
Bassari Country (Senegal) No 1407

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Bassari Country: Bassari, Fula and Bedik Cultural Landscapes

Location

Kédougou Region
Salémata and Kédougou Departments
Republic of Senegal

Brief description

The cultural landscapes of Bassari, Fula and Bedik are located in south-eastern Senegal, close to the Mali and Guinean borders, in a hilly territory, formed by the northern foothills of the Fouta Djallon Massif. In this barely accessible area, but rich in natural resources and biodiversity, the Bassari, Fula and Bedik peoples settled and developed specific cultures, symbiotic with the surrounding natural environment. The cultural expressions of these populations exhibit original traits in agro-pastoral practices, in social, ritual and spiritual practices, and represent an outstanding, original response to natural environmental constraints and anthropic pressures.

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a serial nomination of three *sites*.

In terms of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (January 2008), Annex 3, this is also a *cultural landscape*.

1 Basic data

Included in the Tentative List

18 November 2005

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund for preparing the Nomination

None

Date received by the World Heritage Centre

27 January 2011

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations

ICOMOS consulted its International Scientific Committees on Earthen Architectural Heritage, Cultural Landscapes

and Intangible Cultural Heritage and several independent experts.

Literature consulted (selection)

Dupré, G., *Aspects techniques et sociaux de l'agriculture en pays bassari*, in *Cahiers du Centre de recherches anthropologiques*, XI Series, 8, 1-2, 1965, pp. 75-159.

Ferry, M.P., *Pour une histoire des Bédik (Sénégal oriental)*, in *Cahiers du Centre de recherches anthropologiques*, XII Series, 2 (1-2), 1967, pp. 125-148.

Gessain, M., *Âge et classe d'âge chez les Bassari du Sénégal oriental*, in *Bulletins et mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, n. 14 (1-2) (2002), 2002 (1-2).

Lestrangé (de), B., *La piste Etyolo-Seguekho : document pour servir à l'histoire des Bassari*, in *Cahiers du Centre de recherches anthropologiques*, XII Series, 2 (1-2), 1967, pp. 176-181.

Mauny, R., *Contribution à la préhistoire et à la protohistoire de la région de Kédougou (Sénégal Oriental)*, in *Cahiers du Centre de recherches anthropologiques*, XI Series, 5, 1-2, 1963, pp. 113-122.

Touré, O., *Espace pastoral et dynamiques foncières au Sénégal PRASET / PADLOS (CILSSS)*, Atelier régional sur le foncier pastoral, Espace pastoral et dynamiques foncières au Sénégal, 16 - 21 June 1997.

Technical Evaluation Mission

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the property from 25 September to 6 October 2011.

Additional information requested and received from the State Party

On 12 September 2011 ICOMOS sent a letter requiring additional information concerning the description of the major attributes of the nominated components, the existence of historic maps, the justification of the delimitation of the site, the results of archaeological research, the details of the justification of criterion (iii), the comparative analysis and the monitoring. The State Party responded on 20 October 2011 and this information is included under the relevant sections below.

On 12 December 2011, ICOMOS further requested the State Party to confirm that the protected status as an historic monument concerns all three components of the serial property and that the management plan is operational; to provide a timeline for the set up of the conservation and promotion services for the nominated serial property; and to put in place measures that forbid mining in the nominated property and its buffer zone. The State Party responded on 14 February 2012 and the information provided is comprised in the relevant sections of this report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

14 March 2012

2 The property

Description

The cultural landscapes of Bassari, Fula and Bedik – usually known as Bassari Country – are situated in the south-eastern hilly region of Senegal formed by the extensions of the Fouta Djallon spurs which straddle the Senegal – Guinea border area.

The landscape features two distinct geographic environments: the alluvial plain and the mountains. The average altitude of the plains varies between 100 and 200m above sea level, whilst the hilly zone ranges between 350 and 500m a.s.l. Thanks to its geomorphological features and climatic conditions, the Fouta Djallon Massif is known as the ‘water tower of West Africa’ as three of the major rivers of the continent, namely the head waters of the Niger, the Gambia and the Senegal, originate from there. Forests still occupy a large percentage of the region, the percentage of cultivated soil not exceeding 10%, although they are now threatened by erosion due to the need for arable land. The vegetation consists of typical species of the woody savannah, that is, Shea tree, Néré tree, Caicedrat tree, and bamboos. Further species are palm and oil palm trees, fan palm, raffia palm trees, acacias, tamarind trees, baobabs, and silk cotton trees; herbaceous species include oat grass.

This hilly area, relatively high and sheer and dotted with several natural caves, has offered an environment particularly advantageous for the establishment of different cultural and defensive clusters. Here the Bassari, and subsequently the Bedik peoples, withdrew following invasions by other peoples, e.g. the Fula from Fouta Djallon (repeatedly from the 11th century until the 19th and early 20th centuries AD), who reduced the territory under the control of autochthonous populations and frequently forced them to migrate. Today groups of sedentarized Fula people also live in the area.

The nominated serial property comprises three different geographic areas: the Bassari – Salémata area, the Bedik – Bandafassi area and the Fula – Dindéfello area, each exhibiting specific morphological traits, which are described below in detail. The three proposed areas exhibit mixed cultural traits, having the three ethno-cultural groups distributed in all the components, although with a different density, as clarified in the letter sent by the State Party on 20 October 2011 in response to the ICOMOS letter of 12 September 2011.

Bassari – Salémata area

The Salémata zone occupies 242 km² south of Salémata and is surrounded by a 1,634 km²-wide buffer zone. The hilly landscape is protected by the Ané Mountains, stretching 20 km from south west to north east. The area can be reached only via trails and barely navigable roads. Despite the importance of agriculture for the inhabitants, only 10% of the land is cultivated and a good percentage of forest survives in the area. Fields are organised in terraces and rice – paddies, with interspersed villages and

hamlets. The area is also rich in archaeological sites and caves.

The name Bassari comes from the Fula, but they refer to themselves as Belyians and to their language as *Oniyan*.

Until the last century, villages were grouped and located on rises, so as to control the plains, and consisted of round thatched huts congregated around a central space. Today dispersion and impermanence are the main traits of the Bassari settlements, the populations choosing to live close to the fields. Ancient villages are used only periodically for ritual ceremonies or festivals.

At the centre of each village was located a larger hut, called the *ambofor*, where the youths – male and female – lived together and where a number of ritual objects are conserved. Some twenty of these villages survive in the area.

Bedik – Bandafassi area

The Bandafassi area comprises 181 km², enclosed by a 657 km² buffer zone. It includes low mountains and valleys forming a fossil hydrographic network. Nine Bedik villages are located on the high ground.

These villages, or *i-kon*, are formed by dense groups of huts with steep thatched roofs. Due to their central role in Bedik life, the villages have strict organisation of spaces and each is split into two distinct parts: high and low village. This division must be respected by all the inhabitants. The organisation of the huts in the village reflects the family unit which is based on the *iyanga* (concession) in which, around each head of the family, gather his wives, their brothers, and his children with their brides. The everyday Bedik life, however, takes place in dispersed temporary hamlets and groups of huts, which can be moved according to necessity, whilst the *i-kon* is reserved for the feasts and rites and cannot be abandoned. Therefore, huts built in the ritual villages have earthen walls; in contrast, huts outside of the villages are made out of bamboo.

