture. For the 1971 Ramsar Convention it is the Ministry for the Environment. All planning and management activities are implemented at the regional level by the government of Junta de Andalucía in coordination with the national authorities.

2.3 Response to the recognition of values under international treaties and programmes

In addition to its World Heritage status, the National Park was established in 1980 as a Biosphere Reserve under the UNESCO MAB Programme. In 1982 the National Park was included in the List of Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention and in 2005 the Ramsar site was extended to include the Natural Park. In addition on September 1985 the Council of Europe granted to the National Park the European Diploma for Protected Area Management that has been renewed in 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2010. Furthermore, in 1988, the National Park was declared a “Special Zone for the Protection of Birds” under the EC Habitat Directive 79/409, which implies that it is also part of the Natura 2000 Network established by the EC Habitat Directive 92/43.

3 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES / THREATS

3.1 Management effectiveness

The property was recently subject to a detailed independent assessment of its management effectiveness. The management of the site is considered very effective and supported by adequate human and financial resources. There is a highly qualified team of people managing the site and planning and management activities are guided by the findings of scientific research implemented by the Doñana Biological Station. As with other national parks in Spain, the management of Doñana is guided by recommendations from a Consultative and Participatory Body, which was established by the *Decree 24 of 30 January 2007*.

3.2 Nature and extent of threats to the property

As emphasized since the time of inscription of Doñana on the World Heritage List, the single most important threat to the property has been associated with projects that can affect the long-term hydrological integrity of the area. This includes the use of water resources, particularly groundwater for irrigation. As noted in section 1.4 above, in previous reports on the property and associated Committee Decisions, this has been, and will continue to be, a serious cause of concern in relation to the integrity of the property. The nature of this threat is due to the need to maintain groundwater availability for ensuring the effective functioning of the wetland's

ecosystems that characterize the property. To a lesser extent, the use of surface water in the Doñana area has the potential to impact the property. In terms of projects linked to surface water, of most concern to the Committee as well as to the managers of the property and local communities is the plan for dredging to deepen the Guadalquivir River. A number of proposed projects on mining and gas storage represent other threats to the property as noted in a number of SoC reports.

3.3 Positive or negative developments in the conservation of the property since the last report to the World Heritage Committee

3.3.1. Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana

After 7 years of planning and discussions, the regional government of Junta de Andalucía approved on 16th December 2014, the “Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana”. The approval of this plan was requested by the WH Committee in a number of decisions and in particular in its Decision **37 COM 7B.27**. Whilst this plan has several objectives there are three that are particularly relevant for the conservation of the property:

1. Enable savings in the use of water resources by defining the limits for the extraction of groundwater for irrigation as well as the surface that can be irrigated in a way that does not affect the ecosystems associated with the Natural Space of Doñana;
2. Establish measures to allow for the movement of wildlife in agricultural areas through the introduction of ecological connectivity in a way that is compatible with existing road systems and rural routes;
3. Establish measures to protect the landscape, particularly from erosion, flooding, pollution from agricultural practices and other probable natural risks.

For most people and organizations interviewed during the mission the approval of this plan is viewed as a key positive step to regulate and rationalize the use of groundwater for agriculture. It is foreseen that the implementation of this plan will take place over 15 years, comprising of 48 targeted actions, with a total budget of around 57 million Euros. However in the opinion of a number of conservation NGOs the plan is not the result of a truly participatory process and it does not reflect a consensus with the agricultural sector. During discussions on this issue it was not clear whether or not a detailed plan for implementation has been prepared by the regional government. In the opinion of most people interviewed during the mission the implementation of this Special Plan will be difficult and challenging due to push back from the agricultural sector. It has been also noted that, by using the cut-off year of 2004 for defining which areas can continue utilising groundwater, a number of agricultural areas that existed before that year will benefit from this plan.

Whilst the majority of people interviewed during the mission agreed that the adoption of this plan represents an important step for the conservation of Doñana, its implementation opens a number of concerns. Firstly, it is well known that this plan is in response to the threats posed by illegal use of groundwater to the ecosystems of Doñana, thereby creating a risk that the people who could be negatively affected by this plan could retaliate against the Park and/or its staff. This could jeopardize the excellent relationships developed between the Park and the local communities over the past years. The rise in conflicts has been illustrated by a platform of farmers (“Agua ya” – “Water Now”) who organized on 15th January 2015, a large scale demonstration in Huelva, reportedly attended by 30,000 people, to oppose this plan. The

mission also had the opportunity to meet with representatives of this platform who noted a number of irregularities in the application of measures oriented to implement this Special Plan, and which are affecting people with long-standing authorizations for agricultural development, including a number of enterprises that are using sustainable agricultural practices. This is creating unnecessary tensions and mistrust on the implementation of this plan.

