

**REPORT ON THE ICOMOS REACTIVE
MONITORING MISSION TO THE
OSUN-OSOGBO SACRED GROVE (NIGERIA)**

25 to 30 October 2015

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, the Mission would like to express appreciation to the Federal Government of the Republic of Nigeria for willingly hosting the Mission and assisting where possible.

Particularly, the Mission would like to thank deeply the two key correspondents with the Mission, Mr Aliyu Abdulfattah, Acting Director of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, and Mr Olakunle Makinde, Assistant Director of Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove for their kind consideration, enthusiasm and warm hospitality. These thanks are extended to the Director General of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments Mr. Yusuf Abdullah Usman who facilitated the Mission where possible. Particularly important is gratitude to the many members of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove staff who contributed, and offered their assistance, and for the author, provided a constructive platform for assessing the way forward, and the means by which this can be achieved to greatest benefit the site, the sculptures and the secular and religious community which uses the grove in their day to day operations. The senior staff, particularly, engaged in a very useful spontaneous workshop on the site on the 29th October, providing invaluable input with regards to processes and issues that affect their work and the site. These participants are Mr. Isaac Otun (Head of Heritage), Mr. Joseph Aworeni, (Assistant Chief Conservator), Mr. Yinka Adesiyani (Assistant Chief Museum Education Officer) and Mr. Simon Adebayo (Head of Research). Noted also for her spirited input is Ms. Toyin Ajayi (Principal Assistant Heritage Officer). The members of Mr. Makinde's team provided documentation when requested, despite major challenges in the operations of the office with regards to technology and resources. Core staff in the Office of the Museum at the Kings Palace who assisted in data and documentation are notably Mr. Wasiu Gbadamosi, Mr. Fatai Adekunle and Ms. Adabisi Rasidat.

In addition, other stakeholders notably expressed interest and commitment to the World Heritage Site, and its continued improvement and credibility. From the State Department, with whom the Mission met first, these, in no order, include Her Excellency the Deputy Governor of Osun State, Mrs. Grace Titi-Laoye Tomori, the Head of Service for Osun State Mr. Sunday Owoeye, The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Culture Mrs Olajumoke Bello, the Director of Monuments for Osun State Mr. Samuel Adeniyi and the General Manager of the Tourism Board Mr. Balogun.

The third field day was highlighted by a meeting with His Majesty the Ataoja of Osun, Larooye III. This meeting was held in the Royal Chambers and included a number of the Chief advisors, themselves stakeholders in the Grove and members of the Traditional Authorities. This meeting proved particularly fruitful, and the continued role of the King and his devotees in the management of the Sacred Grove is critical.

Importantly, a few of the original sculptors working with Ms. Wenger were still practising, notably Mr. Kasali Akangbe Ogun,¹ who met with the mission on a couple of occasions.

The organisation of the Mission was carried out in such a manner as to accommodate all the stakeholders in a meaningful manner, in order to maximise transparency. The equal balance between site inspections and meetings with such stakeholders allowed for reflection and digestion which for the author, was valuable in being able to consider issues for discussion on an iterative basis.

It must be noted that heavy rain on a couple of nights on the Mission was beneficial in identifying challenges to the conservation of the site, which may not have been noted were the weather drier.

¹Note: Mr. Ogun has trained three of his children to carry out repair work. They also have other jobs such as furniture work, and the work on the Grove is done in addition. He has three children that are trained to do the work. His children work from photographic references, and memory of 'how it should be done'.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Issues to be addressed immediately

There are key issues in the effective management of the site.

1. *Documentation of the sculptures*

Documentation of the sculptures is urgently required to include a full assessment of the site and its individual components: this includes *inter alia*, a full three dimensional graphic and photographic documentation of all the sculptures, shrines and other structures on the property.² Since the objects are three dimensional and not rational in plan or form, any photogrammetric exercise will have to be checked in order that the representations agree with the objects on the property. This is a vital management tool.

2. *Conservation approach for the sculptures*

Conservation work must be underpinned by a more carefully considered conservation approach which addresses the philosophy of how conservation is carried out and a systematic methodology of implementation. This will then inform the development of a detailed conservation approach for the sculptures. Such an approach must be based on research into appropriate materials for shelter coats of the mud sculpture as an alternative to cement and priority must be given to this work.

3. *Improve the quality of the Osun River*

Given the vital role of the Osun River in the rituals of the site, it is critical that continued work to improve the water quality of the river be prioritised: not just from litter but from pollution arising from urban development. As a sacred river, and one that is used by devotees during the Festival, it is essential that the water quality meets acceptable level and is free from pollution by sewage. The water quality must be monitored through laboratory analysis on a regular basis and if the river is found to be polluted, visitors must be warned of the hazards of touching the water.

4. *Regeneration of the sacred forest*

In order to control and reverse encroachment and encourage regeneration of the sacred forest, It is highly recommended that the internal knowledge of the staff on site be supplemented with advice from professional nature conservation specialists with regards to appropriate vehicles for forest regeneration.

5. *Annual Festival*

Inadequate allocation of resources

Only a very small amount (some 5%) is *in the process* of being negotiated for allocation to the Sacred Grove Management for assistance in the conservation of the site. Currently, any funds from the Festival are only allocated to deal with disruption caused by extra visitors and not towards the on-going upkeep of the Grove. This arrangement appears to be quite unsatisfactory as the Sacred Grove is what attracts participants to the Festival and it is the conservation of the Grove that should benefit from its success.

Commercialisation

Whilst the increased income from the festival is welcome, the negative impact of the human traffic of the festival and its gradual 'Westernisation' with respect to advertising, reliance on imported mechanisms such as 'Seaman's Schnapps' and its associated litter impact is cause for alarm, particularly with the preservation of the sacredness of the Grove.³

² The possibilities of digital recording should be discussed and considered. ICOMOS could offer advice on this.

³ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7593852.stm>

Planning

Given their expertise and implication, it is vital that senior staff and management of the Sacred Grove are more involved in decisions relating to the Festival and its planning. Currently it appears as though they are merely deployed as extra security during the Festival, despite their keen knowledge and understanding of the festival trends, and the impact of numbers of people on the site.

6. *Strengthened governance*

The Stakeholders Forum should be more tightly constituted, with strongly defined roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, whilst challenges exist with the holding of regular meetings, National Commission for Museums and Monuments or the Tourism Department within Osun State could be approached in order to facilitate these meetings which should be held at least quarterly. The complete participation of ALL stakeholders in the operation of the site and the complete transparency in which this is carried out is key to management of the Sacred Grove as a World Heritage property.

7. *Lack of resources for professional staff*

This includes access to computers, internet and scanning facilities in order that they can present themselves as part of an international community of heritage site practitioners, as well as more efficiently carrying out their main conservation duties.

8. *Reconsideration of the Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019*

All of the above issues need to be included in an augmented and strengthened Conservation Management plan. This needs to be based on the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

9. *Projected implementation of the Conservation Management Plan*

This is a critical component of the Plan, and should present clear timelines and goals for site management, which can be monitored at the National Commission for Museums and Monuments level.

10. *Lack of overall framework at a National and State level, for the development of a large scale framework approach for all projects which impact upon the site*

Despite the submission of the Conservation Management for the site, a more systematic, revised version must be prepared: This must include minimally an overall framework plan for future projects in the property, in the buffer zone and in the wider setting of the property, including the removal of the road, the car park, the artists village, and any accommodation required by the Conservator, for example. This plan, a transparent document prepared between the Osun State, and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments should then be submitted to the World Heritage Committee for approval and ratification. This is then used as a tool to inform the requirements for Heritage Impact Assessments for the individual components of the projects which must be carried out systematically for all future projects, and be fully approved by ICOMOS prior to work being approved. Spontaneous development is a threat to the site, and its status as a World Heritage property; planning should be systematic and considered. This plan should be incorporated into the Conservation Management Plan.

11. *Diversion of the road*

Although this forms part of the large scale framework plan as noted in item number 5, the gravity is such that the current impact of the road negatively affects the Sacred Grove as it currently stands.

12. *Completion of the Pavilion with urgency*

13. *Fencing the buffer zone*

The vulnerable areas of the buffer zone should be considered for fencing in order to prevent illegal development encroaching upon the site. This will also mitigate the risk of hunting and bush fires as a result of trespassing on the buffer zone and in the grove.

14. *Traditional knowledge systems and community involvement*

Given that quotidian use of the site is by devotees, in the absence of the ceremony and ritual associated with the August Festival and the participation by the Ataoja, the devotee community itself is a viable pressure group which not only uses the site constantly, but also has personal interest in the maintenance and continued operations on the site. Whilst the complexities of organising regular Stakeholders meetings are fraught with financial pressures, this is all more reason why they should happen and more regularly, in order to properly integrate the active user community in decisions relating to the running of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

The Mission was provided with documentation relevant to the site, from its nomination dossier until the provision of the Conservation Management Plan, Tourism Management Plan and Disaster Management Plan as submitted in early 2015. These documents, particularly the latter, since it is directly relevant to situations and practises in the current year, form the background to this report. These will thus be referred to directly when the need arises. Furthermore, the current website is referred to in places as this also represents the *status quo* in 2015.

At its 39th session (Bonn, 2015), the World Heritage Committee noted that the State Party intended to invite the ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission requested at the 38th session during the year, in order to consider urban development, tourism management and the conservation of natural resources; The Committee also suggested that the mission consider conservation approaches to the ongoing sculpture conservation. Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2005; this mission will be the first Reactive Monitoring mission to the property.⁴

1.1 Inscription history

Inscription on the World Heritage List 15 July 2005

Criteria (ii)(iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

1.2 Criteria and Outstanding Universal Value

The property was inscribed in 2005 on the basis of the following criteria: ii, iii, and vi:

Criterion ii: The development of the Movement of New Sacred Artists and the absorption of Suzanne Wenger, an Austrian artist, into the Yoruba community have proved to be a fertile exchange of ideas that revived the sacred Osun Grove.

⁴ Terms of Reference for ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission (October 2015) Annexure 6.1.

Criterion iii: The Osun Sacred Grove is the largest and perhaps the only remaining example of a once widespread phenomenon that used to characterise every Yoruba settlement. It now represents Yoruba sacred groves and their reflection of Yoruba cosmology.

Criterion vi: The Osun Grove is a tangible expression of Yoruba divinatory and cosmological systems; its annual festival is a living thriving and evolving response to Yoruba beliefs in the bond between people, their ruler and the Osun goddess.

The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove was adopted at the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (2012) with Decision 36COM 8E. The complete statement is provided as Annexure 6.4.

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

This section serves to contextualise the correspondence with regards to the site, and with particular flags areas of concern.

1.3.1 State of Conservation 2015 39COM

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2005

Criteria (ii)(iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1118/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1999-1999)

Total amount approved: USD 10,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1118/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Urban development close to the property
- Road construction around the property
- Pollution of the Osun River
- Bush fires within the property
- Adverse impact of the commercialisation of the annual festival
- Fragility of spiritual, symbolic and ritual qualities of the Grove in the face of a growth in visitor numbers and the lack of a tourism management plan
- Road through property not re-aligned

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1118/>

Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2015

On 28 January 2015, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1118/documents/> and addresses some of the issues raised by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session as well as the conservation of the sculptures, as follows:

- *Pollution of the Osun River:* The quality of the river water has improved as a result of increasing the cleaning of the river from one to four times a year.
- *Conservation of the forest:* As a result of plant regeneration and re-planting, the number of plant species in the forests has increased from 400 to 465. The faunal population are now contained within the forest by a wire mesh boundary fence.

- *Conservation of the sculptures:* During the year 2013-2014, 61 sculptures at the traditional (mythological) Ontoto market site in the Grove were restored by the Sacred Art Movement, as well the Flying Tortoise, a sculpture by Suzanne Wenger formerly at the traditional entrance to the Grove.
- *Management:* A revised Conservation/Management Plan was prepared in 2014 to run until 2019. In addition, a Cultural Tourism and Disaster Risk Preparedness Plans have been prepared.
- *Annual Festival:* The new Plans aim to address the pressure on the Grove from the Annual Festival through zoning areas for spiritual and symbolic activities and diverting some social activities to the buffer zone or less sensitive areas. 5% of the income from the Grove will now go towards conservation work in the property.
- *Urban Development and Roads:* Although the new Management Plan includes approaches to ameliorating the impacts of development, no details have been provided, nor has a timescale been provided for the removal of the road through the property.

The requested ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission has not taken place, although the State Party has indicated that it will invite such a mission during the coming year.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The progress with regenerating parts of the sacred forest area is welcome. At the time of inscription, there were plans to regenerate the 30% of the primary forest that had been damaged by plantations and other agricultural activities. It is not entirely clear whether all or only some of this area has now been regenerated and/or re-planted.⁵ The frequency of river cleaning has been increased; however, in respect of the sacred nature of the river, preventative policies need to be introduced to reverse water pollution and remove the need for regular cleaning.

A programme for the conservation of the sculptures has started with those in the market shrine having been completed. During the year, an International Assistance Request was received to support the conservation of the many other sculptures within the Grove. This request was referred back for more details on the conservation approach and on forward planning and documentation in the light of the extreme complexity of this work. It was also suggested that the forthcoming mission might consider these issues.⁶

The production of a revised Management/Conservation Plan and of Visitor Management and Risk Preparedness Plans is also welcome. Given the strong development and visitor pressures on the Grove, these plans should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies and also be considered by the forthcoming mission in order to understand specific measures on curtailing and controlling development in the setting of the property, the carrying capacity of the Grove and approaches to sculpture conservation.

Draft Decision: 39 COM 7B.43

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-15/39.COM/7B,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7B.53** adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Welcomes progress with regeneration of the sacred forest and the increased frequency of river cleaning; but urges the State Party to tackle the source of the river pollution;

⁵ The Mission has found that some areas were planted, particularly that adjacent to the Indian School and the Visitor's Centre. These trees are well established. However, in the opinion of the biologist working on the site, these trees are inappropriate as they are not indigenous. Remedial action will be found in the report to follow.

⁶ However, given the amount of work which has occurred in recent months in the repairs to the sculptures, it is suggested that the application for International Assistance be directed at facilities and expertise which allow for the total documentation of the site, rather than monies to support repairs to sculptures.

4. Also welcomes the revision of the Management Plan and the development of Cultural Tourism and Risk Preparedness Plans and requests the State Party to submit copies of these plans to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies;
5. Notes that work on conserving sculptures has begun in the market shrine and that funds are being sought for further work in the Grove, and also requests the State Party to provide more details on the conservation approach, and on forward planning and documentation in the light of the extreme complexity of this work;
6. Also notes that the State Party intends to invite the requested ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property during the year, in order to consider urban development, tourism management and the conservation of natural resources; and suggests that the mission also consider conservation approaches to sculpture conservation;
7. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2016, an updated report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 41st session in 2017.