Fula – Dindéfello area

The nominated cultural area (79 km²) comprises a mountainous zone with a wide plateau on the top occupied by five villages and is further buffered by an additional 116 km² of hilly land. The nature of the soil gives rise to prominent geomorphological formations such as cliffs, waterfalls, and rock spurs covered in rich vegetation.

Cultural and social traits of the Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik

The economy of these groups has been for a long time based on subsistence farming and animal husbandry. Crop rotation and manuring continue to be practiced as well as communal sowing, weeding and harvesting. Mixed crops are cultivated in the same field and staggered harvesting is applied. Agriculture is

accompanied by the picking of wild fruit and leaves in most cases. Nobody owns the fields: those who cultivate them gain 'usufructuary' rights. Millet, corn, cassava, peanuts and fonyo are the most popular crops. Rules and traditional ritual practices are associated with cultivation, e.g. the ban on picking fruits before maturation, the use of masks to protect the harvest, the subdivision of the harvest between men and women and regulated consumption of certain products, e.g. honey, millet beer or mead.

To the Bassari/Beliyan and Bedik peoples, the time of life is articulated in different classes of age that correspond to increasing consciousness and responsibilities in the community. The Bassari envisage seven classes for both males and females, with specific trials for each group, while the Bedik have such divisions only for men. Each passage is marked by rituals, although the most important is the initiation phase, lasting an average of five years and accompanied by long and complex trials. However, this age-system has been subject to change and is losing importance in the social structure.

It is especially within the age-passage rites that dances and masks play an important role. Each mask comes out on specific occasions and animates a particular initiation spirit. They may be associated with very complex costumes but also have no material manifestation (i.e. their presence may be expressed only through sounds). Certain masks are more important than others and, in these cases, particular rules are applied, e.g. women cannot call them by their real name.

The Bassari and Bedik's metaphysical world is closely related to the natural environment, all living entities, humans, animals, plants, being part of one cosmogony. The natural environment is pervaded by supernatural forces and certain elements, e.g. monumental trees may embody the spirits of the ancestors. This is reflected in rites and habits as well as in the interpretation of diseases and illnesses.

Studies on the traditional languages of Senegal have led to the recognition and codification of the Bedik (*mënik*) and Bassari (*o-niyan*) languages in Senegal, amongst others, although thousands of Bassari *oniyan*-speaking people still also live in Guinea. Although codified officially, these languages are not taught at school. Given that the numbers of people that speak them are declining, these languages, along with others of the 'Tenda' group, are threatened with disappearance.

The Fula people are distinguished from the other two groups both for their economic base – they were mainly farmers and sheep farmers until, following migrations and prolonged contact with farmers-gatherers, today combine both livelihood styles – and religious habits, being Muslims. These differences are reflected in the structure of the settlements and their huts.

The Fula villages are dispersed in all the Bassari and Bedik territory, mainly in the plains where space for pasture is available. Each village may include various concessions, generally spread out in the plains and surrounded by enclosures, so as to confine the herds. For the Fula being Muslim, the focus of the village is always the mosque. Their huts may be rather large (up to 6m diameter) and generally have two entrances, one at the front and the second at the rear, connected to the washing space. The roofs of Fula huts extend out from the perimeter of the wall to reach the ground, thus creating an external gallery where small animals can find refuge during the rains.

History and development

Archaeological research has yielded some evidence of the human occupation of the region since the Neolithic age, in the forms of worked stones, pebble-tools, etc. As for proto-historic evidence, this consists mainly of sounding stones, and the backs of stone-seats. However, not much is known of the pre- and proto-history of the region, due to the still-limited archaeological investigations.

The current pattern of occupation of the nominated components and their buffer zones results from various factors that date back to different epochs. For its prehistory, the history of the region where the nominated property is located remains largely unknown. Apparently the Coniagui and the Bassari were settled in the region before the arrival of other populations, namely the Malinke, Sarakole, Fula, and Mandingos. Research has highlighted that the first documented population movement phenomenon dates back to the 11th – 13th centuries, when the Fula people and the Mandingos migrated towards the Fouta Djallon Massif. The first European written records date back to the 16th century, following the occupation of the western African coasts by the Portuguese who penetrated into the continent towards Mali. The Bassari/Beliyan are explicitly quoted in chronicles from the 16th - 17th centuries: ever since these centuries until the 20th century subsequent waves of migrations and invasions from other populations have affected the Bassari.

The Bedik people originated from the mixing of the Mandingos and the Bassari/Beliyan, following mandigo migrations in the 13th century. Today, the Bedik people constitute a small population, having in the past resided in a much larger area. They have also been affected by the expansion campaigns of other populations from Guinea and Mali, which forced them to find refuge in the Bandafassi region around the 13-14th centuries. The 19th century brought violent and well-remembered raids and invasions in the Bassari and Bedik-occupied areas, carried out by the Fula as part of their expansion policy, and carried out also through alliances with European colonizers.

The Fula population comes from areas nearby and presents different cultural traits, as they follow the Islamic religion and were originally farmers.

The first Fula migrations date back to the 11th century and continued until the 19th century and it has only been since the mid 20th century that the relationship between these populations has become peaceful. For these reasons, the actual settling of the Fula people in their villages was established after the 19th century wars.

3 Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and authenticity

Comparative analysis

Fusion with nature, vivacity and authenticity of cultural expressions, sacredness and places of resistance, have all been selected as reference criteria to carry out the comparative analysis. This has been developed by taking into consideration properties at the national, regional and international levels.

According to the State Party, the nominated serial property conveys, through particular attributes, both tangible and intangible, the relationships that the populations have with nature, which are distinct from those found in both the same geo-cultural region, e.g. in the territory occupied by Pygmy people, or at the international level, e.g. in Amazonian areas managed by indigenous communities.

Landscape and settlement arrangements, traditional architecture as well as intangible cultural manifestations, e.g. languages, festivals, rites, dances and associated items form a whole cultural system whose originality, vitality and rootedness in the populations is remarkable and comparable to those of isolated cultural landscapes such as the World Heritage Site Sukur Cultural Landscape (Nigeria, 1999, (iii), (v), (vi)) or the cultural landscape of the Mandara Mountains, in which can be found particular stone structures – the Diy-Gid-Biy of Mont Mandara –, included on the Tentative List of Cameroon.

The sacredness of the nominated cultural landscape finds expression in several places which are associated with spirits, legends, fetishes and stories that regulate the relationship of man with nature. In this regard, the nominated property may be compared with other properties already listed on the World Heritage List, e.g. the Matobo Hills (Zimbabwe, 2003, (iii), (v), (vi)), the Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests (Kenya, 2008, (iii), (v), (vi)), the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove (Nigeria, 2005, (ii), (iii), (vi)) as well as other sites, e.g. the Cliff of Bandiagara (Land of the Dogons) (Mali, 1989, (v) and (vii)). The nominated property does not suffer, as the other sites do, from strong external influences, thus allowing the continuity of traditional beliefs and habits.