Secondly, in order to respond to the water demand from the agricultural sector whilst allowing the recuperation of the aquifer, it has been planned to transfer 15 hm³ of surface water to agricultural areas north of the property. Although this measure will reduce social conflicts, it could increase the risk of pollution through the introduction of poor quality water into the Doñana region. It was also discussed that, whilst Doñana's ecosystems are highly dependent on water availability, too much water could also generate problems. Instead, it is important to seek the re-establishment and maintenance of the natural hydrological balance in the region.

Recommendation 1:

Prepare a detailed implementation plan for the "Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana" as soon as possible in a participatory manner to obtain the consensus and commitment of all key stakeholders including managers of Doñana National Park. Implementation should ensure the ecological needs for the conservation of Doñana are met whilst providing options to address social conflicts potentially arising from it, as noted in the IUCN mission report.

3.3.2. Plan for dredging to deepen the Guadalquivir River

Experts from the Port Authority of Seville provided a detailed presentation of this plan noting its socio-economic importance, the technical elements of its design and the ecological measures foreseen to avoid or minimize potential impacts to the property and surrounding areas. It was noted with concern that the presentation did not make any reference to the Statement from the Scientific Commission for the Study of Impacts from Dredging of the Guadalquivir River, officially issued on 12 November 2010. This statement, in its point 2, clearly concludes that the project for dredging to deepen the Guadalquivir River is incompatible with the conservation of the Guadalquivir's estuary and therefore with the conservation of the property. It was also of concern that the presentation from the Port Authority did not make any reference to the concern that has been repeatedly noted by the World Heritage Committee on the potential impact of this project to the integrity of Doñana.

In meetings with different stakeholder , it was clear that there was a general view that this project is not well justified, not even from the economic perspective, as many believe that the Port of Seville will never reach the same importance as that of Algeciras, also in Andalucía, in terms of volume and diversity of operations. It was also noted by different experts that the main problem is not only limited to the deepening of the river to allow access to large vessels but that there are also risks associated with the difficulties for large vessels to navigate along the river.

In discussions with representatives from the Ministry of the Environment and of the regional Government it was repeatedly noted that the project for deepening the Guadalquivir River can only proceed if the environmental conditions of the Guadalquivir's estuary are improved as requested by the Statement from the Scientific Commission for the Study of Impacts from this project. As noted in the State Party report on the conservation of the property, achieving substantial improvement of the estuary can take years of work and considerable investment and therefore *de facto* the project cannot be implemented.

However, conservation NGOs as well as representatives from local communities and farmers that could be affected by impacts from this proposed project are concerned that there is a high risk that this project could go ahead, as the Port Authority has secured the funding for its implementation (40 million Euros) and continues to include the project in its work and financial plans. In the opinion of most stakeholders interviewed there is a high risk that political pressures in favour of economic development and the creation of jobs can strongly bias the decision to implement the project.

During the preparation of this report, the sentence from the Supreme Court of Spain against the project for deepening the Guadalquivir River due to its impacts to the river was publically communicated. The sentence states that dredging contradicts the objectives of the Hydrological Plan, which should aim to maintain and restore the environmental conditions of the river. However the River Basin Authority has publicly stated that they will include this project in their new Hydrological Plan. The Port Authority, on the other hand, has assumed they cannot fund the dredging within the funding period imposed by the European Union, finishing June 2015, but has declared that they will include it in the request for funding for the new period. In addition the Ministry of the Environment of Spain has not revoked the EIA that was approved for this project. Hence whilst the decision taken by the Supreme Court of Spain is most welcomed by environmental organizations and the mission, it seems to leave the door open for this project to go ahead.

Recommendation 2:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79** of the World Heritage Committee, and responding to the decision of the Supreme Court of Spain on the matter, requests the State Party to urgently make a permanent and unequivocal commitment to abandon plans for the deepening of the Guadalquivir River. An absence of such a commitment should be seen as a trigger to inscribe the property in the List of World Heritage in Danger.

