



**ПОСТОЯННОЕ ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЬСТВО
Российской Федерации при ЮНЕСКО**

**DELEGATION PERMANENTE
de la Fédération de Russie
auprès de l'UNESCO**

8, rue de Prony, 75017 Paris

Tel.: 01. 42.12.84.30

Fax. 01. 42.67.51.99

No. 110

Paris, « *29* » January, 2016

Subject: Reports on SoC of WH properties “Volcanoes of Kamchatka”, “Golden Mountains of Altai”, “Lake Baikal”, “Virgin Komi Forests” and “Wrangel Island”, Medium-term management plan of the Reserve “Wrangel Island”

Dear Ms. Rössler,

I have the pleasure to convey to your kind attention original reports on State of Conservation of World Heritage properties “Volcanoes of Kamchatka”, “Golden Mountains of Altai”, “Lake Baikal”, “Virgin Komi Forests” and “Wrangel Island”, as well as a detailed map of the borders of “Volcanoes of Kamchatka” and the Medium-term Management plan of the “Wrangel Island” reserve prepared by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation in accordance with decisions of the 39th Session of the World Heritage Committee.

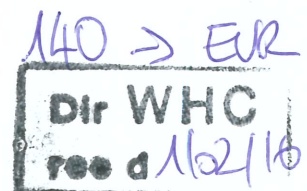
May I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you, dear Ms. Rössler, the assurances of my highest consideration.

AMBASSADOR,
PERMANENT DELEGATE

Eleonora MITROFANOVA

Enclosure: 175 pages, maps.

**Ms Mechtild RÖSSLER
DIRECTOR, UNESCO HERITAGE DIVISION,
DIRECTOR, WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE**



**REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATE OF CONSERVATION
OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES
VOLCANOES OF KAMCHATKA, GOLDEN MOUNTAINS OF ALTAI, LAKE
BAIKAL, VIRGIN KOMI FORESTS, WRANGEL ISLAND IN 2015**

**Report On the State of Conservation of the UNESCO World Heritage Property
Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve (Russian Federation, № 1023rev)
in 2015**

SUMMARY

A complex of measures for provision of the necessary facilities and cleaning the territory from the accumulated environmental damage during the previous economic activity was carried out on Wrangel Island in 2015 to ensure the security of the Russian Federation.

The area of territory, affected by these works, is less than 0.001% of the total area of the World Heritage Site "Wrangel Island"; at that the location, earlier engaged in business activities, is in use.

Furthermore, full-scale study of the Wrangel Island was conducted to estimate the volume of environmental damage accumulated during the last economic activity. 3720 empty drums were removed from Wrangel Island in 2015. Approximately 45 000 empty drums is planned to remove from Wrangel Island in 2016-2017.

Thus, specified activity does not affect the outstanding universal value of World Heritage Site "Wrangel Island".

Subsoil areas for oil exploration and production are absent within borders of the World Heritage Site. Drilling, mineral exploration and mining are prohibited within the boundaries of the state natural reserve "Wrangel Island" and its buffer zone by the legislation of the Russian Federation.

Seismic exploration work, undertaken in the license areas of mineral resources in the marine waters of the East Siberian and Chukchi seas, do not affect the waters of the reserve and its buffer zone. Oil production in the areas surrounding the World Heritage Site is not currently conducted and is not planned in the near future.

Management Plan for 2013-2017 and the program of development of ecological educational tourism were drawn up for the territories of the World Heritage Site.

1. Response of the Russian Federation with regard to Resolution No. 39 COM 7B.25 adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

1. A complex of measures for provision of the necessary facilities and cleaning the territory from the accumulated environmental damage during the previous economic activity was carried out on Wrangel Island in 2015 to ensure the security of the Russian Federation.

The area of territory, affected by these works, is about 20 hectares - 0.0009% of the total area of the World Heritage Site "Wrangel Island" and 0.0025% of the land area of the island. Furthermore, the object is located at the site that was previously used for economic activities, apart from the key habitats of rare and specially protected species, it does not affect the locations of maternity holes of polar bears, formations of walrus rookeries, nesting places of birds. The most part of the territory, in which the objects are placed, has no of vegetation and soil cover; this fact eliminates the need for a discussion of the problems of its conservation. Vegetation from the given site does not have a set of unique components, rare and endemic species of flora are absent in this part of the reserve. Specified activities, in view of its implementation at the extremely small areas, does not affect the outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Site "Wrangel Island".

Furthermore, full-scale study of the Wrangel Island was conducted to estimate the volume of environmental damage accumulated during the last economic activity.. 3720 empty drums were removed from Wrangel Island in 2015. Approximately 45 000 empty drums is planned to remove from Wrangel Island in 2016-2017, as well as equipment, which was felt into disrepair.