The property also represents a place of resistance against forcible changes in cultural identity and enslavement. However, unlike other areas which were colonised by refugee populations, e.g. in Benin (Dassa and Savè Mountains), Togo, Nigeria, Mali, Cameroon (Tinguelin Plateau, Mandara Mountains), Sudan (Nuba Plateau), Ghana (Tongo Hills), the Bassari Country has retained its

cultural background and today makes manifest in its territorial organisation the various contributions of the different populations that have settled there throughout the centuries. Additionally, the nominated property retains a remarkable continuity and vitality in respect to those areas selected for comparison to other places, where much of the occupation evidence has disappeared.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis could have been more detailed and systematic in examining similarities and specificities of the nominated property in respect to those selected for comparison, with regard to both the physical outcomes and the intangible legacy of the interaction between men and nature and among different cultural groups. Additionally, the comparative analysis could have profited by the examination of the World Heritage property of Koutammakou, the Land of the Batammariba (Togo, 2004, (v), (vi)) or the Vernacular architecture and cultural landscape of Gberedou-Hamana, listed on the Tentative List of Guinea, considering the proximity of these countries and the values exhibited by both properties. Additionally, the nomination dossier could have addressed more specifically the comparison with Pygmy areas, by examining two properties currently included on the Tentative Lists of their respective countries - The Forest and the residential encampments related to AKA Pygmy (Central African Republic) and the Pygmy ecosystem and cultural landscape of the Minkébé Massif (Gabon).

Finally, the comparative analysis has not addressed specifically the rationale for the selection of the three areas. However, the nomination dossier clarifies in other paragraphs the reasons for the selection of these three components as the geo-cultural areas of the Bassari, Fula and Bedik peoples who, in this sub-region, have established a peculiar form of interaction and peaceful coexistence.

Notwithstanding these weaknesses, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis has contributed to shed light on the values and peculiarities of the nominated serial property.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis, despite certain weaknesses, justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

Justification of Outstanding Universal Value

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The Bassari Country is a multicultural landscape extremely well preserved, housing original and still lively autochthonous cultures.
- The Bassari Country exhibits features and traces of a still living culture of 'peaceful resistance' in the impregnable character of the landscape and in the archaeological vestiges of the caves used as refuges.

- A subtle adaptation of humans to the environment based on a respectful approach to the environment.
- A social system based on age classes which shapes the role of each individual in the communities and charges with progressive responsibilities the members of the groups, taking into consideration their personal attitudes, from an early age.

ICOMOS considers that the justification is appropriate and the nominated serial property conveys the sense of a cultural habitat that bears witness to the cultures of the Bassari/Beliyan, Bedik, and Fula populations and to the interaction between these groups. The landscape and the associated cultural expressions, in their vitality, form an exceptional testimony to the specific interaction that these people have established with the natural environment and their neighbours, so as to make wise use of the limited resources of the area.

The nominated property comprises three geographic areas in the south-eastern hills of Senegal where three different ethnic groups with peculiar social and political structures have settled. The serial approach is grounded on the historic, cultural and social links (mutual cooperation, intermarriages etc) among the three groups.

ICOMOS sent a letter to the State Party on 12 September 2011 requesting clarification concerning the rationale for the selection of the components. The State Party responded on 20 October 2011 explaining that the three components have been chosen on the basis of the representativeness of these three areas, in terms namely of their high degree of integrity and authenticity in respect of their surroundings and their ability to represent the interaction between the Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik and the environment and among themselves. Additionally it was also clarified that it was not possible to identify within the territory of this region of Senegal a cultural area specific to the Coniagui and the Dialonké.

ICOMOS considers that the serial approach is justified as it attests to a peculiar social and cultural interplay amongst three different ethnic groups who have found themselves sharing the same land and have reached a peaceful cohabitation following long periods of conflict and recurring violence.

ICOMOS takes note of the eventuality envisioned by the State Party to cooperate with the State Party of Guinea in order to extend the property, in case it is inscribed, to include further areas across the Senegal-Guinean border, where today are based other minority ethnic groups that played a part in the occupation and migration dynamics of the area, if these areas can demonstrate a significant contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value of the current nomination.

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

The State Party considers that the nominated components of the serial property have been selected on the basis of their remarkable integrity, which is expressed in the landscape and settlement arrangements, in the careful practices for utilising natural resources, and in the rich and vital cultural expressions of the various groups.

The nominated property comprises the hilly landscape where the Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik ethnic groups have settled along with their agro-pastoral territory and the places associated with their history and their religious beliefs.

In its letter sent on 12 September 2011, ICOMOS requested the State Party to better clarify the rationale for selecting the nominated components and delimiting their boundaries, and the reasons why areas associated with the Dialonké and the Coniagui have not been considered for inclusion.

The State Party responded on 20 October 2011 and explained that the three nominated components were selected and delimited on the grounds of the intention to nominate the areas of occupation of the Bassari, Fula and Bedik that are most representative of the traditional lifestyle of these populations. The State Party further explained that for reasons of territorial coherence and management, the State Party could not include, at the moment, areas associated with the Coniagui and the Dialonké. In fact, the first are concentrated in Guinea, whilst the second are based in a stretch of land located across the Tambacouda-Kédougou road axis, which, because of its importance and recent upgrading, attracts development pressures in the neighbouring areas.

ICOMOS considers that the three components of the nominated property include all elements necessary to make manifest its proposed Outstanding Universal Value. Their individual and comprehensive sizes are also convenient to represent adequately the cultural features and processes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

Each nominated component has been selected according to its cultural-geographic relevance and its individual integrity, attested to by the high landscape quality of each component and by the continual occupation of the area by the Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik peoples. Each nominated area contributes to make evident and reinforce the value of the whole system and the profound cultural connections between humans and nature.

Authenticity

The State Party considers that the cultural landscapes of Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik have, on the whole, retained a very high degree of authenticity, particularly in

the cultural continuity of the three groups that occupy the nominated area and buffer zone, in the deeply rooted links between these populations and their living environment, that produce a respectful attitude towards the natural resources so as to allow their regeneration, the high quality of the traditional architecture, the retention of traditional building techniques and materials as well as of crafts.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property satisfies the conditions of authenticity and that the attributes of the property convey in a credible manner the cultural values of the property. In particular, the results of archaeological and anthropological research testify to the early occupation of the area by the Bassari/Beliyan and then by the Bedik, as well as the successive invasions of the Fula, and confirm the function played by this cultural landscape in the survival of these peoples and the active role played by the rituals and other cultural expressions of the three ethnic groups.