3.3.3. Mining and Gas Storage Projects

As reflected in section 1.4 above, concerns regarding proposed developments associated with mining and gas projects have been noted by the WH Committee since its 34th Session in 2010. Two specific projects were discussed during the mission:

Gas Extraction and Storage Projects

Gas extraction has been taking place in areas outside of the WH property for more than 30 years with no reported impacts. The Ministry of Industry of the government of Spain decided in 2005 to reuse some of the depleted gas deposits as gas storage facilities with the objective of ensuring a secure supply of gas in the south of Spain. In parallel to this it is also proposing to open new wells, renovating some of the existing pipelines and creating new ones. Whilst these projects are outside of the WH property they are proposed within the Doñana Natural Park, which is ecologically linked to the property, managed to achieve complementarity with the World Heritage site, and has enhanced conservation focus to maintain the integrity of the WH property. Therefore these two areas cannot be seen in isolation.

Whilst most of these projects promoted by Gas Natural Fenosa, subsidiary of Petroleum Oil and Gas España S.A, have received positive EIAs, the problem arises from the fact that each project has been assessed in isolation, not fully considering the cumulative impacts. Based on this important argument the regional government of Junta de Andalucía denied issuing a Unified Environmental Authorization to implement these projects. This decision, supported by

conservation NGOs working in this region, is in line with point 7 of Decision **38 COM 7B.79** of the WH Committee which calls for the need to assess cumulative impacts from these projects in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment. Following this positive decision from the regional government, Gas Natural Fenosa has publically announced their intention to claim 350 million Euros from Junta de Andalucía if these projects are not approved; this can generate a significant pressure to revert a decision that is responding to a request from the WH Committee.

Re-opening of the Aznalcóllar mine

Opinions on this issue during the mission were strongly divided. On the one hand it was viewed as inexplicable that this mine, which led to a huge spill in April 1998 and resulted in an environmental disaster, is going to be re-opened. On the other hand some viewed this decision as necessary in order to respond to the economic challenges and the need to create new jobs in this region, which has the highest unemployment rate in Spain.

Representatives from the Ministry of the Environment and the government of Junta de Andalucía informed the mission that a public vote is taking place to select the company that will be granted this operation. It was further explained that the technical basis used for the selection process includes strict requirements on environmental management and protection to ensure that the mine is operated to the highest environmental standards and risk management.

In addition to the risk of another environmental disaster associated with this mine, demand for water to support mining operations is also of concern. Previously, the Guadiamar River, one of the main sources of water for Doñana's wetlands, supplied the water required at the Aznalcóllar mine. Following the closure of the mine after the spill, this supply of water was reallocated to agricultural and industrial users. Therefore there is a need to identify and allocate water resources for the operations of the mine when re-opened.

In order to meet this water demand, it was noted that the Hydrological Plan for the Guadalquivir River 2015-2021 is expected to meet the requirements via either the Agrío dam which would undergo an increase in water storage capacity, or by creating a new dam in the area using the tailings from the old mine which could lead to serious pollution if the tailings are not effectively treated. In both cases the re-opening of the mine firstly complicates an already difficult situation on the use of water in this region and secondly opens up to risks of accidents from the mine. This last point is particularly relevant as IUCN received information during the preparation of this report, that the license to operate the Aznalcóllar mine has been awarded to the México-Minorbis Group.

(<http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/organismos/economiainnovacioncienciayempleo/actualidad/noticias/detalle/90531.html>);

Recommendation 3:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79**, and following the decision by the regional government of Junta de Andalucía to suspend issuing a Unified Environmental Authorization for gas extraction and storage projects proposed in the vicinity of the property, until an Environmental Impact Assessment with a detailed evaluation of the possible individual and cumulative impacts is prepared, urges the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property, are thoroughly assessed in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

Recommendation 4:

Noting with utmost concern the decision to re-open the Aznalcóllar mine, the State Party should ensure that potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property are thoroughly assessed prior to any recommencement of operations, in line with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and ensure that no impacts to the property arise from the use of water by the mine, and that a clear risk preparedness plan and associated resources are in place to enable a rapid response in case of any accidents.

4 ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

4.1 Assessment of the values, on the basis of which the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List, and associated conditions of integrity.

As noted in section 1.2 above Doñana NP was inscribed in the WH List based on natural criteria (vii), (ix) and (x). The assessment of the state of conservation of the values that justified the application of these criteria can be summarized as follows:

Criterion (vii) – The property maintains its exceptional beauty and naturalness which is particularly challenging in a territory surrounded by areas intensively used for agriculture. This is the result of the effective combination of two main strategies oriented to maintain the conditions of integrity associated with this criterion: (a) the management plan for the property dedicates particular attention to maintain the wilderness conditions of the property; and (b) management activities in the Natural Park that surrounds the property are fully aligned and supportive of the management objectives of the property, thus representing *de facto* an effective buffer to the park. It was noted in discussions with stakeholders involved in managing visitors that the sense of naturalness offered by the property is one of the most appreciated features of the site.