1.3.2 State of Conservation 2014 38COM

Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2014

The World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies requested the State Party to submit a state of conservation report to address recent reports on:

- Development close to the property
- Road construction around the property
- Pollution of the Osun River
- Bush fires within the property
- Adverse impact of the commercialisation of the annual festival

The State Party submitted their report on 28 February 2014, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents>. Progress is reported on the following:

Although the report acknowledges the rapid growth of the city of Osogbo and the attendant pressures on land and water resources, it states that development has not affected the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), as it is outside the property and the buffer zone. Nevertheless the report notes that in order to respect the sensitive nature of the grove and sustain its OUV, there is a need to curtail negative development pressures in the wider setting of the property, and for the local government to amend its Urban Renewal Programme.

One of the negative outcomes of development has been the pollution of the Osun River as a result of the violation of drainage regulations in the city. However, this has reportedly improved through annual cleaning by the National Environmental Standards Regulation Agency.

In the Conservation Management Plan for 2010 – 2014, the National Commission for Museums and Monuments acknowledged the many factors affecting the site such as development pressures, environmental pressures, natural threats and disasters, as well as visitor/tourism pressures. The plan also sets out actions to tackle these threats such as an arrangement with the Federal Fire Service to deal with bush fires in the property and buffer zone.

The replacement of the tarmac road through the Sacred Grove by a new access road outside the property has been delayed by financial constraints, but the State Party still intends to undertake this work.

Two developments projects are reported: a car park in the buffer zone and a replacement pavilion within the property.⁷ These are in line with the Conservation Management Plan, and a Heritage Impact Assessment was submitted to UNESCO. In January 2014, the First Palace was repaired using traditional techniques, materials and craftsmen.

No details are provided on the overall conservation of the forest and the large number of shrines, structures and sculptures in the property, nor on the management processes; however, a Senior Assistant Heritage Officer from the property participated in the Disaster Risk Management Workshop organized by the African World Heritage Fund in May 2013 in Zimbabwe, where a draft disaster risk management plan was developed for the property.

Analysis and Conclusion by World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in 2014

In the 9 years since inscription, the city of Osogbo has grown considerably as has the scope, size and profitability of the annual Osogbo festival--these two factors are putting strains on the property, which was inscribed as a sacred forest grove. The adverse impacts of development and potential development in the wider setting are acknowledged by the State Party as well as the need for more controls.

A hotel⁸ has recently been built close to the Grove and the road through the property has not been diverted, as requested by the Committee at the time of inscription.

Although river pollution is said to be addressed by annual cleaning, this does not seem to be the optimal approach for a sacred river at the centre of the annual festival, which reconnects the city to the river goddess Osun who is revered for providing the waters of life. Moreover, the natural aspects of the property, such as the river and forest, are still not clearly addressed in the Management Plan, as requested by the Committee. In addition, no information has been provided on how the shrines and forest are being conserved and managed.

The risk of over-commercialization of the festival is a cause for concern with sponsorship being visibly acknowledged. The commercial success of the festival also means that funding for the festival tends to take precedence over funds for conservation.

The need for a cultural tourism management plan has magnified considerably since inscription. Such a plan should set out clearly and precisely the carrying capacity of the Grove, in relation to its spiritual atmosphere, physical fragility and pristine nature, as well as its connections to access routes, car parking, accommodation etc.

The submission of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) on the proposed pavilion is noted and they acknowledge the work done to create a Conservation Management Plan. Moreover, the preliminary disaster risk management plan drafted during the Disaster Risk Management workshop in 2013 should be finalised and adopted as an annex to the Conservation Management Plan for the property.

The robustness of the fragile Grove needs to be strengthened to withstand the growing pressures from urban development and from the enormous success of the Festival before both inflict irreversible damage. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a reactive monitoring mission to consider how approaches to urban development, cultural tourism management and the conservation of natural resources might be strengthened, and also to consider the appropriate balance between conservation and development in relation to the OUV of the property.

⁷ This pavilion has been constructed by the State, and the area for the car park has been graded. Please see comments later in this report for remedial action.

⁸ This appears to be incorrect information.

Decision: 38COM7B.53

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **29 COM 8B.23B**, adopted at its 29th session (Durban 2005),
3. Welcoming the continuing efforts of the State Party to improve the conservation of the property through the development of a Conservation Management Plan for 2010-2014,
4. Notes with concern that in the nine years since inscription, urban development pressures in the wider setting have increased as have the scale and commercialisation of the annual festival and overall visitor numbers; and considers that development threats in the wider setting need to be curtailed;
5. Regrets that the road through the property has not been diverted as requested at the time of inscription, and urges the State Party to ensure this is carried-out as soon as possible;
6. Expresses concern that the Cultural Tourism Management Plan, also requested at the time of inscription, has not yet been developed; and also considers that such a plan is urgently needed in order to address ways to sustain the spiritual, symbolic and ritual qualities of the Grove in relation to the very large numbers of people visiting this property, particularly during the festival, through defining clearly and precisely the carrying capacity of the Grove, in relation to its spiritual atmosphere, physical fragility and pristine nature, as well as its connections to access routes, car parking, accommodation etc.;
7. Also expresses concern that the natural qualities of the sacred grove, upon which its cultural values depend, and particularly the Osun River, appear to have been adversely affected by water-borne pollution;
8. Requests the State Party to invite an ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission to the property in order to consider with the State Party how approaches to urban development, cultural tourism management and the conservation of natural resources might be strengthened and also to consider the appropriate balance between conservation and development in relation to the OUV of the property;
9. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2015 a progress report, including a 1-page executive summary, on the above issues, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session in 2015.

1.4 Justification of the mission

Please note that the detailed Terms of Reference (hereafter TOR), the Mission Programme and the the composition of the Mission team are provided in the Annexures as per the Table of Contents. This sets out the justification for the Mission.

In brief, the TOR for the Mission was that it should address the following critical points, and make relevant recommendations on:

- *Urban Development and Roads: Inter alia*, assessing the status of the closure of the tarmac road through the property, as requested at the time of inscription and measures to curtail general urban 'creep'.
- *Tourism Management*
- *Pollution of the Osun River*
- *Conservation of the forest*
- *Conservation of the sculptures*
- *Explore the most effective ways to direct the International Assistance Request*
- *Management*

These separate issues will be dealt with systematically in Section 3 below.

It is also important to note that at all times, best practice and the reality of implementation of any recommendation in the socio-political situation is borne in mind, in order that the projects can proceed smoothly and in appropriate fashion.

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

2.1 Protected area legislation

Nigeria has some 63 monuments and 42 museums, and two World Heritage properties, all operating within the legal framework of the Antiquities (Monuments) Act. Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove was formally protected in terms of this Act in by the Antiquities (Monuments) Declaration Notice no 84 of 1965. This included 'The river-side shrine and sacred grove of Oshun at Oshogbo, Western Nigeria, together with the shrine, its grove, the surrounding land within a radius of 400 feet from the northernmost corner of the shrine building'. In order to support such protection of heritage resources, Decree 77 of 1979 established the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (28th September 1979). Other ancillary legislations were also passed, supporting the protection of sites, buildings and structures such as the 1990 Land Use Act, setting out the relationship between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the alienation of and occupation of, rights in land.

On September 1, 1993, the original Declaration of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove was amended giving more concrete cadastral information with regards to the extent of the property, being renamed as the Museums and Monuments (Declaration) Notice 1992.

2.2 Institutional framework

There are three major stakeholders which are responsible for the continued operation of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove. These are as follows, and should be read as an embedded system.

The Federal State of Nigeria operates on a three tier system: Operations situated at National level are regulated by National legislations- within this structure is situation the National Commission for Museums and Monuments: The Director General, Mr. Yusuf Abdullah is based in Abuja, as is the Acting Director of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Mr. Aliyu Abdulfattah. At state level, competencies are articulated, and within this structure is located the local Osun State office, the site run by Assistant Director Mr. Olakunle Makinde who is directly accountable to Mr. Abdulfattah. Within this organisation is located some 50 staff members, a significant number of which are employed on or within the site of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove. The National Commission for Museums and Monuments is responsible for the day to day operations on the site and the payment of salaries, but has little in the way of reserve funds for any major works or any emergency works with regards to infrastructure provision or damage control.

The Federal institutional framework as described above is situated independently from the State of Osun, which is responsible for government of the Osun State. The Osun State is has undertaken to construct the road around the site, as opposed to the existing one running through the site, in addition to the required bridge across the Osun River, and the new car park.

A tertiary partner is the Ataoja of Osun, the King. He has an ancestral interest in the site, and is a critical part of the annual rituals at the August Festival. Members of his family, for example, act as the Votive

Maid. The First and Second Palaces built on the site at the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove are part of the ancestral history. As such, the Ataoja is implicated in decision making, as well as playing a major role in supporting the smooth operation on the site.

2.3 Management structure

An organogram of the site management structure is found in the Annexures. It must be recognised that people within the employ of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments are appointed at different levels, and the employment is not necessarily in line with any qualifications or experience: these are sensitive issues and do not necessarily inform any chain of command, or allow for prescription of duties.

The management structure presented is one workshopped with the senior staff members on site, allowing for a direct chain of command and an interrogation of current structures in order to establish a rearrangement process if necessary. This is found in Annexure 6.5. In addition, a more comprehensive discussion of the management structure of the site is found in Section 3.2.7 of this report.

2.4 Outline of issues affecting the World Heritage property

As noted above, the Osun-Osogbo Grove has Outstanding Universal Value for the following cultural qualities:

- The Grove is the last surviving, flourishing, sacred grove in Yorubaland which reflects the way Yoruba towns linked their establishment and growth to the spirits of the forest.

Comment: **Vulnerable** - The Osun Sacred Grove and the Osun River which forms a vital component of the sacred space continues to be threatened by direct (physical) and indirect (litter, pollution, reduction in spiritual qualities) human impact and development.

- The Grove's sculptures created by Suzanne Wenger and the New Sacred Artists reflect and were inspired by Yoruba cosmology.

Comment: **Vulnerable** – cost of maintenance of structures is high, and the extent of the work is exacerbated by natural and human action and climate.

- The Grove and its sculptures are now a symbol of Yoruba identity to Yoruba peoples all around the world.

Comment: **Vulnerable** – The link with identity has a link with increased religious / spiritual tourism which impacts physically on the site.

- The Grove, as host to its annual festival, sustains the living cultural traditions of the Yoruba peoples.

Comment: **Vulnerable** – This is an area of great concern, as the physical and indirect impact of the annual Festival on the Sacred Grove is great. This is exacerbated by increasing commercialisation of the Festival as a tourist attraction as well as an income-generating exercise.

These different issues, viz: litter and pollution of the site and the river, development and encroachments, maintenance and conservation, the Festival and its management, will be discussed in the following section.

3 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF ISSUES

There are a number of issues that present actual or potential threat to the current operations of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove that can be dealt with proactively. Some of these measures are already embedded in the *Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019* which requires implementation, and others are strategic interventions that can be adopted. Recommendations are provided below.

3.1 Financial Management

Status quo:

A challenge of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove is that it has a specific set of requirements which involve the need to channel specific funds for repair work to the sculptures. With repairs to the sculptures, the Adunni Olorisa Trust (AOT) plays a large part, with Suzanne Wenger as one of the original Trustees; this has enabled funds to be channelled, on requirement, into the maintenance of sculpture. In conversation with Chief Jimoh Buraimoh on 30 October 2015, it appeared that this fund exists and actively fundraises (please see Annexure 6.6 in this regard) for fundraising mechanisms underway at the moment. Further, it is this Trust that is responsible for the repairs to a number of the sculptures on site in recent years. However, evidence of this working relationship is not strong, and it is recommended that this be reinforced and made a more active part of the conservation plan, guided by the site requirements as much as the need to repair sculptures.

In addition, active discussion has commenced between the National Commission for Museums and Monuments and the office of the Ataoja, who benefits significantly from the August Festival. The discussions centred around allocating a portion of 5% of the Festival income being directed to the Osun Office of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, which is intended for site management directly before the Festival, during the Festival and after the Festival, as well as funds directly linked to the maintenance of the site and the sculptures. It is important to stress that this is not a fixed agreement at this point, but rather one in progress, given that it deals with a change in Directorship at National level, as well as with sensitive negotiations at local level with the office of the Ataoja. This is also problematic as quantifying the percentage is based on mutual trust and transparency.

Immediate Situation (October 2015):

This discussion is in process with the various stakeholders.

Recommendations:

In order to protect specific funds for the repairs to the sculptures it is recommended that the relationship with the AOT be formalised in order that work can be expedited with dedicated funds, and that specific funds, particularly from abroad can be channelled through this account, managed by Trustees including representatives of the Ataoja or himself, in order that the maximum effectiveness of funding can be spent. Further, that whilst an amount of 5% is currently being negotiated between the Ataoja and the management of the site, this amount may not be enough to assist in site conservation above and beyond the monies offered by the Federal Government and the State, and it is imperative that a higher amount be brokered: as much as 10%. It is important to note that the continued spiritual qualities of the site are paramount in its survival, both as a Sacred Grove and a World Heritage property, and that parsimony may be a short sighted approach towards its maintenance and continued management.

3.2 Factors affecting the property

In the last two years, the threats to the sculptures and to the natural aspects of the sacred Grove had been the subject of academic articles.

An article in the *International Journal on Science and Nature* for September 2015, entitled 'Potential and Challenges of Indigenous Knowledge in Conservation of Biodiversity' assesses the potential and challenges of biodiversity conservation in the Osun Osogbo sacred grove.

It states: 'The sacred grove was established on the indigenous knowledge (IK) of the people of Oshogbo and passed down orally from one generation to another. Meanwhile, ecological encroachment and degradation activities posed great challenges to the sustenance of the grove. Data was collected through interview of twenty key informants in the adjoining communities and five officials in the grove.

Some of the challenges facing the grove include pressure from population explosion and urbanisation process, poaching and deforestation resulting from farming practices going on along the boundary. To effectively strengthen the indigenous knowledge in conservation of remaining natural diversity, the local people should be fully integrated in the management strategies. More guards are also required for patrol activities, and re-establishment of the grove's boundary and buffer zone are pertinent to prevent further encroachment'.