ICOMOS observes that the preservation of the landscapes and their settlement pattern, along with the traditional architecture, the sacred forests, the sanctuaries etc bear credible witness to the whole socio-economic-cultural system and its associated management practices, based on beliefs, rites, sacred practices and rules, and an educational system, that are peculiar to the nominated property.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the conditions of integrity and authenticity have been met.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (iii), (v) and (vi).

Criterion (iii): bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the cultural landscape of the Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik peoples represents an exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition threatened with disappearance and based on the wise and careful use of the limited natural resources, achieved through a complex system of agricultural practices, cooperative work, beliefs, sacred rules, and rites related to life phases (birth, initiation stages, death), subsistence activities (sowing and harvesting time) and fertility. Bassari specific cultural traits have been adopted and hybridized by subsequent groups, thus ensuring a balanced coexistence among the different ethnic groups.

ICOMOS considers that the cultural expressions and manifestations of the Bassari, Fula and Bedik peoples demonstrate the complex interactions between environmental factors, social rules, beliefs and the sacred dimension to produce peculiar and remarkably preserved cultural traditions which also find expression in the physical layout and meaning of the landscape.

These traditions manifest rich mutual borrowings among the various populations and persist in a lively dynamic of transmission. In this regard, it is worth also noting that the traditional languages of Bassari/Beliyan – *Oniyan* – and of the Bedik – *Mënik* –, although still preserved, are nowadays spoken only by a small number of individuals, and UNESCO has listed *Oniyan* as a vulnerable language whilst *Mënik* is included amongst endangered tongues in the UNESCO Atlas of the World's languages in danger.

ICOMOS therefore encourages the State Party to undertake measures that support the revitalisation of these languages so as to retain the vehicle of the cultural system and cosmogony of these ethnic groups.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (v): be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the nominated components bear witness to a human traditional settlement that revolves around the respectful and wise utilisation of the limited natural resources so as to ensure their regeneration and the long term survival of the populations settled in the area.

All elements of the cultural expressions of these groups, i.e. the age classes, the sacred prohibitions concerning the consumption of certain products, and the festivals, concur to create a respectful attitude towards the environment.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property bears witness to a specific use of the land, particularly in the commuting practices and local nomadism between the ancient villages and the temporary, working villages imposed by traditional agricultural systems and by the scarce resources, and therefore represents an outstanding example of human interaction with a vulnerable environment.

ICOMOS however believes that the reference to initiation rites, festivals and the education system more appropriately concerns the discussion of criteria (iii) and (vi).

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (vi): be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.);

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the natural environment constitutes for the populations of this area a reference for the development of a way of life that allowed them to survive in the region despite the pressures of external populations and, at the same time, respectful of nature. The notion that humans form only one constituent of a complex landscape gives rise to a number of practices, rules, and rites that regulate the interaction between men and nature and, through a progressive initiation organised in steps based on age groups, the members of these groups are prepared so as to deal with their environment and take responsibility within the community.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property has been physically shaped by practices stemming from a peculiar conception of the world which gives to the natural environment and its resources a central role, charged with sacred meanings and inhabited by spiritual entities, which, altogether, contribute to building a holistic system in which natural components, manmade land arrangements, settlements, and intangible manifestations mutually reflect the 'being in the world' of the Bassari/Beliyan, Fula and Bedik peoples.

ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

ICOMOS considers that the serial approach is justified and ICOMOS considers that the selection of sites is appropriate.

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets criteria (iii), (v) and (vi) and conditions of authenticity and integrity and that Outstanding Universal Value has been demonstrated.

Description of the attributes

- The archaeological heritage attesting to the early occupation of the area since the Neolithic era and those which trace the continuity among the first occupiers and the Bassari/Beliyan;
- The archaeological heritage attesting to the ancient establishment of the Bassari/Beliyan and the Bedik in this region;
- Archaeological evidence is complemented by the results of cross research in ethnology, toponymy;
- The landscape arrangement pattern, the distribution of cultivated fields and pasture areas within the environment, subject to regulated harvesting practices;
- The settlement organisation and structure, with the peculiarities marking each ethnic group;
- The architectural forms, characterised by specific building materials and techniques, according to the function of the buildings, that exploit natural local resources;
- The places of worship, often associated with natural elements (trees, caves, forests etc) but also with manmade objects (ancient villages, megaliths etc);

- The intangible manifestations of the cultures of the Bassari, Fula and Bedik peoples, and namely:
 - The traditional farming practices;
 - The age-class-based educational system, with its initiation rites and trial periods, closely related to the knowledge and the experience of the natural forces as they manifest themselves in the landscape;
 - The oral transmission of traditional and secret knowledge;
 - The masks and associated rituals and costumes;
 - The traditional languages.

4 Factors affecting the property

Development pressures

The State Party reports that mining represents one among the major factors affecting south-east Senegal, although none of the nominated components of the serial property includes mines. Only one, now abandoned, falls within the boundaries of the buffer zone.

Whilst the contact with mainstream religions has not modified the lifestyle and traditional concepts of the world of the Bassari and the Bedik peoples, signs of contact with external groups and 'modernity' may be found in the adoption of 'western' clothes.

ICOMOS expresses its concerns with regard to possible mining exploitation within the nominated property and its buffer zone, considering the richness in ores of Senegal and of this specific area. Mining potential creates a significant pressure that is difficult to counteract and control, considering the huge economic interests that it moves. ICOMOS raised this issue in its letter dated 12 December 2011.

On 14 February 2012, the State Party responded that existing legal provisions prevent construction and any other easements without prior authorisation of the competent administrative authority. Additionally, the State Party has expressly included a clause in the Decree 27.1.2012 n. 000717 stating that no authorisation for the exploitation of natural resources, for construction or spatial planning may be issued, within the limits of the safeguarded sectors, without the advice of the Committee for Management of the Bassari Country.

In this regard, ICOMOS observes that this provision does not clarify whether the 'safeguarded sectors' also include the buffer zone or just the nominated components. Additionally, ICOMOS observes that the phrasing of the Decree does not make clear whether it is compulsory to follow the Committee's advice.

ICOMOS further recalls paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

ICOMOS further considers that the implementation of development programmes, necessary to sustain the

populations, requires special attention to avoid possible destructive actions. The building of infrastructure (roads, schools, health centres, electricity and phone pylons) needs to be planned in a participatory framework that includes all stakeholders and relevant subjects in the establishment of the management plan. Furthermore, any project should be communicated to the Department responsible for the protection of protected cultural sites, in compliance with the laws that govern the protection of registered monuments.

ICOMOS finally observes that external influences and contacts with 'modern lifestyle' have already produced signs of an initial weakening of the age-based educational system.

Tourism pressures

According to the State Party, tourism is still too small an industry to represent a threat at the moment, although two major tourism-related concerns need to be addressed rapidly. The first is in regard to the illicit traffic of ethnographic objects that are sold for small sums to collectors or tourists, which causes the loss of important items that could enrich national public collections and contain an important informative potential. The second major threat concerns the alteration of the landscape and of the architectural styles and methods, due to the need for accommodation and tourism facilities. The State Party has considered the possibility of creating an interpretation village to prevent these modifications along with a binding landscape charter to regulate new architectural work.