Criterion (ix): The marshes and wetlands of the Guadalquivir River protected within the property is one of the values that justify its Outstanding Universal Value. The main threat to this ecosystem is the decrease in water inflow, both groundwater and surface water, associated with agricultural use. This threat, discussed above in section 3.3.1 should be substantially reduced with the implementation of the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana.

To identify the effect of the use of groundwater in the marshes, wetlands and lagoons of Doñana, a study was implemented by the Hydrographic Confederation of the Guadalquivir River, which assessed the groundwater levels for a 20 year period (1993-2013) and showed the following results:

- Whilst zones where the higher extraction of groundwater for different uses presented a clear decrease in groundwater levels, wetland zones within the park did not show significant changes, presenting a stable situation.
- In zones associated with the dune system, where water was discharged from the dunes and where human activities were absent, a statistically significant decline in groundwater level was observed; this resulted in decreasing water levels in the lagoons and wetlands that were directly linked to the dunes. Although it has yet to be statistically proven, this fall in water level may be

caused by an increase in evapotranspiration as there has been a significant increase in vegetation cover in these areas in the past 30 years.

➤ The study showed that in areas where Doñana's lagoons and wetlands are located, groundwater levels were highly dependent of climatological conditions; although lower water levels were recorded during conditions with the highest temperatures and lower precipitations, the overall trend over the 20 year period was stable.

Whilst the results of this study are questioned by some experts that believe that there is depletion in the water level, the available scientific information shows a stable situation for the wetlands and lagoons existing in the property with the exception of those associated with the dune system. The importance of climatological conditions to maintain these ecosystems is a key factor that should be considered, particularly in the processes associated to the long-term hydrological regime of the property, to assess the potential impacts from climate change to these key ecosystems, particularly in the event of longer and dryer seasons.

In terms of water supply from surface waters the situation has substantially improved over the last 10 years as a result of the implementation of the Doñana 2005 Project. Special mention should be made of the reclamation of Caño Travieso, where work to re-establish the hydrological flows that took place between 2012 and 2014 which, for the first time in more than half a century, enabled the Guadiamar River to flow through the marshes in the northern zone of the WH property. This work was the culmination of the ecological recovery of the Caracoles agricultural farm incorporated in the World Heritage Site in 2005. The effect of this work, which facilitates flooding of this old farm, was observed during a field visit as part of the mission. Now a natural circulation channel can be observed, along with very rapid colonisation by waterfowl, with major concentrations of certain species such as flamingos, ducks, and cranes. Overall this and other actions implemented by the Doñana 2005 Project have substantially enhanced the conservation of marshes and wetlands within the property, thus contributing towards maintaining and enhancing the integrity of the property.

Overall, in the opinion of many experts interviewed during the mission, the state of conservation of these ecosystems is by far better now than at the time of inscription of the property on the WH List. However a number of experts and NGOs noted that there is a need to develop a comprehensive system to monitor and assess the state of conservation of the different ecosystems comprised within the property. This could be done by reinforcing the capacity of the Doñana Biological Station, which has been reduced in recent years due to budget cuts. Although the Station has historically focused on biodiversity research, it is well positioned to strengthen its activities on monitoring the state of ecosystems.

Criterion (x): Information on the biodiversity values of the property is probably the most well documented as it has been, and will continue to be, the subject of many years of research by both the Doñana Biological Station and the National Park. Research on birds shows that since the time of inscription the total number of wintering waterfowl has been over half a million individuals per year and has reached 600,000 individuals on two occasions. At the time of inscription the property contained breeding populations of 5 globally threatened bird species; at present the property contains breeding populations of 8 globally threatened bird species, partly as a result of favourable ecological conditions as a result of the projects implemented on hydrological restoration.

There are a number of species that have shown an extraordinary recovery. One such example is the Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), which in 1958 disappeared from the property as a breeding species. However after the natural reproduction of 7 breeding pairs in 1996, its population exceeded 7,000 breeding pairs by 2011. In the case of the greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) the number of individuals increased from around 14,000 at the time of the inscription to close to 55,000 in 2013-2014. In the case of the Iberian Imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*) the number of breeding pairs has steadily increased from a total number 7 pairs to 11 pairs over the last 10 years through natural reproduction but there have been recent reports of mortality of two individuals for reasons still unknown.