Similarly an article the *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* Vol. 3 (2) - (2014), entitled 'Exploratory survey on the maintenance of Osun-Osogbo sacred grove, Nigeria', examines, through physical surveys and data from a questionnaire, the maintenance state of Osun- Osogbo grove 'with a view to unfolding the level of deterioration, identifying the causes of decay, and providing appropriate maintenance solutions. In order to carry out this assessment, selected cultural properties like the first palace, the second palace, scared spaces, individual shrines, Osun worship points in the grove, Oja-Ontoto shrine, the sculptures, the suspension bridge..... Findings revealed that these cultural properties were generally ill-maintained and in a serious state of disrepair. It is also confirmed that the main factors affecting maintenance of these cultural properties were inadequate funds for maintenance, high cost of repairs and poor construction techniques. There is no specialized organization to inspect the monuments and advise for efficient maintenance regularly. It is mainly through maintenance of heritage buildings that cultural significance of these monuments can be sustained for the need of upcoming generation. This would be difficult to achieve if the best practice approach to the maintenance and management of heritage properties is not fully adopted'.

In line with the agreed Terms of Reference, the following elements of the site were interrogated, in order to understand such acknowledged challenges, as well as the opportunities, strengths and threats. Given the situation of the site within a dense urban area, the subtleties of municipal organisation, land tenure, sewage disposal and storm-water drainage were addressed. These organisational aspects were used as a backdrop in understanding the delicate balances in organisational and political structures, which in the context need to be part of the stakeholder agreements.

The TOR addresses tangible goals and timelines, and some of the more intangible aspects of relationships need to also be considered in approaches moving forward. Furthermore, it is realised that the issues surrounding the management of the August Festival have to be separated from the quotidian operations. This will be dealt with specifically in the next section, as socio-economic and political issues aside, the management of thousands of people in the matter of a few days has a very different impact to general running of the property and demands a very different strategy from the daily operations, given the relationship between the Federal Government, the State Party and the Ataoja, as well as the National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

In order of place in the TOR, the issues addressed specifically are:

3.2.1 Urban Development and Roads:

This section consists of two specific areas as per the TOR. They will be addressed separately.

3.2.1.1 Urban ‘creep’ and planning

According to the TOR, the Mission was to *Consider specific short- and mid-term measures that are being undertaken to curtail and control development in the setting of the property, and longer term planning controls;*

Status Quo:

In the town of Osun-Osogbo, land is purchased in freehold with issued title deeds. Thus allocation of land is through a formal process and not in an *ad hoc* manner, meaning that controls exist at an urban management level to deal with this. However, whilst these planning controls exist in law, the real implementation of such legislation remains problematic. It was indicated by both Mr. Makinde and Mr. Abdulfattah that the Police have the power to remove people who have invaded land illegally.

The invasion of land, when it occurs, is opportunistic. According to Mr. Makinde, some people have invaded the land close to the buffer zone, and have built their homes very close to the river. They are informal dwellings and the people that have settled here have not had permission or purchased the land. As indicated above, should they be required to move, then the police would understand the situation and act accordingly.

Reports of the construction of a hotel / tourism development close to the buffer zone appear unfounded: There is currently no evidence of any large scale construction work close to the site. Newspaper reports alluding to the donation of land by the Oba refer to Ikirun, a town some distance away.⁹ This concurs with information offered by Mr. Makinde, who noted that the reports of these developments at Osogbo Sacred Grove were incorrect and that they were located elsewhere.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

The wet conditions made travel to this part of the site problematic.

Recommendations:

The local officials and police, in addition to all stakeholders, can address this issue through the Stakeholder’s Forum. The issue of land invasions can be controlled by the replacement of judiciously placed fencing, much of which existed at the time of the nomination and declaration, has rusted and collapsed. The vulnerable areas to the south of the site would particularly benefit from enclosure. It is strongly recommended that, whilst the cost of fencing the entire site along the buffer zone would be prohibitive, that the sections which are vulnerable to invasion and human impact are fenced as soon as possible.

3.2.1.2 Diversion of road

According to the TOR, the instructions were to *Review progress with planning and the agreed timescale for the closure of the tarmac road through the property, as requested at the time of inscription.*

⁹ <http://dailyindependentnig.com/2015/08/private-investor-collaborate-osun-govt-develop-tourism-resort/>;
<http://www.nigerianobservernews.com/02122013/news/news26.html#.Vplvgk8nFXU>

Status Quo:

One of the major threats to the property is the continued existence of the road through the property. Not only does it create noise in what should be a sacred, sanctified space, but its use as an arterial road means that vehicles speed through the property. This is dangerous for human and animal visitors, in addition to potential threats of vehicles losing control and damaging wall structures and sculptures close to the road. The severe degradation of the tarmac means that there are potholes, which also require negotiation. Further, dust thrown up in areas which are in proximity to the walling and sculptures can have a negative effect.

Another major noise issue is the school children which use this road as a short cut. Whilst the largest threat from this user group may be monkeys and other fauna being chased, this is not an ideal situation.

Note: The road diversion includes three sub-projects that the State Department has indicated will come from their budget, but will be handled independently and simultaneously. The road realignment is as per World Heritage listing, the road bridge across the Osun River is a critical component of this realignment, and the car park, at the entrance to the site, sits in the buffer zone. Note the ground for the car park was levelled by the State Department concerned around a year ago (2014) and is currently fenced and vacant. There is no evidence of any impact assessment for this project.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

The meetings with stakeholders at the time of the Mission all agreed that this realignment was critical. Furthermore, it became evident as issues surfaced that the basic management of the property with respect to some of the other issues flagged in this report would be made much easier. This includes monitoring of visitors and control of and management of heritage resources within the property. Active discussion involved the time lines practicable for the deployment of the road: it appeared from conversations that the Federal Government had, in the past, carried out basic engineering studies, but that the whereabouts of these was unknown. Thus, the officials from the State Department were compelled to allocate time and resources to this.

They indicated that there was budgetary allocation for the current financial year (ending at the end of December 2015) and that these funds would roll over into the 2016 financial year.

Practical timelines were discussed: the buffer zone is the area in which this road is to be realigned. Mr. Makinde indicated that much work had occurred on this already. It was highly recommended that with regards to any development for this road, the potential archaeological resources be flagged in any excavations, in the HIA and in the work itself.

The plans for the road and the bridge need to be drawn up and submitted to ICOMOS as soon as possible, together with the HIA as above. ICOMOS needs to approve these documents prior to the ground being broken.

The State Department concerned has indicated the money for the road realignment, the bridge construction and the car park is available and budgeted. It has indicated that the designs and engineering for the road, the bridge and the car park can be carried out in-house as separate contracts. The evidence of this in the planning process is presented in Annexure 6.7 *Budgetary commitments, Governor of Osun*

Recommendations:

- Plans for the proposed new road and bridge should be submitted as soon as possible to ICOMOS for review together with a detailed HIA. No work to these roads must be approved or undertaken until

the ICOMOS review has been sent to the State Party and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments.

- Real planning will work around the practicalities of the rainy season. The State Department has undertaken to consider timelines which are achievable in this regard.
- The production of a trafficable road will have to take into account the process of construction in order that a durable, well-built road is constructed, so it does not have to be repaired constantly, can carry the heavy loads currently travelling along the road intersecting the site, and will last in good condition for some years. Indeed, the condition of the diversion road will possibly be the key 'carrot' in it achieving rapid acceptability.
- The road can largely be constructed without affecting the site and the switch over to the new road can be done immediately.
- The old road through the site must be legally decommissioned and physically closed off to public traffic.
- It is highly recommended that whilst the State Department have approved the budget for the development of the road, its plans and alignment must be submitted to ICOMOS for approval prior to construction commencing, given the allowance of fund roll-overs. Furthermore, the construction of the road must be systematically and properly completed.
- The priorities for the State Department in terms of deployment of funding should be the road and bridge first, and the car park second. Should there be no funds remaining for the car park, this component should stand over until the next tranche of budgeted funding become available from the State.
- It is recommended that the removal of the existing tarmac will be more invasive than letting the forest grow slowly around it.
- It is strongly recommended that the State do not charge a toll on the new road.
- It is also vital that due to the narrow extent of the buffer zone, development within the buffer zone along the new alignment be prohibited, and that this prohibition be actively enforced by the site management together with the local Police.

3.2.2 Tourism Management

The instruction as per the TOR for the Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove (Annexure 6.1) notes *'Review the completed Tourism Plan for the property in particular with regard to how it controls visitor numbers and addresses pressure on the Grove at the Annual Festival, and the effectiveness of the defined spiritual and symbolic zones'*.

Whilst the Festival is addressed in Section 3.3 below, the general approach towards tourism needs to be presented.

3.2.2.1 Review completed Tourism Plan

Status Quo:

Whilst a Tourism Plan is embedded in the *Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019* submitted by the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, a specific 'Tourism Plan' appears to be largely considered at the Osun State level. Her Excellency the Deputy Governor Mrs. Grace Titi-Laoye Tomori had indicated at the opening conference that this site, together with other significant sites in the State, was priority to attract tourists. She also noted that the rail service between Lagos and Osun-Osogbo had been restored as well as major works to the main road being undertaken in order to attract tourists.¹⁰This is noted as being in hand, with the active renovation and landscaping around the station precinct in the centre of Osogbo (October 2015).

¹⁰ It is noted that this train takes some six hours to travel from Lagos to Osun, whilst by road the journey takes around four hours. Importantly, however, the station at Osun is not far from the site and the Palace Compound where the offices of the Osun Office, National Commission for Museums and Monuments are located.

With regards to the Tourism Management Plan as embedded in the *Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019*, the following items, *inter alia*, are identified:

- Increasing the necessary public awareness for the site and the need to support the heritage conservation efforts.
- Generating the resources necessary to operate at optimal level and global best practices.
- Enhancing direct, indirect and induced employment opportunities for the local communities as well as sustainable economic development.
- Creating avenues for increased revenue for the protection and conservation of natural and cultural heritage resources of the site.
- Protecting the carrying capacity of the site while maintaining its physical fragility and pristine nature.
- Enhancing better spiritual atmosphere that will protect the symbolic attributes, authenticity and integrity of the site.
- Promoting local traditions, indigenous technology and development of local handicrafts.
- Encouraging community participation leading to other economic development opportunities in the state.

These separate elements together contribute to the following statement:

The Cultural Tourism Management Plan has developed a cultural and natural heritage base by undertaking a comprehensive inventory of the resources of the site. Currently the site has 84 sculptures, 54 structures, 6 shrines, 16 worship points, 2 traditional palaces, 1 traditional market and 1 pavilion. In addition, there are 465 species of trees, seven species of small mammals, varieties of birds, reptiles and insects, all of which are being protected by the Management Committee and other stakeholders. All the spiritual and symbolic places, objects and practices that are significant to the maintenance of the site and protection of their values have also been effectively managed. The Osun River is the symbolic representation of the Osun Goddess where annual oblations take place during the festival. This process is intended to be continuous and on-going as the cultural heritage concerns of the people can change over time.¹¹

This plan speaks largely to the August Festival and the crowd control issues related thereto, as well as the different infrastructural interventions intended for the site, such as the intended Artists Village, awareness generation and identifiable tourism routes. However, these all appear in isolation and need to be tied together in a systematic fashion, with an underlying ethos founded in a firm conservation approach.

The Mission, through discussions, realized that this Tourism Management Plan could well be expanded with a series of small, real goals allowing for delivery and expedition.

Immediate Situation (October 2015):

Much discussion ensued about attracting visitors to the property outside the Festival. It is noted that the State Authorities are responsible for the marketing of the site, as per Guidebooks etc..An active Facebook site is maintained for communication to the diaspora.¹² Website access is through the National Commission for Museums and Monuments as well as through the Osun State Website and UNESCO. There is no dedicated website for the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove.

¹¹ *Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019*, page 108.

¹² There was discussion about the status of the Osun-Osogbo World Heritage property appearing on Facebook, contested by a devotee living in Germany According to Mr. Makinde, the Facebook posts apparently centred on 'ownership' of the site, and questioned the 'authority' of the website. However, the Facebook site as it stands appears to be a platform for personal posts and has very little to do with the Sacred Grove itself.

Recommendations:

The Tourism Management Plan needs to be built on, and informed by, the articulated conservation approach. It needs to address the threats posed by increased tourism, particularly with respect to the August Festival, and provide projected mitigation measures which inform forward planning in the next four years.

Tourism could be reinforced on the property with the following ideas.

- Creating a brand for the site which is carried through from the Museum / Main office in the Palace Compound, used in signage for a walking route down to the site, used at the gate (new gateway to be constructed could take advantage of this branding), and can also be deployed in T-Shirts for sale, and other goods, as well as 'Special Event' Uniforms for staff.
- Tourism could be facilitated through the creation of a 'branded' route which leads from the site of the main office in the Ataoja's compound, through the town and into the site itself, providing reflective experience and enhancing the sacredness of the grove.
- Toilet facilities for staff and visitors need to be carefully rethought. The 'Coca-Cola' toilets¹³ should be repaired, or fully assessed and a cogent way forward developed in order that toilets exist for day to day use.

3.2.2.2 Control of visitor numbers

Status quo:

Currently, visitor numbers are entered longhand into a ledger, and entry fees are charged. The entry into the ledger notes the origin of the visitors (foreigners pay a higher entrance fee). The totals are submitted to the Head Office of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments in Abuja annually. The Education Officer, Yinka Adesiyun was able to show typed analyses of the 2012 and 2013 years, but not 2014. The estimated attendance at the August Festival is entered as part of this final documentation.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

There exists a large discrepancy in visitor numbers between 2001 / 2002 (as part of the nomination dossier) and the 2012 / 2013. The first notes some 12000 visitors per annum, the two most recent around 5500. The fluctuations for this are noted as socio-economic amongst others: the lack of allowed movement in 2014 during the Ebola crisis was noted, an economic collapse in Nigeria in 2012, as well as sustained student political action (some five months). The attendance at the August Festival also varies: the death of the old Ataoja, curiosity around the appointment of the new Ataoja, recession, etc.

It is noted that whilst visitor numbers are captured and perhaps, understood and analysed within the site, this needs to be more patent as these numbers greatly influence the means by which such sites can continue to operate.

Recommendations:

- Whilst the ledger system may work, these numbers either need to be transferred as soon as possible into electronic means so that their trends can be mapped, or else the entrance system needs to be computerized with a till. This latter point implies provision of electrical power, which, ideally, would be through solar energy.
- With the movement of the road, a new entrance / paypoint will need to be constructed at the base of the site, at the main entry.
- The devotees should sign into the site into a separate ledger

¹³ These public toilets are of relatively recent construction and have been allowed to fall into disrepair due to the infestation of insects and general rot.