ICOMOS believes that, in addition to the concerns expressed by the State Party, tourism may impact adversely on the traditional lifestyle and social organisation especially of the Bassari and Bedik populations.

ICOMOS however welcomes the strategy envisioned by the State Party and suggests that the guidelines be implemented as soon as possible and coupled with incentives.

Environmental pressures

According to the State Party, pressures on the natural environment are caused by the high demand of certain resources at national and international level, such as protected wood species.

Fire is also a considerable threat to the environment. Aside from controlled fires that are part of the agricultural practices, other, spontaneous ones frequently devastate the savannah and threaten the species living therein. The State Party recognises the need to address these issues through specific management measures, e.g., preventive fires or fire-barriers should be envisioned in sensitive areas.

The State Party, however, observes also that the environment poses constraints on the populations e.g., in the scarcity of water, in the difficulty of accessing the area,

especially in certain seasons, and the limited resources. All this makes it difficult to make a living that is only based on endogenous resources. This forces the Bassari into seasonal migrations to towns so as to supplement their economic base with salaried work. The phenomenon is increasing, although still periodical.

ICOMOS considers that poaching and logging represents a further prominent threat to the natural resources of the area, as well as the uncontrolled harvesting of palm wine using methods that cause the death of the trees and threaten the survival of this species.

In this regard, ICOMOS recommends that strict measures be put in place to effectively counteract fire, arson, poaching and careless palm wine harvesting.

ICOMOS further considers that the scarcity of water represents an environmental constraint that becomes a pressure on the local communities. Therefore, ICOMOS recommends that a solution be found in the medium term for the water supply of the villages, especially those located on the Bandafassi and Ethiole Plateaux, so as to improve the quality of life of the communities and of women, who are daily obliged to undertake long walks to supply water to the villages.

Natural disasters

The State Party has not addressed this issue in the nomination dossier. ICOMOS notes that, with respect to the environment and the climate of the area, the most likely disasters are fire and floods.

Impact of climate change

The State Party has not addressed in the nomination dossier the effects of climate change on the nominated property.

However, ICOMOS observes that research and scenario projections of the impact of climate change in Senegal foresee a temperature increase and a decrease in rainfall. In northern Senegal reduction in fertility of the soil and desertification phenomena have already been identified as possibly associated with climate change. A lowered fertility of the land may induce permanent population migrations. On the other hand, on the coast, the temperature increase registered in the last decades has already caused the sea level to rise and the retreat of the coastline, with disruptive consequences on local communities. Research has also explored the relationship between temperature increase and growing vulnerability of forests.

ICOMOS considers that the main threats to the property are mining exploitation, the uncontrolled development of infrastructures, the weakening of traditional lifestyles, culture and land management, and permanent population migration. With regard to the measures in place to prevent mining exploitation, ICOMOS requests the State Party to confirm that the 'safeguarded sectors' mentioned in the letter of 14 February 2012 include both

the nominated property and the buffer zone and that the advice of the Committee for Management of the Bassari Country is suspensive.

5 Protection, conservation and management

Boundaries of the nominated property and buffer zone

The boundaries of the three nominated components and their respective buffer zones coincide with natural (mountain ranges, rivers, waterstreams etc), man-made (roads, trails, etc) and administrative (state borders) limits.

With regard to the clear identification of the boundaries of the property components, ICOMOS observes that the cartographic documentation provided by the State Party is not uniform and in certain instances it poses problems of readability and consistency.

In the Bassari – Salémata area live some 8,856 people, in the Bedik – Bandafassi component reside 3,177 people, whilst in the Fula – Dindéfello area 2,226 people are settled. The residents in the buffer zones altogether amount to 9,569 individuals.

ICOMOS recommends that the State Party provide a complete cartography at the appropriate scale (at least 1:50.000) identifying and mapping heritage components and manifestations of the nominated property, with particular regard to those related to the attributes of its Outstanding Universal Value, as a basis for conservation activities and monitoring.

ICOMOS considers that the rationale for the selection of the component parts of the nominated property and for delimiting their boundaries and buffer zones is on the whole understandable and adequate to represent the values of the property. The buffer zone is sufficiently extended to provide an effective additional layer of protection, considering the cultural processes and pressures in the area.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and of its buffer zone are adequate.

Ownership

The land comprised in the nominated property is in a common domain, and can be used by each member of the communities.

Protection

Legal Protection

The State Party reports that the nominated property is formally protected by the Decree n. 05.2006* 002711/MCPHC/DPC (letter prot. n. 008836, dated

12.9.2007), which establishes the protection of the following areas as monuments of history:

- Tata de Bademba in the Tenda region;
- Falls of Dindéfello, natural site;
- Site of Iwol, Bandafassi, on the mountain "Place of silence";
- Assirik Mountains in the National Park of Niokolo Koba;
- Bassari Country.

ICOMOS observes that the protection decree does not specify whether the Bassari Country mentioned in it also comprises the Bandafassi and Dindéfello areas and that no specific maps with the boundaries of the protected areas have been provided by the State Party, therefore it is not possible to understand whether all nominated components are covered by a formal layer of protection.

Because of this ambiguity, ICOMOS sent a letter on 12 December 2011 to the State Party requiring it to confirm that all the component parts of the series are covered by a formal layer of protection and not just the Bassari Country component.

The State Party replied on 14 February 2012 informing that all the component parts of the serial nomination are formally protected by the decree 29.4.2011 N. 004510, a copy of which was also provided.

ICOMOS welcomes this information although further notes that the documentation transmitted does not include a map delimiting the exact perimeter of the protected landscapes according to the national legislation. In this regard, ICOMOS considers it advisable that a map showing the boundaries of the areas included under the protection of the Ministerial decree N. 004510 be provided.

Traditional Protection

According to the State Party, the protection of the cultural and natural values of this vast territory is guaranteed by the populations living in the area and its traditional social structures, which have maintained their stability along the centuries and have enabled the conservation of this area so far.

The State Party recognises that inscription on the World Heritage List might bring additional exposure to this area and a subsequent increase in tourism, which would require the establishment of measures that would help the traditional inhabitants to face the impact of external influences and avoid changes in lifestyle.

ICOMOS confirms the importance and effectiveness of the traditional local methods of protection and management, consisting of the combination of subsistence agricultural practices and animal husbandry, combined with the 'cultivation' of natural resources, all sustained by traditional, social and ritual practices and beliefs, e.g. the rotation of crops, seasonal fires, prohibitions in the use of

natural resources, the age-class -based education system with its initiation rites and trial period in the natural environment, and the sacredness of nature.

ICOMOS agrees that the increase of tourism and related activities (infrastructure, tourism facilities, changes in the economic base etc) represents a probable threat to the preservation of both the physical and cultural environment and requires a strengthening of the protection measures and a strategy to sustain the traditional economic activities, and social and ritual practices, so as to reinforce the resilience of local communities; this strategy should have the active involvement of national and local authorities, local populations, as well as tour operators and economic stakeholders.