Considerable efforts continue to be implemented towards the conservation of the Iberian lynx. Whilst the number of total individuals has slightly increased every year since 2002, the numbers of territorial females and offspring remain practically equal for the last 5 years. The geographical range of this species has continued to expand, not only inside of the property, but also outside of these protected areas, representing a high risk for the individuals. On-going cases of mortality of individuals have been reported (6 individuals in 2014), which are generally associated with road kills. The captive breeding programme for the Iberian lynx that started in 2004 is considered to be one of the most successful of its kind for this species globally, providing lessons learned and best practices for similar programmes in other regions of Spain as well as in Portugal. However the conservation of this species continues to be a challenge, as there has been a significant decline in rabbits, the main food source for the lynx, caused by a number of factors including the spread of diseases which has proven very difficult to control.

Maintaining the integrity of the property associated with criterion (x) is directly linked to the plans and strategies required to maintain the ecosystems of Doñana. However, the conservation of key species such as the Iberian lynx and the Imperial eagle requires further enhancement of the long-term specific programmes already in place for the conservation of these two species, whilst also giving the plan some flexibility to adapt to and address new challenges such as those derived from climate change.

Recommendation 5:

Expand the research activities taking place in Doñana by the Doñana Biological Station to better assess the status and trends of ecosystem and the key attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property, and assure the necessary resources to support this research are provided.

Recommendation 6:

Assess the potential impacts from climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and define adaptation and mitigation measures required to maintain the conditions of integrity of the property, particularly in the processes associated with the long-term hydrological regime of the property.

4.2 Review any follow-up measures to previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of the property and measures which the State Party plans to take to protect the outstanding universal value of the property.

A number of recommendations proposed during the 2011 Mission to Doñana have been fully or partially addressed; however the implementation of these measures still seems not to be fully coordinated with all of the actors involved. This is particularly the case for actions involving institutions that operate outside of the property and that are linked to agricultural development,

roads and transport infrastructure and mining and gas sectors. Substantial improvement on the other hand, has been noted regarding the relationships between the authorities dealing with water planning and management and the park authorities since the 2011 Mission.

Following discussions during the mission there seems to be three priority measures to protect the OUV of the property. These are:

- 1 Preparing a detailed implementation plan for the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana.
- 2 Updating the Management Plan for Doñana National Park to include specific programmes and activities not only to deal with existing threats and challenges but also to emerging threats such as those derived from climate change.
- 3 Prepare, in accordance with Decision **38 COM 7B.79**, a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guadalquivir River Basin, particularly in relation to water supply scenarios, agricultural, industrial and commercial development.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the analysis of all material provided and the field visits and meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, the mission concludes that the state of conservation of the World Heritage property is satisfactory. The values for which the site has been inscribed under the World Heritage Convention are still present. However a number of issues related to the conditions of integrity have been noted by the mission, particularly those associated with: 1) the implementation of the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana; 2) the situation concerning the project for deepening the Guadalquivir River; 3) a number of gas projects; and 4) the proposed re-opening of the Aznalcóllar mine. The cumulative effects of these projects and other potential infrastructure projects that could be proposed outside of the World Heritage property could have an impact on the values and integrity of the site. The mission concludes that currently the Outstanding Universal Value of this World Heritage property is not in danger and hence at this time does not recommend the property's inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

However, the mission also recommends that if the State Party fails to urgently make a permanent and unequivocal commitment to abandon the plan to deepen the Guadalquivir River in accordance with Committee Decision **38 COM 7B.79**, it should lead to the inscription of this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The mission proposes the following recommendations to the State Party:

Recommendation 1:

Prepare a detailed implementation plan for the "Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana" as soon as possible in a participatory manner to obtain the consensus and commitment of all key stakeholders including managers of Doñana National Park. Implementation should ensure the ecological needs for the conservation of Doñana are met whilst providing options to address social conflicts potentially arising from it, as noted in the IUCN mission report.