- The adherents to the Second Palace should sign into the site in a separate ledger.
- At the end of the month, the site employees should analyse the visitor data, and provide possible trends for rise and fall on a monthly basis, which then fits in with an annual analysis.

3.2.2.3 Effectiveness of defined spiritual and symbolic zones

Status quo:

These exist but are inscrutable to the visitor – their clearer articulation on a site map as part of the visitor experience could be more effective. However, it is important to note that most of the site is not impacted in any large manner by the August Festival: this occurs along a very defined route which acts to control the numbers and the resultant impact.

Immediate situation (October 2015): None

Recommendations:

As above. More clearly defined zoning, as well as accessibility is recommended.

3.2.3 Pollution of the Osun River

In terms of the TOR, the instruction was to *Review progress with measures to improve the quality of river water as a result of cleaning, including its regularity, and also consider measures to stop pollution from urban areas reaching the river;*

Status quo:

The river appears absent of human waste, from urban development upstream however this can only be confirmed by regular testing of the water quality. Litter, particularly plastic bags, continues to be a big problem, being washed through the site from the storm-water from the town. This may also appear worse than usual as the visit was made at the end of the rainy season, and the heavy rain during the Mission was noted in the opening part of this document. Mr. Makinde noted that the State authorities once sent a man with a canoe to trawl the river for refuse, but this was carried out only once.

A critical problem though, is waste WITHIN the site, and its management: the most impact is during the August Festival-however this will be discussed in Section 3.3 which deals with management of the Festival, particularly.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

In discussion: whilst it is understood that different cultures perceive of litter differently, it is important to prioritise this issue with this site given its World Heritage property status, as well as the potential harm the litter, particularly plastic, may have on fauna and flora in the Grove. As a sacred river, and one that is used by devotees during the Festival, it is essential that the water quality meets acceptable level and is free from pollution by sewage. The water quality must be monitored through laboratory analysis on a regular basis and if the river is found to be polluted, visitors must be warned of the hazards of touching the water.

Recommendations:

- The management and responsibility of water borne litter should fall under the Heritage Section of the Site Management, given its relation with the environment.

- Shark net technology could be employed in order to catch the litter in the river at the entrance to the site, and this should be lifted and cleared weekly (or more frequently if trends suggest).
- Whilst it may seem appropriate that the city of Osogbo take responsibility in part for the refuse entering the river, this is also a State function, from the perspective of Environment and Tourism, and these separate Departments are strongly encouraged to put pressure on the city and its inhabitants to consider more carefully the manner in which sewage and waste is managed. This is particularly so since Osun views itself as a cultural centre, and sees tourism as a key area of income generation.
- The Conservation Management Plan should include provisions for regular water quality testing: The water in the river should be monitored every six months for water quality which involves the water being tested for *E. Coli* levels.
- A specific part of the property should be photographed each month, (the area close to the Pavilion as well as a view upstream from the Suspension Bridge) in order to monitor the refuse.
- New refuse bins which are more sensitive in colour and material are recommended: the use of perforated oil drums painted dark green, suspended on vertical poles and set a little back into the bush is suggested- using bolts to attach the drums to the poles limits the foraging capacity of the monkeys and other animals on site.
- The currently used blue plastic bins can be stored and used as extra refuse bins at the time of the August Festival.
- The Ataoja and his Votive Maid and entourage are in a position to announce to the devotees from time to time that respecting the Deity involves putting waste in bins.
- Given the provision of basic audio technology, the Employees of the Osogbo Sacred Grove are in a position to supplement these suggestions by driving through the town the week before reinforcing the sensitivity of the site and requesting people to co-operate in this regard.

3.2.4 Conservation of the forest

In terms of the TOR the instruction was to *Review progress with the plans outlined at the time of inscription to regenerate the 30% of primary forest that had been damaged by plantations and other agricultural activities and whether all or only some of this area has now been regenerated and/or re-planted.*

The primary, 70% of forest is largely intact. However, of concern is the amount of invasive plant material in certain sections of the forest. This appears to have been an issue at the time of inscription. This needs to be addressed in a systematic fashion.

For the remaining 30% in the Nomination Dossier it was noted under 'Objective 3' that *'Several parts of the grove have been deforested and further "colonized" by the plant known as "Awolowo". It is proposed to regenerate those sections of the forest, through the plantation of native trees and plants, with the exclusion of any foreign tree or plant. That means that those need to be properly identified. As it could be difficult to get such trees through the forestry department, a possibility will be take some few samples from the virgin forest and transplant them. A test plot could be started and based on the results, a gradual process of regeneration be programmed.*

It is important to note that the current staff on site appear unclear as to what was supposed to happen with the regeneration project, where and how it was intended to be implemented. This lack of institutional memory is a challenge: recourse to the statements in the Nomination Dossier and the assessment carried out by ICOMOS in 2004 should provide a framework for reviving this project and informing the means by which this is done. It could viably be supported by a Nature Conservation professional or be informed by reports carried out involving this issue on the site.¹⁴

¹⁴ Olowu, T.2012. "Development of a Management Plan for 75 Hectares of Osogbo Forest Groves" University of Ibadan / Osun Grove Support Group: Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development

Status quo:

Some areas of the forest had been severely denuded of primary forest prior to inscription, and the intention was that these areas, particularly areas in which farming had occurred, were to be allowed / encouraged to regenerate.¹⁵ Whilst it appears that some of this had occurred at the time of original inspection, the means by which this regeneration was intended seems to have been lost. This means that active planting in the recent past was the *modus operandi*, rather than letting the forest grow back through natural regeneration. There is little institutional memory as to this planting being carried out. Some planting of forest was carried out in around 2006, particularly around the Visitors Centre, and by the old Indian School. An area across the suspension bridge in the buffer zone was also originally identified, but this has remained scrub and grasses. This area is also under threat by proximity to homesteads.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

Some of the staff were aware of this planting, but were not sure in the manner that it was connected to the World Heritage property nomination and declaration. Mr. Isaac Otun, a specialist in biology, noted with concern that the trees planted were exotics and not trees that he would plant in the grove. They had been provided by the Ministry of Forestry. It was noted that this had been raised at the last stakeholder meeting and that the Ministry of Forestry had not arrived or indicated willingness to participate.

The trees that were planted in 2006 have reached a height, but there is little in the way of sub-canopy foliage which has followed the trees. This suggests some judicious replanting.

Areas to the south of the site which were damaged by agriculture would possibly need assistance in regeneration. This would have to be carried out in an informed manner and deploy plant material in environmentally appropriate fashion. Ideally these areas should be fenced to allow regeneration.

Recommendations:

- The Heritage Section of the site staff be detailed through mechanisms such as 'Google Earth' analysis and site inspections, assess areas which require protection in order that the forest can be encouraged to grow back.
- The areas to the south of the property be re-fenced in order that the forest has a chance to re-grow.
- The identification and cultivation of appropriate trees for the grove be carried out in house, given the inability of the Ministry of Forestry to provide appropriate plant material.
- Seed can be collected from the Grove at the end of the growing season.
- An area within the buffer zone can be identified as a starter zone for the tree growing project, given the numbers of monkeys and squirrels within the control zone.
- That the areas that were planted with inappropriate trees be supplemented with more appropriate, lower growing plant material.
- It is highly recommended that the internal knowledge of the staff on site be supplemented with advice from professional nature conservation specialists with regards to appropriate vehicles for forest regeneration.

¹⁵ In the ICOMOS evaluation at the time of nomination in 2004, it was noted that '*The conservation history of the site can be seen in two ways. First there is the conservation of the whole site: it has been rescued from dereliction and possible incorporation into the town and re-established as a sacred place over the past forty years. Sculptures have been recreated and the high forest re-established in those areas where it had been cut for plantations or agriculture. This is in itself a success story (sic).*'

3.2.5 Conservation of the sculptures

In terms of the TOR the instruction was to *Review work already undertaken on the conservation of the Ontoto market site and the Flying Tortoise sculptures; consider conservation approaches in place, including approaches to authenticity, materials, documentation, recording, and capacity building, and whether a Conservation Plan has been produced or should be produced;*

This section will comprise general comments on walls and wall sculptures, and freestanding sculptures as separate components, given that the former are largely constructed of concrete covered earth, and the latter, concrete on steel wire frames. It will then proceed to discuss the sections as recommended in the TOR.¹⁶

3.2.5.1 Walls and wall sculptures

Status Quo:

The walls and wall sculptures are constructed of earth and latterly plastered with a concrete skin, sometimes pigmented in order to match the environment. These show areas of patching and occasional areas of reconstruction, using cement. Walls along the road are better preserved than those inside the site. Given its linear nature, it is difficult to quantify the amount of walling which needs repair, as cracks occur in most of it.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

There are six areas of concern in this regard.

Moss: Much of this walling is covered in moss, which, according to the site manager, is the status after the rainy season. Once the weather is drier and the sun reaches these areas, the moss shrivels. There are areas in which the moss is always present. Currently, some of this moss is removed by chemical means.

Cracks through tree roots: There are many instances of tree roots growing beneath the wall structures. Oral history notes that cutting trees in the Grove is not allowed. However, the roots can be managed as part of quotidian operations, mitigating future damage.

Collapsed walling through tree roots: There are instances in which the tree roots are large enough to push over sections of walling. Oral history notes that cutting trees in the Grove is not allowed. However, the roots can be managed as part of quotidian operations, mitigating future damage.

Collapsed walling through damp: Given the heavy rains during the Mission, issues with respect to collapsing walling due to water action and damp were patent. Some areas, such as the main gateway to the most sacred part of the site above the First Palace, are under threat. Other areas, particularly in the dense shade are similarly threatened.

Erosion of the base of the wall: This aspect is largely through water action, and rising damp.

Human action: People, including staff, were seen to be clambering across the walling, instead of walking around to an entrance.

¹⁶ Osegale *et al* commented in 2014 that *'It is also confirmed that the main factors affecting maintenance of these cultural properties were inadequate funds for maintenance, high cost of repairs and poor construction techniques. There is no specialized organization to inspect the monuments and advise for efficient maintenance regularly'* http://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_21_vol_3_2_july_2014.pdf

Recommendations:

- The conservation approach towards repairs to the walling should be developed in order to prevent reactive repair which may be inappropriate. This conservation approach underpins the (material) conservation plan.
- A detailed site plan, with all the walling and sculptures must be prepared in order that this can be used as a tool to monitor all the walling and sculptures for conservation status, allow for the preparation of a priority planning system which can then inform the use of in-house maintenance funds or approach to the AOT, but also be used as a tool for further development if necessary on the site.
- The issues of moss growing on the wall is not seen as a major threat in most cases, as it is seasonal. Poisoning the moss on the wall introduces more chemicals to the site, and also costs extra money. It is recommended that areas of moss growth be monitored rather than cleaned, and addressed if and when cracks begin to appear.
- Tree roots can be trimmed at the base of the wall, both in the front and the back.
- Agricultural drainage needs to be introduced in sensitive areas of the site, given the large amount of clay present in the soil. This should preferably be carried out by laying the slotted pipe in a trench around 600mm deep, with a bed of sand below. Some grit can be placed above the pipe to filter ground water, and then topped with the same topsoil as the ground level. This pipe should drain the water away from the walls and off the sensitive parts of the site. This should assist in mitigating rising damp and erosion to some degree, and runoff water sitting against the wall and runoff water sitting against the wall in times of heavy rain.
- All staff should be conscientised as to the reasons for impacting as little as possible on the walls. Signage should be introduced to conscientise the public in this regard.

3.2.5.2 Free standing sculptures

Status Quo:

The conservation work is carried out under the supervision of a dedicated site conservator. He calls in those specialists, usually sons trained by the members of the Sacred Cult of Arts on an *ad hoc* basis when major restoration work is to be carried out.

The conservation protocols hinge around faithful restoration of the sculptures according to photographs taken by Suzanne Wenger: evidence of these was produced by Mr. Makinde with specific reference to the Ontoto Market. Oral tradition records that the sculptures have to be faithfully restored as they were conveyed to Suzanne Wenger by the Deity. Most of the large sculptures (around 80%) are recently restored, and are in good condition. The Fertility Deity is in dire need of repair, as the base is compromised, given its earth and stone construction.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

It is confirmed that many of the large freestanding sculptures have been repaired or rebuilt, as per the guidelines to repair faithfully to the original designs of Suzanne Wenger. These are carried out with steel wire frames and then cement skins, a practice that was in place at the time of Madame Wenger, in her later years.¹⁷

Recommendations:

Vulnerable elements such as fingers and arms are occasionally damaged or incomplete: addressing these can be proactively carried out in the compilation of a full documentation of the site and the production of detailed base maps which could be used in the restoration planning process.

¹⁷ The larger sculptures particularly would not be practically constructed in earth in any way.

3.2.5.3 Conservation approaches in place

Currently, despite the lack of funding for repairs and restoration, the Osun-Osogbo manages to undertake well focused projects such as the repairs to the old market as well as other large sculptural pieces: many of these have been carried out in recent years. The availability and engagement of traditional craftspeople on site, as well as the willing commitment of the staff in this regard is commendable, given the circumstances.

Nevertheless there is an absence of a Conservation approach that sets out how the work should be undertaken, an absence of base line documentation of the original forms, and an absence of detailed recording of the conservation work.

In the absence of anything more cogent, which should be a fundamental component of the Conservation Management Plan, the conservation approach is, patently, repair which is reactive.

This work is carried out, as mentioned earlier, as faithfully as possible to documentary evidence of photographs taken of the sculptures by the late Suzanne Wenger. Whilst it appears that Suzanne Wenger had embraced the use of cement as a shelter coat to the earth constructed walls,¹⁸ this issue may have to be addressed from a conservation approach point of view: whether for the good of the site and its socio-cultural and climatic conditions, other shelter coats need to be explored which would be less prone to cracking and staining.¹⁹ On site research is needed to explore whether a lime based shelter coat would be more appropriate which could still provide similar sculptural characteristics but be more flexible and not prone to staining or cracking. In addition, lime has a level of fumicide which deters termite activity for some time. This has been broached with the site conservator, and it appears that slaked lime is readily available. This technology could be employed on test patches with walls with major cracking, in addition to sections of walls which need major repairs.

General maintenance of the walling is problematic, particularly along the route to the First Palace, and this is perhaps exacerbated by the large numbers using the route at the time of the August Festival. Much of the challenge with regard to these sections of the site is related to climate: this is expanded upon in section 3.2.5.1.