Effectiveness of protection measures

According to the State Party the traditional measures for the protection and management of the property have enabled its conservation until today.

These are complemented by the action of the Directorate for the Cultural Heritage (DCP), the national institution in charge of the protection of cultural heritage, which supports local initiatives of conservation and enhancement of the cultural expressions of the country. In this area, the DCP supports the project for the development of the communitarian village of Bandafassi.

The Region of Kédougou and the Departments of Salémata and Kédougou have undergone a recent reform (2008) that has given more power to the Region and better control on the development of the area, through, for example, the institution of new rural communities, among which are Ethiolo, Dar Salam, and Ninéféscha in the nominated area.

Further institutions and related services have been decentralised, e.g., the Regional Service for Local Development, the Regional Inspectorate of Waters and Forests, the Service for the Environment, the Department Service for Rural Development, the Regional Service for Community Development, the Antenna of the Crafts Chamber. The Local Communities have been strengthened and, beyond the promotion of economic, social, and cultural development have received further responsibilities in the following areas: environment and natural resource management, health and social care, education, sports and youth, culture, territorial management, urban planning and habitat. The Rural Communities (Ethiolo, Dar Salam, Dindéfello) aggregate villages from the same area; they have financial autonomy and their competences concern education, health, environment and territorial planning.

Several NGOs also contribute to the protection and management of the nominated property, among which the following are noteworthy: the Association of Ethnic Minorities (AME), which sensitises the local population to their own cultural legacy and coordinates festivals; the Association for the Development of Bassari Country

(ADPBS), which aims to reinforce the solidarity among the members of the community, participates in the civic education of the populations and contributes to the economic revitalisation of the population.

Amongst international organisations, the UNESCO Regional Bureau in Dakar represents an important institutional resource for the African Region and certainly for Senegal.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the legal protection in place is adequate. However ICOMOS advises that a map showing the boundaries of the areas included under the protection of the Ministerial decree N. 004510 should be provided. ICOMOS further considers that the combination of institutional and traditional protective measures for the property is adequate but underlines the need for a reinforcement of these measures within a comprehensive strategy, integrated into the management plan, so as to face the threats to the property discussed in previous sections. A strong coordination of all projects, activities and actions undertaken in the area by several distinct bodies is needed to ensure their effectiveness. Specific measures to prevent the weakening of traditional protection and illicit traffic of cultural goods should also be rapidly envisioned and implemented.

Conservation

Inventories, recording, research

The site has been studied extensively in the past decades and this has resulted in a plethora of publications. The State Party mentions especially anthropological, ethnological and archaeological research, as well as studies carried out by architects and scholars from other fields. The State Party, however, underlines the importance of continuing and deepening this research to improve the knowledge of these populations and explore fully the rich archaeological potential of the area.

ICOMOS agrees with the State Party that systematic archaeological research will allow clarification of the history of the occupation of the area, since pre-historic and proto-historic times.

Although recognising the difficulty of undertaking these studies, ICOMOS considers that the documentation of traditional knowledge and associated places would be advisable, so as to understand better how they have been maintained up until now, and how to sustain their conservation. ICOMOS therefore recommends that information concerning this type of heritage also be incorporated into the inventories and mapping of the heritage components and manifestations.

Present state of conservation

The State Party holds that the nominated property has been preserved in a very good state of conservation, unlike other areas of Senegal, where external influences

have contaminated, if not disrupted, the traditional way of life. Here the vivacity of the cultures attests to the preservation of the local traditions, even in the last four decades, when change has affected many other places that, until the 1970s, remained intact. The landscape, the architecture, the sacred sites, the traditions and the intangible heritage, e.g., rituals, festivals, initiation ceremonies, medicine etc have been actively maintained.

ICOMOS confirms that the property and its tangible and intangible attributes are in a good state of conservation; however, they are prone to different threats, namely depopulation, exogenous development, excessive natural resource exploitation, and tourism. The latter especially may affect the intangible heritage and signs of 'touristification' of certain original traditions may already be detected.

ICOMOS recommends a special vigilance towards certain threats that do not seem to have been addressed by specific measures, namely:

- the weakening of the traditional management;
- the illicit traffic of cultural heritage items, the impact of which could be reduced by developing cultural banks, as in Mali;
- mining exploitation;
- poaching and logging.

Active Conservation measures

According to the State Party, the traditional management and protection measures have allowed the conservation of the nominated components of the property. These measures have been accompanied and reinforced by actions undertaken both by national and local government and by several NGOs operating in the area. The NGOs operate with two different strategies: both consider the area and their inhabitants in a comprehensive manner through sensitization, education, revenue-generating activities and implementing sectorial measures, e.g., undertaking conservation and management actions for natural and cultural resources, establishing community reserves, sustaining the organisation of festivals, implementing the creation of the interpretation village in Bandafassi, to counteract poverty through culture-based income-generating activities and jobs. A national programme for fighting against poverty, sustaining and developing the economy and endogenous development has been initiated. It is known under the acronym MDG-F and focuses on the promotion of traditional handicrafts and cultural industries.

ICOMOS supports this variegated and holistic approach to ensuring the conservation of this cultural landscape in the long term.

However, ICOMOS again stresses the importance of coordinating all activities, projects and programmes within the framework of a management plan.

Maintenance

The maintenance of the nominated property and of its components is guaranteed by a number of traditional practices, including the traditional periodic maintenance of the architecture, the rotation of crops, and the regulated withdrawal of natural resources to ensure their renewal. This activity is organised by authorities selected within the community according to principles of social organisation specific to cultural groups residing in the area.

Effectiveness of conservation measures

ICOMOS recognises the effectiveness of traditional measures of conservation, sustained also by a variety of actions implemented by a number of bodies: public administrations, institutions, local associations, NGOs and international organisations related to the UN.

ICOMOS notes that many projects and activities have been undertaken by different bodies and recommends the development of a strategy for conservation which is integrated into the Management Plan and coordinates all the different projects, so as to fully exploit their potential.

ICOMOS further considers that the conservation of the attributes of the nominated property should be sustained through an improved and deepened knowledge, based on a thorough inventory of all cultural heritage components and manifestations.

ICOMOS sent a letter on 12 December 2011 to the State Party requesting the setting up of a timetable for the development of a conservation and promotion service for the property.

The State party responded on 14 February 2012 informing that the conservation and promotion service has been established in Bandafassi where the building of an interpretation centre is planned and that the project for this interpretation village is expected to commence in March 2012.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the conservation of the nominated property is on the whole adequate, although a number of threats could affect in the medium to long-term the values of the nominated property. ICOMOS recognizes the range of actions, projects and programmes both in the field of conservation and development activated by several bodies but it nevertheless recommends that the State Party develop a strategy for conservation based on all the different projects and to integrate this strategy in the management plan.