Recommendation 2:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79** of the World Heritage Committee, and responding to the decision of the Supreme Court of Spain on the matter, requests the State Party to urgently make a permanent and unequivocal commitment to abandon plans for the deepening of the Guadalquivir River. An absence of such a commitment should be seen as a trigger to inscribe the property in the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Recommendation 3:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79**, and following the decision by the regional government of Junta de Andalucía to suspend issuing a Unified Environmental Authorization for gas extraction and storage projects proposed in the vicinity of the property, until an Environmental Impact Assessment with a detailed evaluation of the possible individual and cumulative impacts is prepared, urges the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property, are thoroughly assessed in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

Recommendation 4:

Noting with utmost concern the decision to re-open the Aznalcóllar mine, the State Party should ensure that potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property are thoroughly assessed prior to any recommencement of operations, in line with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and ensure that no impacts to the property arise from the use of water by the mine, and that a clear risk preparedness plan and associated resources are in place to enable a rapid response in case of any accidents.

Recommendation 5:

Expand the research activities taking place in Doñana by the Doñana Biological Station to better assess the status and trends of ecosystem and the key attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity of the property, and assure the necessary resources to support this research are provided.

Recommendation 6:

Assess the potential impacts from climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and define adaptation and mitigation measures required to maintain the conditions of integrity of the property, particularly in the processes associated with the long-term hydrological regime of the property.

Recommendation 7:

In line with Decision **38 COM 7B.79** of the World Heritage Committee, prepare a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guadalquivir River Basin, particularly in relation to water supply scenarios, and agricultural, industrial and commercial development, to enable the State Party to identify key measures to strengthen planning, regulation and implementation of development projects located outside of the property in order to avoid impacts to its OUV including the integrity of the property. Such assessment has the potential to facilitate preparing regular updates on the State of Conservation of the property.

6 ANNEXES

6.1 Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Joint IUCN / Ramsar Convention Secretariat Reactive Monitoring and Ramsar Advisory Mission, Doñana National Park, Spain, 14 – 17 January 2015.

At its 38th session, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party of Spain to invite an IUCN reactive monitoring mission to Doñana National Park World Heritage Site, including an invitation to the Ramsar Convention Secretariat (Decision 38 COM 7B.79). The objective of the monitoring mission is to assess the state of conservation of the property as well as existing and potential threats to its OUV and conditions of integrity.

In particular, the mission should undertake the following:

1. Assess, based on available information and experts opinions, the state of conservation of the property, including the condition of the Doñana aquifer, and the extent to which the Outstanding Universal Value and integrity is currently affected by the existing threats;
2. Assess the current situation with the potential threats, including gas extraction and storage projects in the vicinity of the property, plans for dredging to deepen the Guadalquivir River, plans to increase water use for irrigation of rice paddies upstream of the property, proposal to legalize illegal water use under the revised Strawberry Plan, and to construct a dam on the Guadamar River, as well as any other projects increasing water use upstream of the property;
3. Review the progress achieved by the State Party in assessing the cumulative impacts from various projects and in undertaking a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guadalquivir River Basin, particularly in relation to water supply scenarios, agricultural, industrial and commercial development as requested in Decision 38 COM 7B.79;
4. Evaluate the progress achieved by the State Party with the implementation of the recommendations of the 2011 reactive monitoring mission;
5. In line with paragraph 173 of the Operational Guidelines, assess any other relevant conservation issues that may negatively impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including the conditions of integrity and protection and management;
6. Based on the results of the above assessments make a recommendation to the World Heritage Committee regarding the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The mission should be assisted to conduct the necessary field visits to key locations. In order to enable preparation for the mission, it would be appreciated if the following documents could be provided to the World Heritage Centre (copied to IUCN and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat) as soon as possible:

- a) The most recent version of the management plan of the property; the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones and any other relevant management plans;

- b) The latest available Environmental Impact Assessments for all relevant projects, including the EIA and EIS of the gas extraction and storage project proposed by Gas Natural Fenosa, as well as the latest draft version of the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Guadalquivir River Basin if already developed;
- c) Recent results from scientific research on the values of the property and the most recent studies assessing the condition of the Doñana aquifer;
- d) Additional information may be requested during the mission to the State Party and key stakeholders as required.

The mission should hold consultations with the Spanish authorities at national, autonomous community and local levels, including representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment and representatives of the Junta de Andalucía and of the local government. In addition, the mission should hold consultation with a range of relevant stakeholders, including: i) researchers of the Doñana Biological Station and others as required; ii) NGOs, including WWF and OCEANA; iii) representatives of the water authority; iv) representatives of relevant industries associated to the gas storage project and the proposed dam construction; v) representatives of farmers organizations; vi) representatives of local communities, and vii) representatives of the authority managing the Port of Seville.