The site conservator indicated that much time and resources are spent cleaning moss off walls and sculptures, in addition to fumigating the timber components of buildings against termite activity particularly. The Mission found this extremely concerning, given the environmental impacts of fumigation which would negatively impact on the flora and fauna in the Grove.²⁰

This issue was discussed at length and the consideration submitted as to the possibility of soaking any small pieces of timber in lime wash, and the possibility of boring into and injecting some of the large pieces of timber in order to limit the activity of termites for a good period. The possibility of 'control' and 'experiment' pieces of timber, left in the open for a year was discussed in order to establish the veracity of this proposal.

¹⁸ This statement is in the light of a comment as to the sculptures originally being earth, with cement being deployed as shelter coats later.

¹⁹ Currently, part of the problem is the collapse of the cement plastered walls internally, from the base, which suggests that remedial action using principles of conservation dealing with earth construction may be more appropriate in the patching and crack repair process.

²⁰ Critical in this discussion is the alienation of the professional staff from local and international discourses on all types of conservation issues, as well as the resultant inarticulate use of internet resources due to the lack of computers on or near site for use by professional staff.

As indicated previously, the need to have a systematically considered conservation approach is patent: this begins with a philosophy of how to address conservation on the site, which then informs the manner by which materials and techniques are deployed as well as determining monitoring and proactive action.

Recommendations:

The Conservation Management Plan needs to clearly articulate the philosophy of approach towards the material conservation of the walls and the sculptures, addressing the concerns around greater conservation issues such as protecting the fauna and flora against fumigants, whilst at the same time, deploying natural compounds such as slaked lime to repair walls and cracks, allowing them greater 'breathability' and at the same time give them a more viable shelter coat than cement which is expensive in continued repair situations.

The experimentation into material options for shelter coats (lime as opposed to cement) crack fillers (lime as opposed to cement), and natural fumigants (lime wash instead of commercial fumigants) can viably take place on site, and for maximum benefit, needs to be fully documented by the Site Conservator in order that the process and product has credence.

3.2.5.4 Approaches to integrity and authenticity

The integrity and authenticity present at the time of inscription on the World Heritage List are thus:²¹

Integrity - The property encompasses almost the whole of the sacred grove and certainly all that has been restored over the forty years before inscription. Some of the recent sculptures are vulnerable to lack of regular maintenance which given their materials – cement, iron and mud – could lead to potentially difficult and expensive conservation problems. The Grove is also vulnerable to over-visiting and visitor pressure that could erode the equilibrium between the natural aspects and people necessary to sustain the spiritual qualities of the site.

Assessment: The comments regarding the integrity of the site stand – visitor numbers present a threat, particularly at the time of the August Festival, and the material components of the sculptures are problematic from a continued restoration point of view. The visitor numbers at the time of the August Festival need to be managed as a matter of urgency.

Authenticity - The authenticity of the Grove is related to its value as a sacred place. The sacred nature of places can only be continually reinforced if that sacredness is widely respected. Over the past forty years the new sculptures in the Grove have had the effect of reinforcing the special qualities of the Grove and giving it back its spiritual qualities that imbue it with high cultural value. At the same time the new sculptures are part of a long and continuing tradition of sculptures created to reflect Yoruba cosmology. Although their form reflects a new stylistic departure, the works were not created to glorify the artists but rather through their giant size and intimidating shapes to re-establish the sacredness of the Grove. The new sculptures have achieved their purpose and the Grove now has wider than local significance as a sacred place for the Yoruba people.

Assessment: The comment above regarding the Grove with its associated sculptures, as a sacred place stands. New work has been carried out on many of these sculptures in recent months, the statement about scale which reinforces the intact nature of it. However a major threat to the sacred nature of the Grove is the uncontrolled visitor numbers, and associated lack of respect through human impact, especially at the time of the August Festival.

²¹ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1118>

1.2.5.5 Materials

The materials used on site for the repairs to structures are congruent, to large degree, with the requirements and the expectations. At the risk of compromising authenticity, timber, wire, and lime plaster are appropriate in large areas of repair work, and the possibility of using a lime compound to fill cracks in some of the older concrete coverings which have substantial earth construction was discussed.²² The rationale was that the lime as a crack filling mortar would perhaps allow for the seasonal movement of the crack and mitigate the total collapse of the internal earth construction. This was experimental, and thus would be carried out on a more insignificant area of walling to start with, and success measured over the period of a year.

Lime is available in Osogbo: it was also discussed that lime wash may be used as a pesticide for some timber elements, given that the conservator spends much time and money purchasing poisons for injection into timber to prevent termites. Certainly, experiments can be carried out with soaking small elements of structural timber in lime and comparing their decay over the period of a year with a similar piece not soaked, and a similar piece which has been treated with pesticide.

The need to remove the mosses from the wall was also questioned: it appears that these come and go with the amount of light and the amount of water. The Mission felt that the mosses on the walling was a part of the patina of the site, and that sterilising the natural aspects was counter-intuitive.

3.2.5.6 Documentation and recording

The need to document the site using detailed photogrammetry was identified early in the first site inspection. This is an integral component of the much discussed conservation approach. Baseline documentation is needed as a record for all future conservation work.

As well as baseline documentation, records are also needed of the state of conservation of each piece. Whilst the staff know the site intimately, it is important that a base map be constructed so that problems can be located systematically on a greater plan, during general site inspections. This map/ series of maps forms the baseline tool for management of the site, as well as prioritization of the repairs to any aspects of the site. Furthermore, it provides an empirical record as to HOW much work has to be done, HOW often and HOW long it lasts. It also allows for planning in terms of costing and acquisition of materials.

The base document of the whole site, at large scale (1:50) should be constructed, using photogrammetric means. This includes elevations of the three dimensional walling. This document is a working document, onto which new cracks, the extent of cracks and their severity can be drawn on site. The method of cataloguing and issuing new wall sections to staff and security for monitoring would have to be carefully worked out.

Each crack would have to be assessed independently, and referred back to the base document in terms of date of identification and subsequent date of repair. Newly identified cracks / damage to the site should be entered into a recording sheet which allows for prioritization based on a series of eliminatory questions: - has it fallen (yes/no) is it about to fall (yes / no), is it stable (yes/no). Each is awarded a number which feeds into a priority matrix. The development of this matrix is a potential subject for publication by staff members on the site.

Given the scale of this project from a conceptual point of view, grant aid may need to be explored.

²² The widespread use of lime shelter coats as opposed to cement would necessarily involve research over a defined period of time. It is possibly best to initially deploy lime mortars as crack fillers and cement as repair shelter coats in strategic areas until the integrity of the lime shelter coat can prove viable.

3.2.5.7 Capacity building

This links directly with the above discussion: many of the staff on site have tertiary qualifications yet have no direction on site or any career potential. Whilst capacity building is inherently part of the refinement of the management structure and the provision of a more professional work environment, potential also exists for the following:

- The need for employees working on World Heritage properties around the globe to form exchanges (through UNESCO) is vital: Many world heritage sites, particularly those in developing countries have similar challenges, and cross-pollination of ideas through manpower exchange is a way to situate the employee more confidently in their own situation, and at the same time be able to view similar situations from outside.
- Continued support at an official level for staff members increasing their qualifications through further study. This perhaps should be articulated in a clear staff development plan once management systems on site have been reconsidered.
- The professional staff should, where possible, be encouraged to attend conferences, both local and international, in fields which are appropriate to the running of the site. This not only increases the exposure of the site, but assists in building the knowledge and capacity of the staff complement.

3.2.5.8 The Pavilion

Status quo: This was constructed by the State Department whilst discussions on the heritage impact were underway and did not have the approval of ICOMOS or of the World Heritage Committee.

Immediate situation (October 2015)

The building is not built as per plans and is not completed. It is badly constructed, of inferior materials, and in the few months that the timber work has been up, it has rotted. This has been discussed, and a new plan was shown to the Mission which recommended some aesthetic changes. A revised copy has not been seen.

Recommendations

The Mission felt that removal of the existing structure would be counter-productive to all parties and would have a negative impact on the Grove. The State Department produced new plans in this regard, which were discussed with regards to visual impact and materials. These plans need to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS.

3.2.6 Direction of International Assistance

The TOR recommended that the Mission 'Explore the most effective ways to direct the International Assistance Request for conservation and management of the Osun Grove Sculptures, Busanyin, Idi-Oke, Idi Baba and Ajigun Shrines, and make recommendations to be taken into consideration by the next IAs' panel.'

Given that the AOT manages to largely fund repairs to the structures, ancillary projects requiring support for the continued maintenance and conservation of the site are suggested in this section. There are a series of projects that can be funded from separate sources, including the Federal Government, State and NGO sectors. The author has attempted to align appropriate projects with appropriate funding sources: Note that ideas for the direction for International Assistance is found in section 3.2.6.2 b and 3.2.6.3.

3.2.6.1 Project packages: State and Federal Government

a) Provision of professional office facilities

Whilst the main office situated in the Ataoja's compound of Osogbo is not directly linked to the site itself, it is the site from which the management of the site is controlled in the greater federal system. Currently, small rooms in an old building form the offices of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Osogbo. Photocopy and printing facilities are found at an adjacent shelter, powered by a generator.

Plans have been drawn up to provide a proper office complex for the Osogbo site, which include a museum / gallery of Osogbo related items. Currently no funding has been set aside for this structure.

It was noted by the Mission that although not currently common in Nigeria, it would be appropriate to revisit the plans with universal access facilities.

Recommendations: that finance be set aside by Federal Government to assist in the construction of this building in the near future, given its importance as support to the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, as well as its position as 'gateway' to said grove.

b) Documentation of site and materials research (local competence together with International Assistance)

The site is in dire need of full documentation, as well as the need to prepare a comprehensive approach towards conservation planning, enabled by a detailed base map (see Section 3.2.5.6). GIS competence exists at federal level, and this could be well deployed in detailed mapping of the site.

c) Increased budget to site for running repairs and stakeholder involvement

The Site Manager has expressed frustration at the problems experienced in obtaining materials for small repairs and continued pest control on the site. These are both fundamental components of the conservation of the site, and the responsibility lies with the National Commission for Museums and Monuments to be able to facilitate this, given their custodianship of a World Heritage Site. In addition, other petties such as being able to provide basic refreshments to attendees at Stakeholder Committee meetings may go a long way towards cementing commitment between parties.

3.2.6.2 Project packages: State Government

The following are areas in which strategic funding, most practicably by the Osun State or Federal Government, given their core areas of focus, would be able to assist.

a) Branding and signage:

There exists an opportunity to brand the site: whilst this may appear as an imposed idea, the creation of an identifiable motif (with Yoruba identity at the core of motif development) would assist in great part in unifying the disparate elements of the site. Importantly, it will aid in guiding the pedestrian visitor from the Ataoja Palace Compound through the streets of Osgobo to arrive at the Sacred Grove. This branding can be derived through an agreed middle ground of the practicable operational requirements of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments and the requirements of the Ataoja.

b) Website development:

This is self-explanatory, removing the information sites from generic presentations to a lively, on site experience. Currently Facebook sites have met with mixed success, given the position of this particular site in the local and international Yoruba diaspora.

c) New gate house:

This is a new building that will have to be designed by the State Department as a result of the decommission of the old road and the construction of the new road and the car park. The design of the building is critical as it will form the public face of the site, and thus has to be done in a manner that shows the iconography, branding as well as being architecturally sensitive and at the same time effective from a security and monitoring point of view. It is recommended that this form part of a full scale site plan, showing existing structures and future development in order that all parties are aware as to the *status quo*, intentions for development and reasons therefore.

d) Special events uniforms:

The staff working on site should be provided with special events uniforms (even if this is a T Shirt) that articulate their authority at times like the August Festival. This is a simple requirement that can be factored into the cost of the festival, and be provided by either the State Department or from the Ataoja's budget as a goodwill gesture.

e) Fencing to site:

Given the extent of the Grove, fencing of the entire site is problematic. However, areas which were fenced in the past can be re-fenced, as well as areas identified by the management of the site which prove vulnerable.

3.2.6.3 Project packages: International donors

The following are a series of critical areas in which smaller amounts of funding, or rather directed funding are perceived would make a difference in the operation and growth of the World Heritage Site.

a) Computers for professional staff, printing, scanning facilities

The lack of technological access for professional staff particularly, is of great concern. This limits their capacity, restricts their professional growth and does not allow for exploration of ideas and precedents in their field. Currently, some staff have access to personal computers and emails.

- Given the lack of practicality of computers on site, (no access to electricity) it is recommended that the Manager of Osun-Osogbo World Heritage Site, Mr Makinde, assess, together with his staff, a real approach to computer requirements, where they will be located, how they will get access to the internet, how staff members will be allocated internet addresses and the printing and scanning requirements of the unit. This must be carried out in a realistic fashion given the infrastructure restraints, so that all professional staff have access to a computer in some fashion, the internet in some fashion, and scanning and printing facilities in some fashion. The logistics of the latter are more than likely discussions that will have to be had with the National Commission for Museums and Monuments in Abuja.
- Accountability (published research, evidence of documentation, upskilling) would have to be a necessary component of such a project package. This could be the result of an association with a local or international University, perhaps the Technical University at Graz, Austria through EU funded programmes.

b) Documentation of site (together with National Government assistance)

The comments in 3.2.5.6 above have reference. These read;

The need to document the site using detailed photogrammetry was identified early in the first site inspection. This is an integral component of the much discussed conservation approach. Baseline documentation is needed as a record for all future conservation work.

As well as baseline documentation, records are also needed of the state of conservation of each piece. Whilst the staff know the site intimately, it is important that a base map be constructed so that problems can be located systematically on a greater plan, during general site inspections. This map/ series of maps forms the baseline tool for management of the site, as well as prioritization of the repairs to any aspects of the site. Furthermore, it provides an empirical record as to HOW much work has to be done, HOW often and HOW long it lasts. It also allows for planning in terms of costing and acquisition of materials.

The base document of the whole site, at large scale (1:50) should be constructed, using photogrammetric means. This includes elevations of the three dimensional walling. This document is a working document, onto which new cracks, the extent of cracks and their severity can be drawn on site. The method of cataloguing and issuing new wall sections to staff and security for monitoring would have to be carefully worked out.

Each crack would have to be assessed independently, and referred back to the base document in terms of date of identification and subsequent date of repair. Newly identified cracks / damage to the site should be entered into a recording sheet which allows for prioritization based on a series of eliminatory questions: - has it fallen (yes/no) is it about to fall (yes / no), is it stable (yes/no). Each is awarded a number which feeds into a priority matrix. The development of this matrix is a potential subject for publication by staff members on the site.

Given the scale of this project from a conceptual point of view, grant aid may need to be explored.

As part of the development of a long-term conservation plan, this project is viable for the real direction of International Assistance. Research into lime mortars and shelter coats would also be a part of the above documentation programme.