Management

Management structures and processes, including traditional management processes

The State Party underlines the central role of the local communities in the conservation of the nominated

property. However, in conformity with the decree that establishes formal protection of the nominated property (Decree n. 05.2006* 002711/MCPHC/DPC), the conservation and monitoring of the nominated property are a responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and of Protected Historic Heritage which can ask for the cooperation of the local and municipal authorities to carry out this task. According to the legislation in force, any modification to protected properties is subject to the authorisation of the Ministry of Culture.

Additionally, several institutions, local administrations, communities and organisations cooperate in the conservation and the management of the nominated property and have developed a number of projects, programmes and actions in different sectors as well as transversal strategies, as mentioned in the Conservation section.

In its letter sent on 12 December 2011, ICOMOS requested the State Party to provide a time plan for the implementation of the management structure.

The State Party responded on 14 February 2012 informing that a Decree has been issued on 27 January 2012 n. 000717 that establishes the Committee for the Management and the Safeguard of the Bassari Country and defines its composition and its function. The service will be established in Bandafassi, where the "interpretation village" is planned to be developed and completed by September 2012.

Additionally ICOMOS notes that in article 2 of the Decree the Management Committee for the Saloum Delta is mentioned. This appears to be a factual error that, however, needs to be amended by the State Party.

ICOMOS also recommends that the role of each party and its respective tasks within the management framework be formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding.

Policy framework: management plans and arrangements, including visitor management and presentation

The document entitled Management Plan 2011-2015 presents the framework of the Plan, its underlying vision, the main objectives and action lines and the 2011-2015 Action Plan. The strategic goals include: the preservation and promotion of the originality of the local cultures (actions comprise: preserve the quality of architecture and the richness of landscapes; preserve the richness and diversity of cultural expressions; promote the cultural heritage); the preservation of natural heritage (actions include: preserve the fauna and flora; encourage ecotourism); improvement of the quality of life (actions comprise: reinforce the local production supply chain; promote responsible tourism); inclusion of local populations in the management and the development of the territory (actions include: set up an operational management structure).

The Management Plan complements other existing specific plans, namely:

- The local plans for the development of the concerned communities;
- The Project MDG–F Culture and Development "Promote the cultural industries and Initiatives in Senegal (Bassari Country and Saloum Delta);
- The Action Plan of the association for the development of Bassari Country;
- The national programme of local development devoted to the realisation of socio-economic infrastructures and the implementation of capacity building programmes;
- The five-year programme of Wula Nafaa, a structure of USAID, which intervenes in the management of natural resources;
- The different action plans of decentralised national structures, e.g. the development plans of the Regional Agency for Development (ARD).

In its letter of 12 December 2011, ICOMOS asked the State Party for confirmation that the management plan is being implemented.

The State Party informed on 14 February 2012 that the Safeguard and Management Committee for the nominated property has been formally established on 27 January 2012 by the decree n. 000717. The Committee that is responsible for the implementation of the management plan of the property was formally established and was expected to begin its work within a few weeks. Information was also provided about a workshop of a technical committee that was held in Kédougou between 17 and 21 January 2012.

ICOMOS notes that the letter from the State Party does not clarify whether the management plan has been enforced and implemented. Additionally, it is not clear whether the technical committee mentioned in the Annex 2 to the letter sent by the State Party on 14 February 2012 coincides with the Management Committee or is a different body.

Risk preparedness

This point has not been addressed specifically by the State Party. However, at least, fire prevention measures have been envisaged.

Involvement of the local communities

Communities are well engaged in the conservation and management of the property, as the vitality of traditional management practices within the nominated property confirms.

According to the State Party the Management Plan has been developed with the full participation of the local and national administrations as well as local communities.

With the aim of ensuring a good involvement of local communities and preserving the traditional management system, ICOMOS recommends that the role of traditional authorities in the management process be recognised in the new management system that will be set up.

Additionally, ICOMOS recommends that the actions of traditional conservation implemented by local communities, which have allowed the survival of the nominated property so far, be sustained and facilitated.

ICOMOS finally recommends that the Management Plan be enforced and implemented as soon as possible.

Resources, including staffing levels, expertise and training

The State Party considers that the primary guardians of the nominated property are the populations that live within it. Besides these, national and local institutions and administrations as well as NGOs and international organisations represent resources in terms of expertise and financial engagement through their projects.

While recognising the centrality of the local communities for the long term conservation and management of the nominated property, ICOMOS considers that the establishment of a permanent staff, members of which could be identified within the local communities and supported by the decentralised regional organisations and the Department for Cultural Heritage, should be envisioned to sustain conservation and monitoring activities carried out according to traditional management practices.

Equally, ICOMOS notes that it would be useful that a chart describing the projects, their funding amount and provenance, and their timeline be developed as a strategic tool for management, priority-setting and monitoring purposes.

Effectiveness of current management

The State party has explained that the management of the nominated property takes place through a continuous process of negotiation and participation that sees the involvement of the local communities and national and local institutions.

ICOMOS recognises the effectiveness of the management as it has been conducted so far.

However, ICOMOS considers that a number of measures should be put in place, which would strengthen the effectiveness of the management in the long term.

In particular, ICOMOS observes that, to achieve the full effectiveness of the management strategy, all relevant parties, and in particular traditional authorities, be involved in the management process and the Management Plan should become the coordination instrument of all these measures and of the planning documents. Existing measures should be related to the planned actions in the

Action Plan prepared by the State Party and included in the Management Plan document. In this way objectives and associated actions, be they implemented, planned or envisioned, may be framed and prioritized and their implementation monitored.

Secondly, considering the conspicuous role played by the Regional Agency for Development (ARD), ICOMOS notes that effective value-based management could only be effectively achieved if the Ministry of Culture and the ARD cooperate closely at the planning stage of large projects.

Furthermore, ICOMOS suggests that the Project MDG-F be continued and managed through a decentralised structure, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture, based in the nominated property so as to ensure a full participatory process.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that special attention is needed to establish a synergy among all relevant parties, particularly between the local and traditional authorities. ICOMOS considers that the management system and structure for the property are adequate. However ICOMOS recommends that the role of each party and body and their respective tasks within the management framework be formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding. ICOMOS further recommends that close cooperation be established between the Ministry of Culture and the Regional Development Agency. Furthermore, ICOMOS recommends that the management plan be enforced and implemented as soon as possible.

6 Monitoring

The State Party has identified a number of indicators that would allow monitoring of the state of conservation of the major attributes of the nominated property, namely the natural environment, traditional know-how and the intangible heritage.

However, the State Party underlines that the local communities have been able to preserve for centuries the values of the property through traditional procedures and practices.

The State Party further notes that an excessively formalised form of monitoring would possibly negatively affect the traditional management methods by making the local communities feel divested of their authority.

ICOMOS considers that the indicators identified by the State Party appear adequate, although they should be integrated with indicators concerning the built environment, the humanised landscape and development.

ICOMOS further believes that, whilst attention should be given to the involvement of the local communities in monitoring, there is a need to integrate the local-based

monitoring with tools for data management that may require specific technical expertise.

ICOMOS then notes that it would be advisable that the sources of information, the bodies responsible for data gathering and storage, be identified and reported.