Based on the assessment of available information and discussions with the State Party representatives and stakeholders, the mission will develop recommendations to the Government of Spain, the World Heritage Committee and the Ramsar Convention with the objective of providing guidance to the State Party for the development of a conservation strategy that will ensure the conservation of the property's Outstanding Universal Value and conditions of integrity. It should be noted that recommendations are made within the mission report (see below), and not while the mission is still on-going.

The mission will prepare a concise mission report on the findings and recommendations of this reactive monitoring mission no later than 6 weeks after the end of the field visit, following the standard format.

6.2 Annex 2 – PROGRAMA MISIÓN DE EVALUACIÓN Y SEGUIMIENTO DEL CENTRO DE PATRIMONIO MUNDIAL Y DE ASESORAMIENTO DE LA CONVENCION DE RAMSAR, DOÑANA, 14 AL 17 DE ENERO DE 2015

Miércoles 14 de enero

Mañana

9:30 h. Primera sesión de trabajo con los técnicos responsables de la gestión del Espacio Natural de Doñana. Asuntos a tratar: Enmarque de la Misión.

- Aclaración detallada del tratamiento durante la misión de los asuntos propuestos por la Decisión relativa a Doñana del Comité del Patrimonio Mundial de la UNESCO reunido en Doha.
- Marco territorial del Bien, localización y escala espaciotemporal de riesgos y amenazas.
- Marco jurídico competencial y sus efectos. La Gestión de Doñana.
- Actuaciones en aguas superficiales. Doñana 2005. Balance de las actuaciones. Avances del período 2011-2015 y planteamiento de futuro. (60 minutos el bloque)

11:30 h **Bloque de contenidos demandados por la Misión. 1. Dragado del Guadalquivir.**

- Dragado del río Guadalquivir. Antecedentes, estado del conocimiento de la tramitación de proyectos y posición del Estado Parte. (Ministerio y Consejería de Medio Ambiente y Ordenación del Territorio). (50 minutos).

14:00 h Almuerzo.

Tarde

16:00 h **Bloque de contenidos demandados por la Misión. 2. Agricultura, usos del agua y situación de las aguas subterráneas.**

- La agricultura en el entorno de Doñana. 15 minutos
- Actuaciones realizadas y programadas desde la administración competente para la ordenación de los usos del suelo y el órgano responsable de las aguas subterráneas. -45 minutos
 - Plan Especial de Ordenación de Regadíos situados al Norte de la Corona Forestal de Doñana.
 - Control sobre consumos de aguas subterráneas. Sustitución de captaciones.

17:30 h Pausa – café

- Aguas Subterráneas. Antecedentes, evolución y estados de las masas de aguas subterráneas. (Confederación Hidrográfica del Guadalquivir) – 40 minutos

Jueves 15 de Enero:

Mañana

9:00 h. Reunión con Alcaldes de municipios que aportan territorio al Parque Nacional. (Se pretende aportar la visión de las autoridades y comunidades locales respecto a la realidad de Doñana y los problemas que se debaten) – 60 minutos

10:30 h. Visita explotaciones agrícolas.

12:30 h. Sesión de trabajo con investigadores de la Estación Biológica de Doñana del Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.

- La EBD y la Investigación en Doñana.
- Seguimiento de Procesos Naturales en Doñana.
- Resultados de Investigación y Seguimiento de Procesos Naturales.
- El futuro para Doñana en un escenario de cambio global.
- Conclusiones más relevantes sobre la situación del sitio Patrimonio de la Humanidad y del humedal RAMSAR desde el conocimiento científico.

14:30 h Almuerzo

Tarde

16:00 h **Bloque Reuniones con organizaciones conservacionistas, asociaciones, colectivos y agentes socioeconómicos del territorio.**

16:00 WWF

16:45 Ecologistas en Acción

17:30 Sociedad Española de Ornitología

18:00 h Pausa – café

18:30 Reuniones con otras instituciones y organizaciones

18:30 Fundación Doñana 21.

19:15 ASAJA y UPA

20:00 Representante Empresarios Consejo de Participación

Viernes 16 de Enero

Mañana

9:00 Visita al Parque Nacional y alrededores, con especial atención a las áreas relacionadas con asuntos de interés para la misión conjunta.

Acebuche – Vera y marisma – Los Sotos –El Rocío – El Partido – Marisma Gallega – Guadiamar – Caracoles – Entremuros - El Rocío.