As guidance for the implementation of International Assistance, the following is required:

1. The identification of a suitable professional in Nigeria or internationally who can work on the project for a three month period, setting up the framework and establishing the methodology of documentation, together with the professionals working on the site. The costs of this professional appointment can be directly linked to ICOMOS.
2. It is proposed that the State Department would cover the basic accommodation, subsistence and travel requirements of the ICOMOS appointed professional.
3. That the establishment of the process of documentation be a vehicle by which to train the staff on site at the Sacred Grove, the means by which publications can be generated.
4. That at the time of the departure of the professional, all skills for the various construction and sculptural types are transferred to the conservator and his team for continued implementation.
5. That the conservator prepare a bi-annual report informing ICOMOS as to the progress of the documentation, as well as the means by which its existence benefits the long-term maintenance of the site.

c) Interpretation of indigenous planting on the site

Whilst the key focus of this World Heritage Site is aimed at the intangible, the site nomination rests heavily on the elements of the natural environment, with many different types of plant material forming part of the original nomination dossier. This means that the integrity of the site is deeply connected with the integrity of the natural environment. However, a standard approach of interpretation of the plant material is not appropriate given the gravity of the site itself.

- It is recommended, due to the existence of a biologist within the staffing component on site, that an interpretive brochure giving an explanation of plant material on site, as well as its ancillary associations and uses, would respond to this embedded natural environment, as well as providing a platform for more integrated research.²³

d) Bicycles for security patrols

Staff identified the need for security patrols to have bicycles allowing them to traverse the site more speedily, thus enabling poaching control/bush fire control to occur more expeditiously. As with the technological requirements, this should be more carefully itemised to establish the real requirements so that an application for assistance in this regard can be made.

3.2.7 Management

Review the revised Conservation/Management Plan prepared in 2014, and reviewed in 2015, to cover the period between 2015-2019, and in particular consider the effectiveness of the management structure, and the adequacy of both human and financial resources and how the 5% of income generated from the Festival has benefitted conservation work in the property

Management of the property is a key issue in its success: Mr. Makinde has indicated through his staff that there are some 50 people involved in the management of the site. In the opinion of the author, this is indeed sufficient.

3.2.7.1 Effectiveness of Management Structure

Through discussions with the senior staff members on site, and given the different competencies and qualifications of these people, it could be considered that a restructuring of the staff on site may be a possible means of more effective management. Given the structure of the organogram on page 56 of the *Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019*, enquiries on site revealed that what appears to be a more rational structure is in fact being practised, and that this structure can act as a strong baseline for professionalism development, as well as implementing training within core focus areas.

However, of concern are issues relating to deployment of staff in an effective manner; this includes making available vehicles by which staff capacity can be increased, particularly in the area of conservation of the site. Given the particular types of staff required, the concern is that 'ceilings' are reached without providing areas for growth or challenge: examples are security patrols and tour guides.

It is recommended that a process by which restructuring of staff into three core capacities: Conservation of the sculptures, conservation of the natural environment, and education on the site, be undertaken. Entry level staff elect to fall under one of the core capacities of their interest, and be given a chance to grow in this area. On-site training becomes a part of their daily work schedule; thus, for example, a

²³ The biologist on site, Mr. Isaac Otun has noted that he has a personal interest in the properties of the plants on site and their contribution to the indigenous medicinal practises. Note that this is highlighted given the integrated nature of the religious and natural worlds of the Yoruba people.

security patroller can elect to work in the conservation area, thus, for two hours a day he would work on identification of potential restoration projects under the guide of the chief conservator. He/she would also be responsible for identifying new threats, given the mobility on the site. Similarly such security patroller may also elect to work under the environmental section, thus faunal / floral studies that have to be carried out are allocated. Monitoring of the conservation of the site can thus be an integral part of security patrols.

It would appear that there are a number of courses that are run in Abuja which focus on conservation. This means that these could form part of an incentive programme which could be structured in a transparent manner in order to attract staff members that perform within this key areas to build capacity and at the same time build the capacity of the organisation.

3.2.7.2 Adequacy of human resources

There are more than adequate staff available both on site and in the main National Commission for Museums and Monuments office in the Osogbo town. The *Conservation Management Plan* for 2015-2019 records some 42 on site staff deployed in a variety of ways. Of interest is that a large percentage of these staff members hold tertiary qualifications.

The Conservation Management of the grove is under the Site Manager who works in conjunction with 42 staff designated as Heritage Officers (Guides, Heritage Guards, Monuments Caretakers, Traditional Carpenters, Botanists, and Traditional Bricklayers/Sculptors), Conservators, Ethnographers, Curators and Education Officers. They perform various functions from patrol services, general cleaning, and cutting of grasses, restoration and maintenance of structures and sculptures, roofing and thatching, fumigation against insects attack and averting accidents such as fire or flooding that may affect the site. In addition officers also undertake the inventory and documentation of the flora and fauna species.²⁴

3.2.7.3 Adequacy of financial resources

The financial resources available on site appear to be problematic. Whilst staffing appears to be covered, any ancillary requirements are challenging. It is recommended that the National Commission for Museums and Monuments review their annual budget to factor in the values of World Heritage Sites and the critical requirements of their continued and effective management.

3.2.7.4 Accounting for the 5% Festival income

Please see item 3.1 in this regard. This is an issue which is still under discussion by the Stakeholders. In the light of a current lack of transparency between parties due to the lack of Stakeholders Meetings, it is of concern that there is no clarity as to how the 5% contribution will be measured.

In addition it is vital to note that given its situation in a tropical environment, as well as its materiality, this site is an extremely complex one to manage. It is in the interests of all stakeholders to dispassionately assess the value of the site, the costs of ongoing maintenance, fencing, security, bush clearing and litter clearing against the survival of the site as a Sacred Grove of the Yoruba, in which the spirits continue to dwell. It is highly suspected that a 5% contribution of the annual income will prove a pittance, and that it may prove pragmatic that in the long term interests of the site and its survival, a higher percentage could be allocated from the fund for site maintenance.

3.3 The August Festival

The August Festival is an event which is organized by the Ataoja, currently Larooye III, and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments currently have little say in the operations, including

²⁴ *Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019*, page 47

advertisement. Whilst there is an understanding that an amount of 5% of the revenue generated is to be channelled into the management of the site, the means by which this is achieved is unclear.

The Annual Festival has flagged six areas of concern:²⁵

3.3.1 Waste management of litter

This has, to some degree, been addressed earlier in this document.

Status Quo:

As indicated in the item in the section above dealing with waste management, waste on the site (litter) is an issue, and this appears to be largely connected with the August Festival. This includes the management of human waste (discussed in the section below): the 2012 statistics indicated some 120000 people on the site, 2013 less at 78 000 (attributed to a drop in the economy). These numbers have serious implications for the site itself.

Immediate Situation (October 2015)

Despite the provision of refuse bins (which need to be reconsidered as they are out of keeping with the environment) waste from the festival continues to be evident: MTN placards fastened to trees and refuse dumped behind walls. This is in addition to the refuse left on the ground – bottle tops etc.

Recommendations:

The management of litter needs to be integrated into a larger festival management plan which needs to directly engage with the Ataoja Larooye III, as the key personality of the August Festival.

Currently, the Ataoja Larooye III is the main organizer of the festival. He currently benefits financially in large part from the proceeds of the Festival, of which 5% (still under negotiation) will be handed to the National Commission for Museums and Monuments for site management.

Brochures: The Ataoja Larooye III commissions A4 size full colour brochures, consisting of a number of pages, which highlight the importance of the festival and the luminaries connected with it. These are handed out for free to devotees. These are an OPPORTUNITY for a full page notice on respect for the deity by throwing refuse into the bins provided or taking it off site.

Social suggestion: As the person who leads the celebrations, the Ataoja Larooye III and his Votive Maid / retired Votive Maids are in a position to suggest strongly to the Devotees from a position of authority, that their refuse is disrespectful to the Deity and that they should please refrain from dropping it on the ground. Note that this issue has been raised with the Ataoja Larooye III, who has indicated that he is prepared to work together with the authorities, given that they should provide more refuse bins.

3.3.2 Management of human waste

Status Quo:

Mr. Makinde notes that in 2011 and 2012 the State provided portable toilets for the devotees at the Festival. This appears to have not been the case in recent years, suggesting a major impact on the natural environment through damage and the deposition of human waste.

²⁵ It is to be noted that significant sculptures, such as that which is connected with fertility, are highly consulted by people at this festival, however, the *human* threat through damage or vandalism to these sculptures at the time is negligible.

Immediate situation (October 2015):

This is a critical issue that needs to be addressed through the Stakeholders, in order that an adequate number of portable toilets are provided for the 2016 August Festival. In 2010 and 2011, around 25 portable toilets were provided by the State.

Recommendations:

- That the State revisit the provision of portable toilets for the two major days of the August Festival, given the tourism potential for the State as a result of this event.
- That the Ataoja Laaroye III fund the biannual monitoring of the river water from the proceeds of the festival income, given his income potential and the impact of devotees at the time of the festival.

3.3.3 Crowd control

Status quo:

Festival numbers appear to fluctuate dramatically and are seen as a key threat to the site. However, at the same time they are a fundamental component of the Intangible Heritage. Fluctuations are noted by the staff and are interpreted according to economy, outbreak of Ebola which restricted all except very local travel, and also events (such as the death of the former Ataoja).

Immediate situation (October 2015):

It is noted that extra security staff are posted on site for the duration of the festival. In the past, a major benefit was the erecting of large screen televisions in parts of Osogbo city, which streamed live. These large screens were erected by the Governor's office at the time, and assisted in large part in protecting the site, as the numbers that directly approached the Ataoja were more limited.

Recommendations:

- Staff indicate that they require some support from extra people on the days of the festival in order to protect the walls and the forest.
- Identification as to their role on the days of the August Festival (ie, Uniform)
- Revisit the provision of large screen televisions as per circa 2012, which assisted greatly in mitigating damage and crowd control on the site itself, as devotees preferred to stay away and watch from a distance.

3.3.4 Relations between the stakeholders

Status Quo:

The current situation is that there is possible conflict in the relations between the National Commission for Museums and Monuments as custodians of the site, the Traditional Authority under the Ataoja Laroye III, and the State Department. This is hinged around an understanding formulated at the time of the nomination of the site and its inscription, between the parties, with the late Ataoja, the current Ataoja Laroye III's father as the signatory on behalf of the Traditional Authority.

Only the continued co-operation of the three parties will ensure the retention of the World Heritage Site status: a mutually agreed understanding has to be reached as a matter of urgency.

Immediate situation (October 2015): Inarticulate

Recommendations:

- It is strongly recommended that the complete transparency of roles and responsibilities between the State parties, the National Commission for Museums and Monuments and the Traditional Authorities be demonstrated.
- The positions of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments AND the Ataoja Larooye III as CUSTODIANS is to be clearly articulated, and the responsibilities, both action and financial, particularly with regard to the August Festival, are to be specifically outlined, in order that there is absolute certainty as to what the various stakeholders are expected to do.
- It must be remembered that the inscription as World Heritage property is not for the creation of fiduciary interest, but to provide a vehicle for the preservation of the sanctity of the site for ALL PEOPLE, particularly the devotees of Osun. Inability to run the site in an effective, transparent and professional fashion will jeopardise the status of the site in terms of UNESCO listing.
- The Ataoja Larooye III was not the original signatory to any agreements between parties at the time of inscription, and thus has to be briefed clearly as to the vulnerability of the site and the costs of its maintenance in addition to the implications of having World Heritage Site status being removed, which is a possibility given the impacts of the August Festival in terms of litter and human waste management.
- As religious custodian, the Ataoja Larooye III has responsibilities for the sanctity of the site and preserving its authenticity as a sacred grove. These should be viewed as reciprocal to the income from the August Festival.

3.3.5 Commercialisation of the Festival

Status Quo:

The Festival is largely driven by the office of the Ataoja who actively seeks out sponsors in order to attract devotees and ensure that the Festival is financially viable. This includes publishing glossy brochures for free distribution to devotees, in addition to the supply of Seaman's Schnapps in small plastic packets which has significant impact on litter at the time of the festival. Whilst the amount of 5% of the proceeds has thus far been negotiated for contribution to the conservation of the site, it is not understood the means by which the 5% will be calculated, nor the vehicle by which this transfer will happen.

Of greater concern is an articulation by devotees that this over commercialisation will actively chase away the spirits, and thus destroy the sacredness of the Grove.²⁶

Immediate situation: Inarticulate

Recommendations:

- The direct human impact on the site must be more controlled, especially at the time of the festival.
- It is strongly recommended that the vehicles of large screen televisions deployed around Osun be reintroduced at the time of the festival (see 3.3.3 above) in order to limit access and overcrowding at the site.
- It is imperative that all stakeholders including the Ataoja recognise the fragility of the site, particularly with regards to the tension between natural, spiritual and built environment, and establish the best way in which these tensions can be managed.

²⁶ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7593852.stm>

3.3.6 Lack of inclusion of Site Staff

Status Quo:

Currently, the site staff indicate that they have very limited input in the organisation of the Festival, as well as in the Festival itself, except for being on duty for the duration. The comment above regarding being provided with a uniform to identify them as officials at the time of the Festival is a case in point.

Immediate situation: Inarticulate

Recommendations:

- It is strongly recommended that the site staff and management, through the vehicle of the Steering Committee, have more say in the planning and management of the Festival, including the management of numbers, as they are directly implicated in the impact on the site before, during and after the Festival.
- That the financial affairs of the financing of the Festival be more transparent, involving senior staff of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, whether at site, State or Federal level, given that a percentage of funds have tentatively been agreed on for transfer for management of the site.
- That the site staff on duty at the time of the Festival be given uniforms which identify them specifically as officials of the site, thus giving them the authority to protect the site at the time where necessary.

4. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE SITE

This section serves to consolidate the discussions above, prior to setting out the final conclusions and recommendations. As per the Terms of Reference:

- *Urban Development and Roads: Inter alia*, assessing the status of the closure of the tarmac road through the property, as requested at the time of inscription and measures to curtail general urban 'creep'.

A major impact on the site is the road running through it. This needs to be realigned with urgency, through the buffer zone as agreed, following the correct applications and protocols. The old road must be closed off to through traffic and legally decommissioned if possible, and be allowed to slowly become part of the forest. The new road, bridge and car park must be constructed properly and must have as little impact on the site as possible.

- *Conservation of the sculptures; effective ways to direct the International Assistance Request*

The sculptures are in reasonable condition, many of them being recently refurbished, as with the Second Palace and the Spirit House.