ICOMOS recommends that a detailed inventory of the attributes of the property be elaborated to create a baseline for the monitoring exercise and that the monitoring exercise be implemented as soon as possible.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the monitoring system for the nominated property is on the whole adequate. Nevertheless ICOMOS recommends that this system be strengthened by the identification of the bodies responsible for the data management and the sources of information for the indicators, and that the monitoring exercise is implemented without delay.

7 Conclusions

Thanks to its geomorphology, vegetation, landscape layout and physical features as well as the intangible cultural expressions of the populations residing therein, closely associated with the manifestations of the natural environment, the Bassari Country represents outstandingly the original interaction between human groups and the natural environment and among populations of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

However, a number of issues need to be addressed by the State Party to ensure that the protection, conservation and appropriate management of the property compatible with its values, be adequate and effective in the medium and long term.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

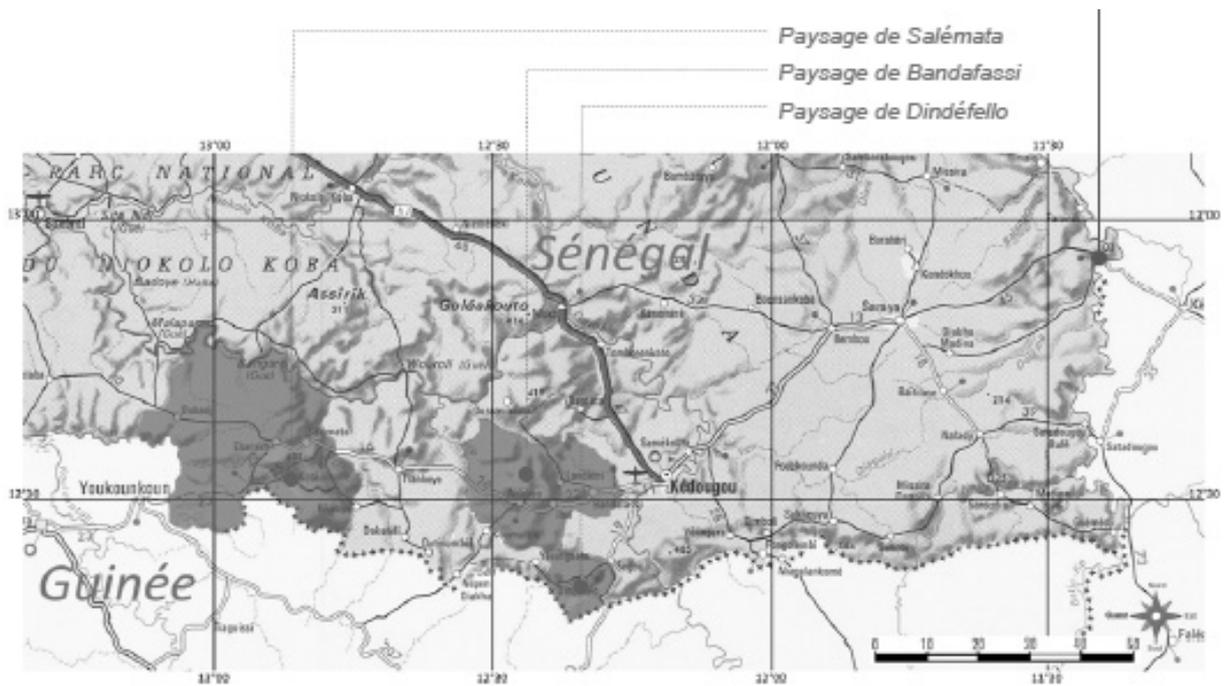
ICOMOS recommends that the nomination of Bassari Country: Bassari, Fula and Bedik Cultural Landscapes, Republic of Senegal, be **referred back** to the State Party in order to allow it to:

- Enforce and implement the management plan;
- With regard to the measures in place to prevent mining exploitation, confirm that the 'safeguarded sectors' mentioned in the letter of 14 February 2012 include both the nominated property and the buffer zone and that the advice of the Committee for Management of the Bassari Country is suspensive.

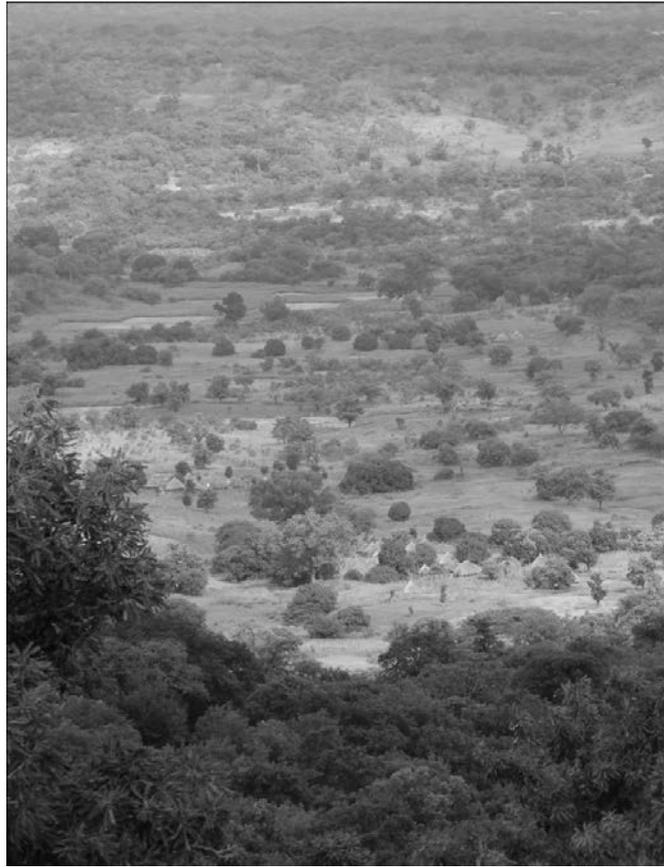
ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- Putting in place strict measures to effectively counteract fire, arson, poaching, illicit logging and traffic of cultural items;

- Providing a map showing the boundaries of the areas included under the protection of the Ministerial decree N. 004510;
- Developing and providing a complete cartography at the appropriate scale including inventories of heritage resources related to the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property, for conservation and monitoring purposes;
- Developing a strategy for conservation based on all different projects and integrating it in the management plan;
- Elaborating a solution in the medium term for the water supply of the villages, especially those located on the Bandafassi and Ethiolo Plateaux; so as to improve the quality of life of the population and help them to continue their lives within the nominated property;
- Formalising the management structure, the role of each party and body and their tasks through a Memorandum of Understanding;
- Sustaining and facilitating the traditional conservation actions which have allowed the survival of the nominated property;
- Developing cultural banks so as to reduce the impact of illicit traffic of cultural items;
- Reinforcing the monitoring system on the basis of a cartographic inventory and implementing it as soon as possible.



Map showing the boundaries of the nominated properties



The Bassari landscape



The Bedik landscape



The Fula landscape



Celebration dance with the "chameleon" mask