14:00 h. Almuerzo de trabajo con el Presidente del Consejo de Participación del Espacio Natural de Doñana, D. Miguel Delibes Castro.

16:30 h Salida hacia el Acebuche

Tarde

17:30 h Bloque de contenidos demandados por la Misión. **3. Planificación integral del estuario del Guadalquivir y Evaluación proyectos gas y minería.**

- Introducción y aclaraciones. - 10 minutos.
- Planificación y acciones para una gestión, seguimiento y evaluación integral del Estuario del Guadalquivir. 40 minutos.
- Situación y tramitación de los proyectos en el exterior de Doñana relacionados con explotación de gas y minería. 20 minutos.

Sábado 17 de Enero

Mañana

10:00 h Sesión de trabajo con el Equipo de Gestión del Espacio Natural de Doñana.

- Seguimiento y evaluación del estado de conservación de Doñana. Con especial atención a los asuntos de interés de la misión y a los valores que motivaron la inclusión del Bien en la Lista del Patrimonio de la Humanidad y en la Lista de Ramsar. 30 minutos
- Principales conclusiones y contenidos del informe del estado español para UNESCO y Ramsar. - 30 minutos
- Intercambio de opiniones sobre los contenidos básicos del informe que elaborará la Misión conjunta. 40 minutos

13:30 h Almuerzo de trabajo de los miembros de la Misión conjunta para revisar contenidos del informe y procedimiento para su elaboración.

6.3 Annex 3 – List of Participants

IUCN

- Pedro Rosabal, Deputy Director, Global Programme on Protected Areas.

Federal Authorities

- Laura de Miguel Riera, Director for World heritage, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.
- Monserrat Fernández, Autonomous Organization for National Parks, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment.
- Magdalena Bernués Sanza, General Direction for Nature and Forestry Policy, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Regional Government of Junta de Andalucía

- Esperanza Pérez Acosta, Director General for Natural Spaces and Civil Participation, Council for the Environment and Territorial Planning.
- Juan Pedro Castellano Domínguez, Director Natural Space of Doñana (National Park of Doñana and Natural Park of Doñana).
- Francisco Quirós Herruzo, Director for Conservation, Natural Space of Doñana.
- José Juan Chans Pousada, Manager, Natural Space of Doñana.
- Milagros Pérez Villalba, Technical Advisor, Direction General for Natural Spaces and Civil Participation.
- María Nieves Masegosa Martos, Secretary General for Territorial Planning and Climate Change, Council for the Environment and Territorial Planning.
- Olga Ormaechea Czalis, Director of Services for Management of Territorial Planning, Council for the Environment and Territorial Planning.

Hydrographic Confederation for the Guadalquivir River

- Manuel Romero Ortiz, President, Hydrographic Confederation for the Guadalquivir River.
- Agustín Pastor Turullols, Head, Department of Hydrological Planning.
- Francisco Lerdo de Tejada, Department of Hydrological Planning.
- Victor Cifuentes, Commissariat for Water.

Port Authority of Seville

- Carmen Castreño Lucas, President, Port Authority of Seville.
- Angel Pulido Hernández, Director, Port Authority of Seville.
- Joaquin Vera Sanchez, Head, General Secretary.
- Dr. Jose Carlos Gracia, Researcher, Professor of Biology, University of Seville.

Doñana's Biological Station

- Juan José Negro, Director of Doñana's Biological Station.
- Guyonne Janss, Vice-Director, Doñana's Biological Station.

NGOs, Civil Associations and Experts

- Eva Hernández and Juan José Carmona, WWF-Spain.
- Carlos Dávila, Sociedad Española de Ornitología.
- Juan Romero, Antonio Ramos and Rosa Fernández, Ecologistas en Acción.
- Emilio Vieira and Juan Manuel Díaz, Asociación Agraria de Jóvenes Agricultores (ASAJA)
- Javier Fernández, Unión de Pequeños Agricultores y Ganaderos (UPA).
- Pedro Roldán Cabrera, Confederación de Empresarios de Andalucía (CEA).
- Miguel Ángel Losada Rodríguez, University of Granada.
- José Solís de la Rosa, Comisión for Sustainable Development of the Council for Participation in the Natural Space of Doñana and Vice-President of Doñana 21 Foundation.

Local Authorities – Municipalities

- José Antonio Domínguez Iglesias, Mayor of Almonte.
- Dolores Escalona Sánchez, Mayor of Aznalcázar.
- Miguel Ángel Curiel Reinoso, Mayor of Hinojos.