The undulating walling varies between excellent condition and collapsing or collapsed. These different states of preservation indicate the urgency for a comprehensive documentation exercise, which informs the philosophy and compilation of a Conservation Management Plan which needs to append that

submitted in 2015. This documentation exercise can viably be the result of a joint partnership between ICOMOS and the authorities.

- *Urban Development and Roads: Inter alia*, assessing the status of the closure of the tarmac road through the property, as requested at the time of inscription and measures to curtail general urban 'creep', *Tourism Management, Pollution of the Osun River*.

The Stakeholders Forum needs to be formally constituted with urgency and it is a requirement of ICOMOS that the minutes of these meetings be submitted to ICOMOS in order that progress can be demonstrated. The Stakeholders Forum is in a position to address the following issues, *inter alia*:

- The cleaning of human waste and litter needs to be prioritised within the confines of the Sacred Grove.
- The pollution in the Osun River running through the Grove needs to be reduced: in addition the water quality needs to be monitored on a regular basis. This could possibly be facilitated through the office of the Ataoja.
- The encroachment of ANY development close to the site needs to be clearly monitored. Any offenders must be reported as such to the National Commission for Museums and Monuments and dealt with through the appropriate channels.
- The visitor management at the time of the August Festival needs to be more actively managed and the impact on the site lessened. This can be achieved through closer relations between the office of the Ataoja and site employees at Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, prior to, during and after the Festival.
- More transparency is required in order to monitor the funding arriving as a result of the proceeds of the Festival. In addition, it is prudent to revisit the percentage against the real costs of loss of sanctity of the site in the long run, as well as the actual impact on the site at the time of the Festival.

- *Conservation of the forest*

The conservation of the forest needs to be addressed, particularly revisiting the intentions of the regeneration of the forest project at the time of inscription, as well as a continued maintenance plan of bush clearance in order to keep invasive species at bay.

- *Management*

The Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019 needs to be supplemented with information dealing more directly with the philosophy of the management of the site, in addition to the means by which conservation of the built and natural environment will be achieved. This can be reinforced by information garnered from intimate knowledge of the site, attained by such mechanisms as full documentation of the three dimensional structures in order to manage, conserve and repair them in a systematic and predictable fashion.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The fundamental intention of the Mission was to establish the means by which the conservation and management of the site of Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove could be improved in order to ensure that there is no loss of authenticity, and to mitigate the vulnerability of the attributes that accord it Outstanding Universal Value. Vital to maintaining this Outstanding Universal Value are the components, both tangible (shrines, forest and river) and intangible (sacred associations and traditional knowledge), which comprise the site, and which need to be sustained.

It is important however, that all parties, are sensitive to the operations of the other, and that a level of mutual understanding and support from the baseline of site management from now on. The role of the State and the Ataoja, particularly, are vital components, and these parties must be guided by the requirements of UNESCO as much as the management of the site: It should also be reinforced that the restrictions imposed by UNESCO are intended as world standards, and that these world standards are vital components of inscription.

Note that the intention is to put into place means and measures by which the staff and management of the Osun-Osobgo World Heritage property are treated in an inclusive and professional manner and are part of a greater infrastructure of heritage professionals which all have to address challenges relating to remoteness, infrastructure, financial constraints and cultural pressures from time to time.

It is important that the key issues of the road and the pavilion are addressed timeously, and as per the committed time lines as per Annexure 6.7. Furthermore, the full documentation of the site is to be addressed urgently: thus far an indication has come in from Mr. Aliyu Abdulfattah that there is competence at State level with respect to GIS mapping, and this can be deployed as a starting point. Other issues which require urgent attention relate to the need for a more detailed approach to conservation activities and a deeper understanding as to how the necessary regeneration of the forest can be addressed through more dialogues between culture and nature staff.

Issues to be addressed are articulated in the Executive Summary, with individual recommendations pertaining to specific aspects of the site are contained in the body of the document.

More specifically:

There are key issues in the effective management of the site.

1. *Documentation of the sculptures*

Documentation of the sculptures is urgently required to include a full assessment of the site and its individual components: this includes *inter alia*, a full three dimensional graphic and photographic documentation of all the sculptures, shrines and other structures on the property.²⁷ Since the objects are three dimensional and not rational in plan or form, any photogrammetric exercise will have to be checked in order that the representations agree with the objects on the property. This is a vital management tool.

2. *Conservation approach for the sculptures*

Conservation work must be underpinned by a more carefully considered conservation approach which addresses the philosophy of how conservation is carried out and a systematic methodology of implementation. This will then inform the development of a detailed conservation approach for the sculptures. Such an approach must be based on research into appropriate materials for shelter coats of the mud sculpture as an alternative to cement and priority must be given to this work.

3. *Improve the quality of the Osun River*

Given the vital role of the Osun River in the human ritual of the site, it is critical that continued work to improve the water quality of the river be prioritised: not just from litter but from pollution arising from urban development. As a sacred river, and one that is used by devotees during the Festival, it is essential that the water quality meets acceptable level and is free from pollution by sewage. The water quality must be monitored through laboratory analysis on a regular basis and if the river is found to be polluted, visitors must be warned of the hazards of touching the water.

²⁷ The possibilities of digital recording should be discussed and considered and ICOMOS could offer advice.

4. *Regeneration of the sacred forest*

In order to control and reverse encroachment and encourage regeneration of the sacred forest, It is highly recommended that the internal knowledge of the staff on site be supplemented with advice from professional nature conservation specialists with regards to appropriate vehicles for forest regeneration.

5. *Annual Festival*

Inadequate allocation of resources

Only a very small amount (some 5%) is *in the process* of being negotiated for allocation to the Sacred Grove Management for assistance in the conservation of the site. Currently, any funds from the Festival are only allocated to deal with disruption caused by extra visitors and not towards the on-going upkeep of the Grove. This arrangement appears to be quite unsatisfactory as the Sacred Grove is what attracts participants to the Festival and it is the conservation of the Grove that should benefit from its success.

Commercialisation

Whilst the increased income from the festival is welcome, the negative impact of the human traffic of the festival and its gradual 'Westernisation' with respect to advertising, reliance on imported mechanisms such as 'Seaman's Schnapps' and its associated litter impact is cause for alarm, particularly with the preservation of the sacredness of the Grove.²⁸

Planning

Given their expertise and implication, it is vital that senior staff and management of the Sacred Grove are more involved in decisions relating to the Festival and its planning. Currently it appears as though they are merely deployed as extra security during the Festival, despite their keen knowledge and understanding of the festival trends, and the impact of numbers of people on the site.

6. *Strengthened governance*

The Stakeholders Forum should be more tightly constituted, with strongly defined roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, whilst challenges exist with the holding of regular meetings, National Commission for Museums and Monuments or the Tourism Department within Osun State could be approached in order to facilitate these meetings which should be held at least quarterly. The complete participation of ALL stakeholders in the operation of the site and the complete transparency in which this is carried out is key to management of the Sacred Grove as a World Heritage property.

7. *Lack of resources for professional staff*

This includes access to computers, internet and scanning facilities in order that they can present themselves as part of an international community of heritage site practitioners, as well as more efficiently carrying out their main conservation duties.

8. *Reconsideration of the Conservation Management Plan 2015-2019*

All of the above issues need to be included in an augmented and strengthened Conservation Management plan. This needs to be based on the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

9. *Projected implementation of the Conservation Management Plan*

This is a critical component of the Plan, and should present clear timelines and goals for site management, which can be monitored at the National Commission for Museums and Monuments level.

²⁸ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7593852.stm>

10. *Lack of overall framework at a National and State level, for the development of a large scale framework approach for all projects which impact upon the site*

Despite the submission of the Conservation Management for the site, a more systematic, revised version must be prepared: This must include minimally an overall framework plan for future projects in the property, in the buffer zone and in the wider setting of the property, including the removal of the road, the car park, the artists village, and any accommodation required by the Conservator, for example. This plan, a transparent document prepared between the Osun State, and the National Commission for Museums and Monuments should then be submitted to the World Heritage Committee for approval and ratification. This is then used as a tool to inform the requirements for Heritage Impact Assessments for the individual components of the projects which must be carried out systematically for all future projects, and be fully approved by ICOMOS prior to work being approved. Spontaneous development is a threat to the site, and its status as a World Heritage property; planning should be systematic and considered. This plan should be incorporated into the Conservation Management Plan.

11. *Diversion of the road*

Although this forms part of the large scale framework plan as noted in item number 5, the gravity is such that the current impact of the road negatively affects the Sacred Grove as it currently stands.

12. *Completion of the Pavilion with urgency*

13. *Fencing the buffer zone*

The vulnerable areas of the buffer zone should be considered for fencing in order to prevent illegal development encroaching upon the site. This will also mitigate the risk of hunting and bush fires as a result of trespassing on the buffer zone and in the grove.

14. *Traditional knowledge systems and community involvement*

Given that quotidian use of the site is by devotees, in the absence of the ceremony and ritual associated with the August Festival and the participation by the Ataoja, the devotee community itself is a viable pressure group which not only uses the site constantly, but also has personal interest in the maintenance and continued operations on the site. Whilst the complexities of organising regular Stakeholders meetings are fraught with financial pressures, this is all more reason why they should happen and more regularly, in order to properly integrate the active user community in decisions relating to the running of the site.

6 ANNEXURES

6.1 Terms of reference

Terms of Reference

For

ICOMOS REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION TO OSUN-OSOGBO SACRED GROVE (NIGERIA)

Background

At its 39th session (Bonn 2015), the World Heritage Committee noted that the State Party intended to invite the ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission requested at the 38th session to the property during the year, in order to consider urban development, tourism management and the conservation of natural resources; and the Committee also suggested that the mission consider conservation approaches to the ongoing sculpture conservation.

The mission will be undertaken by Deborah Whelan, representing ICOMOS.

Osun-Osoybo Sacred Grove was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2005; this mission will be the first Reactive Monitoring mission to the property.

Scope of the Mission:

The mission should address the following points, and make relevant recommendations on:

Urban Development and Roads:

- Consider specific short- and mid-term measures that are being undertaken to curtail and control development in the setting of the property, and longer term planning controls;
- Review progress with planning and the agreed timescale for the closure of the tarmac road through the property, as requested at the time of inscription.

Tourism Management

- *Review the completed Tourism Plan for the property in particular with regard to how it controls visitor numbers and addresses pressure on the Grove at the Annual Festival, and the effectiveness of the defined spiritual and symbolic zones;*

Pollution of the Osun River:

- *Review progress with measures to improve the quality of river water as a result of cleaning, including its regularity, and also consider measures to stop pollution from urban areas reaching the river;*

Conservation of the forest:

- *Review progress with the plans outlined at the time of inscription to regenerate the 30% of primary forest that had been damaged by plantations and other agricultural activities and whether all or only some of this area has now been regenerated and/or re-planted.*

Conservation of the sculptures:

- Review work already undertaken on the conservation of the Ontoto market site and the Flying Tortoise sculptures; consider conservation approaches in place, including approaches to authenticity, materials, documentation, recording, and capacity building, and whether a Conservation Plan has been produced or should be produced;

Explore the most effective and appropriate ways to direct the International Assistance Request for conservation and management of the Osun Grove Sculptures, Busanyin, Idi-Oke, Idi Baba and Ajigun Shrines, and make recommendations to be taken into consideration by the next IAs' panel.

Management:

- Review the revised Conservation/Management Plan prepared in 2014, and reviewed in 2015, to cover the period between 2015-2019, and in particular consider the effectiveness of the management structure, and the adequacy of both human and financial resources and how the 5% of income generated from the Festival has benefitted conservation work in the property.

The State Party should facilitate necessary visits to key locations and meetings with the relevant institutions and communities involved in the management of the World Heritage property.

Mission Report

Based on the results of the above mentioned assessment and discussion with the State Party representatives, the mission will prepare a concise mission report in English on the findings and recommendations of this Reactive Monitoring Mission for review by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session (2016). The report should be completed no later than 6 weeks after the end of the field visit and follow the annexed standard format.

6.2 Itinerary and programme

TENTATIVE PROGRAMME FOR THE VISIT OF MRS. DEBORAH WHELAN FOR ICOMOS REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION TO OSUN-OSOGBO SCARED GROVE 24TH - 30TH OCTOBER, 2015

24TH October – ARRIVAL

- DD (MHS) leaves Abuja for Lagos by air.
- Arrival of Mrs. Deborah Whelan to Lagos to be received by DD (MHS)
- DD (MHS) checks Mrs. Deborah Whelan into a hotel

25TH October – ARRIVAL

- 9:00am – DD(MHS) and Mrs Deborah Whelan leave Lagos for Osogbo by road
- 12:00 noon – Arrival at Osogbo, received by Site Manager and check-in to the hotel
- 2:00pm – Lunch
- 4:00pm – Discussion with site Manager/DD(MHS)
- 7:00pm – Dinner

26TH October – MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- 8:00am – Breakfast
- 9:00am – Meeting with Ataoja (King of Osogbo) and other traditional leaders
- 11:00am – Visit to Grove / Osogbo town
- 2:00pm – Lunch
- 4:00pm – Discussions
- 7:00pm – Dinner

27TH October – MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- 8:00am – Breakfast
- 10:00am – Meeting with State Government Officials
- 12:00 noon – Visit to Grove / Osogbo town
- 2:00pm – Lunch
- 4:00pm – Discussions
- 7:00pm – Dinner

28TH October – MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

- 8:00am – Breakfast
- 10:00am – Meeting with The Osun Osogbo Management Committee
- 2:00pm – Lunch
- 4:00pm – Discussions
- 7:00pm – Dinner

29TH October – REVIEW SESSION

- 8:00am – Breakfast
- 10:00am – Meeting with DD/MHS, Site Manager and relevant Staff
- 12:00 noon – Tour of Osogbo Town (Nike Art Gallery, Jimoh Art Gallery etc.)
- 3:00pm – Lunch
- 5:00pm – Discussions
- 7:00pm – Dinner

30TH October – DEPARTURE

- 8:00 am – Breakfast
- 10:00 am – Discussion on International Assistance with Site Manager
- 12:00 noon - Mrs. Deborah Whelan and DD (MHS) leave for Lagos by road.

6.3 Composition of mission team

Dr. Deborah Whelan (representing ICOMOS)
Department of Architecture
Durban University of Technology
Steve Biko Campus
Durban
South Africa

6.4 Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove was adopted at the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (2012) with Decision 36COM 8E.

Brief synthesis

A century ago there were many sacred groves in Yorubaland: every town had one. Most of these groves have now been abandoned or have shrunk to quite small areas. Osun-Osogbo, in the heart of Osogbo, the capital of Osun State, founded some 400 years ago in southwest Nigeria, at a distance of 250 km from Lagos is the largest sacred grove to have survived and one that is still revered.