2. Subsoil areas for oil exploration and production are absent within borders of the World Heritage Site. Drilling, mineral exploration and mining are prohibited within the boundaries of the state natural reserve "Wrangel Island" and its buffer zone by the legislation of the Russian Federation.

Seismic exploration work, undertaken in the license areas of mineral resources in the marine waters of the East Siberian and Chukchi seas, do not affect the waters of the reserve and its buffer zone. Oil production in the areas surrounding the World Heritage Site is not currently conducted and is not planned in the near future.

Calling of vessels, carrying out seismic exploration in the Chukchi Sea, to the marine waters of the buffer zone of the reserve "Wrangel Island" took place only in

order to shelter from the storm under permits of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation and the administration of the reserve.

3. Management plan for 2013-2017, drawn up for the territory of World Heritage Site includes:

- programs for the conservation of natural complexes of Wrangel and Herald Islands, which focuses on the conservation of marine species (polar bears, pacific walrus, whales, seals), as well as the preservation of the population of snow geese, hoofed animals (reindeer and musk buffalo);

- program of monitoring the state of the environment in terms of global climate change;

- program of preservation of historical heritage objects;

- program of clearing of the reserve from the garbage accumulated during the last economic activity;

- program of modernization of infrastructure of the reserve for more effective protection of the territory;

- program of development of ecological educational tourism.

Within the framework of development of ecological tourism:

- Program of development of ecological educational tourism in 2014-2015 was prepared;

- ecological land and sea routes, minimizing the impact on the reserve, were developed;

- the rules of conduct for visitors of the reserve were developed;

- the rules of conduct for prevention of conflicts with a polar bear were developed.

At the present time modern houses for employees of the reserve and tourists, equipped with alternative energy sources (solar panels), were built for replacing of wrecked buildings.

Vehicles which are not harmful for soil and grass cover or tundra were purchased and are in operation.

Infrastructure modernization in territory of reserve allowed:

- to improve working and living conditions for employees of the reserve;

- provide comfortable conditions for visitors of terrestrial ecological routes without increasing anthropogenic load on the territory of the reserve;

- to reduce the level of household pollution of the territory through the use of alternative energy sources and eliminating the use of petroleum products for heating;

- to use modern vehicles, which are not harmful to soil and vegetation cover, when solving problems of protection of the territory, environmental monitoring and research, as well as for transportation of tourists.

Moreover, the existing flow of visitors (up to 500 people per year) has no significant impact on the ecosystem of a World Heritage Site. Inspection of the environmental impact in connection with the development of tourist activity is not appropriate due to the very low load on the protected area from the touristic groups and the absence of significant increase in tourist flow in prospect.

Management plan is attached in the appendix to this report.

1. Information about other current issues related to the World Heritage property conservation

Protection of the reserve is carried out by overground fixed-route patrolling on the vehicles, which have no significant impact on soil and vegetation cover; by monitoring the coastal waters from shore observation posts during the route observations, taken by staff members of the reserve from a helicopter and cruise ships visiting the island.

Entire water area of the Wrangel Island and the southern waters of the island of Herald are inspected from vessels from July to September.

Full flyover of the shoreline of the Wrangel Island by helicopter was carried out in 2015.

Monitoring of components of the natural complex of the reserve on 15 species of animals and problematic research on 11 types of animals are carried out.

58 camera traps in the territory of the islands of Wrangel and Herald for collecting data on the polar bear and other key species of animals are installed in the framework of monitoring. The joint research are conducted with the leading institutes of Russia and the universities of Montana and Colorado, USA: to studying the population of musk buffalo on Wrangel Island and in Alaska, molecular genetic studies the Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population, population monitoring of white goose, including the work of ringing, monitoring of terrestrial entomofauna and fauna of freshwater invertebrates, as well as other types of fauna.

Monitoring of the coastline of islands is carried out in order to identify the destruction of vegetation cover of tundra due to the melting of the permafrost. New large-scale erosion of vegetation cover was not identified.

Monitoring of watercourses of the Wrangel Island is conducted in the framework of control of the impact of climate change. Changes of chemical state of the

watercourses of the Wrangel Island, associated with increased defrost of permafrost soil in recent years were identified.

23 historical sites, requiring protection, were revealed in the reserve:

- archaeological (1 object);
- The remains of buildings and signs of the first settlers - wild capture dugouts, places of setting of flags (7 projects);
- Building of the period of commercial hunting and reindeer farming on the island, the ruins of the buildings of the period of the economic development of the Wrangel Island (15 sites).

Monitoring of these objects is conducted for identifying further ways of their preservation.

3. Significant changes within the World Heritage property are not expected.