The dense forest of the Osun Sacred Grove is some of the last remnants of primary high forest in southern Nigeria. Through the forest meanders the river Osun, the spiritual abode of the river goddess Osun. Set within the forest sanctuary are forty shrines, sculptures and art works erected in honour of Osun and other Yoruba deities, many created in the past forty years, two palaces, five sacred places and nine worship points strung along the river banks with designated priests and priestesses.

The new art installed in the grove has also differentiated it from other groves: Osogbo is now unique in having a large component of 20th century sculpture created to reinforce the links between people and the Yoruba pantheon, and the way in which Yoruba towns linked their establishment and growth to the spirits of the forest.

The restoration of the grove by artists has given the grove a new importance: it has become a sacred place for the whole of Yorubaland and a symbol of identity for the wider Yoruba Diaspora.

The Grove is an active religious site where daily, weekly and monthly worship takes place. In addition, an annual processional festival to re-establish the mystic bonds between the goddess and the people of the town occurs every year over twelve days in July and August and thus sustains the living cultural traditions of the Yoruba people.

The Grove is also a natural herbal pharmacy containing over 400 species of plants, some endemic, of which more than 200 species are known for their medicinal uses.

Criterion (ii): The development of the Movement of New Sacred Artists and the absorption of Suzanne Wenger, an Austrian artist, into the Yoruba community have proved to be a fertile exchange of ideas that revived the sacred Osun Grove.

Criterion (iii): The Osun Sacred Grove is the largest and perhaps the only remaining example of a once widespread phenomenon that used to characterise every Yoruba settlement. It now represents Yoruba sacred Groves and their reflection of Yoruba cosmology.

Criterion (vi): The Osun Grove is a tangible expression of Yoruba divinatory and cosmological systems; its annual festival is a living thriving and evolving response to Yoruba beliefs in the bond between people, their ruler and the Osun goddess.

Integrity

The property encompasses almost the whole of the sacred grove and certainly all that has been restored over the forty years before inscription. Some of the recent sculptures are vulnerable to lack of regular maintenance which given their materials – cement, iron and mud – could lead to potentially difficult and expensive conservation problems.

The Grove is also vulnerable to over-visiting and visitor pressure that could erode the equilibrium between the natural aspects and people necessary to sustain the spiritual qualities of the site.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the Grove is related to its value as a sacred place. The sacred nature of places can only be continually reinforced if that sacredness is widely respected. Over the past forty years the new sculptures in the Grove have had the effect of reinforcing the special qualities of the Grove and giving it back its spiritual qualities that imbue it with high cultural value.

At the same time the new sculptures are part of a long and continuing tradition of sculptures created to reflect Yoruba cosmology. Although their form reflects a new stylistic departure, the works were not created to glorify the artists but rather through their giant size and intimidating shapes to re-establish

the sacredness of the Grove. The new sculptures have achieved their purpose and the Grove now has wider than local significance as a sacred place for the Yoruba people.

Protection and management requirements

The Grove was first declared a National Monument in 1965. This original designation was amended and expanded in 1992 to protect the entire 75 hectares. The Nigerian Cultural Policy of 1988 states that 'The State shall preserve as Monuments old city walls and gates, sites, palaces, shrines, public buildings, promote buildings of historical significance and monumental sculptures'. Under the Land Use Act of 1990 the Federal Government of Nigeria conferred trusteeship of the Grove to the Government of Osun State.

The Grove had a well-developed management plan covering the period 2004 – 2009 that was adopted by all stakeholders and the site enjoys a participatory management system. The Federal Government administers the site through a site manager of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments as empowered by Decree 77 of 1979. Osun State Government equally contributes to its protection and management through its respective Local Governments, Ministries and Parastatals, who are also empowered by the state edicts to manage state monuments.

The community's traditional responsibilities and cultural rites are exercised through the Ataoja (King) and his council - the Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council. There are traditional activities that have been used to protect the site from any form of threats such as traditional laws, myths, taboos and customs that forbid people from fishing, hunting, poaching, felling of trees and farming.

The traditional worshippers and devotees maintain the intangible heritage through spiritualism, worship and symbolism. There is a management committee made up of all cadres of stakeholders, that implements policies, actions and activities for the sustainable development of the site.

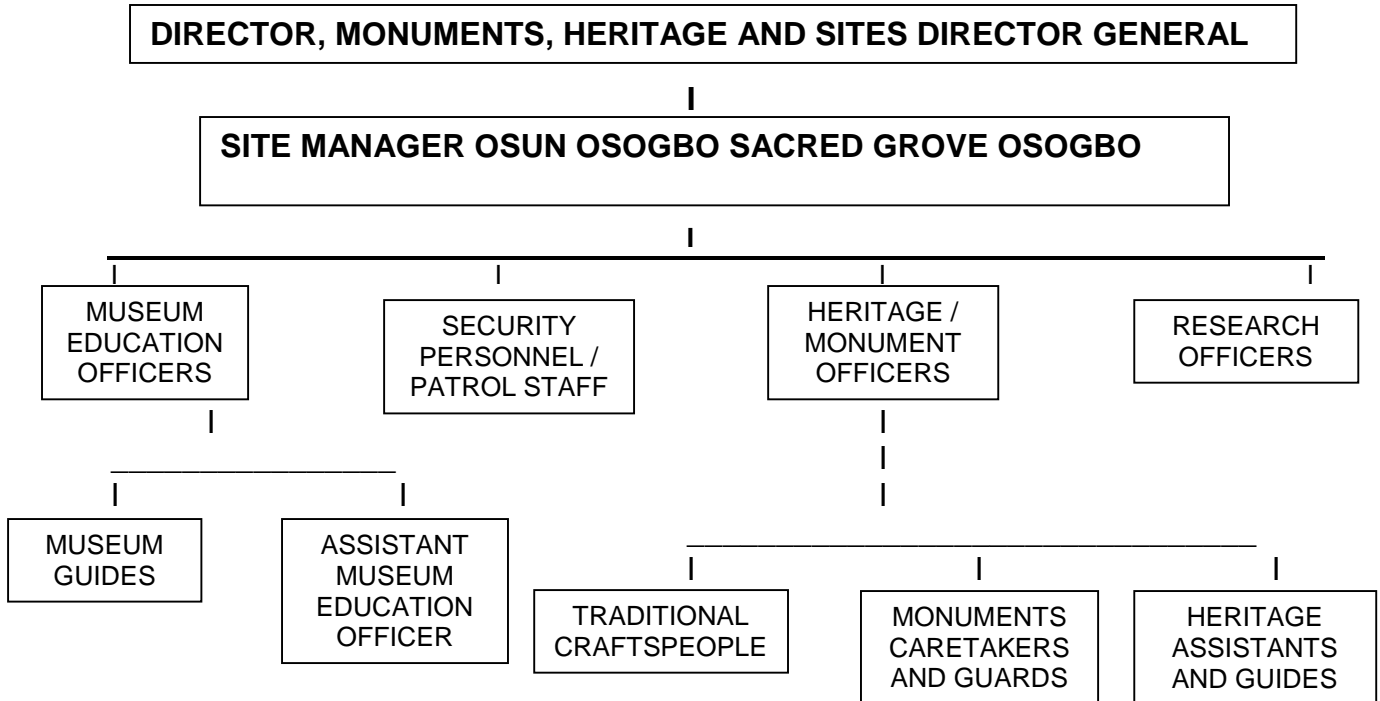
Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove is also part of National Tourism development Master Plan that was established with World Tourism Organization (WTO) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The annual Osun Osogbo festival will need to be better managed so that the site will no longer suffer from adverse impacts of tourism during the festival.

The Grove will also serve as a model of African heritage that preserves the tangible and intangible values of the Osogbo people in particular, and the entire Yoruba people. As a source of pride to them, the Grove will remain a living thriving heritage that has traditional landmarks and a veritable means of transfer of traditional religion, and indigenous knowledge systems, to African people in the Diaspora.

6.5 Management structure

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE SITE (as per Cultural Management Plan 2015-2015 p56)

Currently, the picture is thus:



6.6 Fundraising efforts for the sculpture repairs

Our Art, Our Heritage, Our Gift to the World

Save the Art in Nigeria's UNESCO World Heritage Site: The Osun Osogbo Grove

Campaign Launch: The Wheatbaker Hotel: Tuesday, November 24th, 2015

On November 24th patrons of the arts, corporate leaders and concerned citizens are invited to an evening event to build awareness and launch the Campaign to "Save the Art in Nigeria's UNESCO World Heritage Site", the Osun Osogbo Grove.

The evening will include:

A Photo Exhibition of the Sculptures in the Osun Osogbo Grove and Sale

A portion of the proceeds from the Sale will go towards the restoration of the sculptures in the UNESCO Osun Osogbo Grove.

The Photographic Exhibition will include:

- Archival photos of the art in the Osun Groves taken in the 1960's by "Time-Life", the book division of Time's cornerstone magazines: Time and Life founded in 1961. These photos are made available courtesy of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington D.C.
- Archival photos from the 1960's from Susanne Wenger's personal collection taken by Ulli Beier and the 1980's by Austrian photojournalist and author Gert Chesi.
- Contemporary photos of the art in the Osun Groves by photographer Adolphus Opara showing both the decay and the recent restoration of some of these magnificent works by the Susanne Wenger Adunni Olorisha Trust.

An Art Exhibition

The Exhibition will have two components:

1. For Display Only:

Paintings by Susanne Wenger including her last work of art, never before exhibited.

2. Exhibition and Sale

Works of art by the two Movements of Art founded in Osogbo in the 1960's: the New Sacred Art Movement founded by Susanne Wenger and The Osogbo School of Art founded by Ulli and Georgina Beier

Limited Edition prints of a selection of Susanne Wenger's paintings;

Limited edition archival photos from Susanne's personal collection;

Limited Edition photos of the art in the Groves by photographer, Adolphus Opara

An Art Auction

A limited number of works of art on the theme of Art inspired by Heritage will be sold by auction including a rare original work of art by Susanne Wenger.

Testimonials and Discussion

Key spokes people will say why it is important or The Panel will include artists and collectors as well as special invitee Helene Joubert of Director of the African Collection, the Quai Branly Museum, Paris, France's National Museum of Art and Culture.

Recognition of Donors

The evening will also provide the opportunity to recognize our Donor Partners as well as Sponsors of the event.

Sponsors

The Campaign to Save the Art in Nigeria's UNESCO World Heritage Site is seeking sponsors for the event including the Catalogue and print materials, Audio Visual, framing, prints of works of art, food and beverages.

Campaign Launch: Crowd Funding

In follow up to this event, the Trust will be launching a "Crowd Funding" Campaign in early in 2016. This internet based Campaign will seek a very broad base of support by individuals both within Nigeria and internationally. This campaign will serve both to raise funds and to raise awareness of the urgency to "Save the Art in the Osun Grove". It will also provide an opportunity to further recognize our Donors.

The Save the Art in Nigeria's UNESCO World Heritage site, the Osun Osogbo Grove is an initiative by the Susanne Wenger Adunni Olorisha Trust. The Trust has completed seven major restorations of the art in the Osun Groves and is the custodian of Susanne Wenger's House in Osogbo which also holds her personal art collection collected over nearly 60 years in Nigeria.

www.susanne Wenger-aot.org

6.7 Budgetary commitments, Governor of Osun (November 2015)

PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF CARPARK
COMPLEX AT OSUN-OSOGBO GROOVE, OSOGBO, STATE OF OSUN.

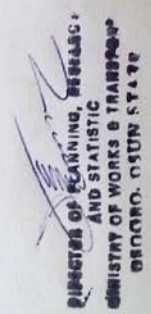
S/N	DESCRIPTION/WEEKS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	COMMENCEMENT DATE & PRACTICAL COMPLETION DATE										
1	MOBILIZATION	XX									
2	SITE CLEARANCE	XXX									
3	EXCAVATION TO REDUCE LEVEL		XXXXX								
4	LATERITE FILLING TO MAKE UP LEVEL			XXXXX							
5	INTERLOCKING CONCRETE PAVINGS / KERBS				XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX						
6	SOFT LANDSCAPING				XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX						
7	GATE HOUSE				XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX						
8	STONE PITCHING				XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX						
9	ART WORKS				XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX						
10	SITE CLEANING								XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		
11	DEMOBILIZATION									XXX	XX

[Signature]
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS
MINISTRY OF WORKS & TRANSPORT
OSOGBO, OSUN STATE

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS, MINISTRY OF WORKS, OSOGBO.

**PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF BISECTING ROAD
AT OSUN-OSOGBO GROOVE, OSOGBO, STATE OF OSUN.**

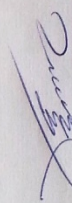
S/N	DESCRIPTION/MONTHS COMMENCEMENT DATE & PRACTICAL COMPLETION DATE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	MOBILIZATION	X									
2	SITE CLEARANCE	XXX									
3	SURVEY WORKS	XXX									
4	HYDRAULIC WORK (DRAINS/BRIDGE/CULVERT)	XX									
5	EARTHWORKS (FILLING AND CUTTING)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX									
6	PAVEMENT AND SURFACING (SUB BASE, STONE BASE AND ASPHALT)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX									
7	ROAD FURNITURE								XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		
8	SITE CLEANING									XXX	
9	DEMOBILIZATION										XX


**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, RESEARCH
AND STATISTICS**
MINISTRY OF WORKS & TRANSPORT
OSOGBO, OSUN STATE

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS, MINISTRY OF WORKS, OSOGBO.

**PROGRAMME OF WORKS FOR THE COMPETITION OF PAVILION AT
OSUN-OSOGBO GROOVE, OSOGBO, STATE OF OSUN.**

S/N	DESCRIPTION/WEEKS COMMENCEMENT DATE & PRACTICAL COMPLETION DATE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	MOBILIZATION	XX									
2	REMOVAL OF EXISTING ROOF COVERING AND CARCASS	XXX									
3	CONSTRUCTION OF ROOF COVERING, CARCASS AND THATCHED ROOF	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX									
4	CEILING FINISHES/ART WORK				XXXXXXXXXXXX						
5	WALL FINISHES/ART WORK							XXXXXXXXXXXX			
6	FLOOR FINISHES/ART WORK								XXXXXXXXXXXX		
7	SITE CLEANING									XXX	
8	DEMobilIZATION										XX


**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, RESEARCH &
STATISTICS
MINISTRY OF WORKS & TRANSPORT
OSOGBO, OSUN S.T.S.**

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS, MINISTRY OF WORKS, OSOGBO.