

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

IUCN TECHNICAL REVIEW

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER AND NAME 199 SELOUS GAME RESERVE

LOCATION: Between latitudes 7° 17' and 10° 15' S and longitudes 36° 04' and 38° 46' E, in southeast Tanzania.

NOMINATED BY: The Wildlife Division
Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism

4. DOCUMENTATION:

- (i) Nomination form
- (ii) Supplementary documentation (IUCN)
 - a) Description and Reports of IUCN/WWF Project 1930: Antipoaching equipment for the Selous and Rungwa Game Reserves (Tanzania).
 - b) Matthiessen, Peter. 1981. Sand Rivers. Collins, London. 213 pp.
 - c) Douglas-Hamilton, I. 1976: Selous Elephant and Wildlife Survey DANIDA/IUCN, 70 pp.
 - d) Consultations: G.K. Makumbule, Game Division, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism; Ian R. Grimwood, plus cutting from *Africana*, December 1981 "Focus on the Selous"

5. BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

The Selous is Africa's largest protected area. Its 5,120,000 ha is totally devoid of human population and is sufficiently large to provide ecologically viable habitats to all species contained in the reserve. Species of particular interest include elephants, black rhinos, leopards, cheetahs, and wild dogs (all IUCN Endangered Species); other rare species include the sable antelope and Lichtenstein's hartebeest. The area has the world's largest protected populations of elephants, crocodiles, hippos, and black rhinos, and perhaps of buffalo and sable antelope as well. While there are many habitat types, the deciduous Miombo Woodland is dominant, providing the world's best example of this vegetation type; as this is a fire climax formation, it may be the result of human activities in the past. With unproductive soils, Selous has few alternative uses; wildlife management is widely considered to be its most appropriate objective.

6. INTEGRITY

The area is so large that it can absorb all but the most severe pressures on its resources. There are plans to harness the flood waters of the Rufiji River, with a dam to be constructed at Stiegler's Gorge; but this would affect only a relatively small part of the Reserve and should not be a matter of serious concern unless the reservoir draws in large numbers of settlers. Because of difficulties of transportation, the interior of Selous is seldom patrolled, so the numbers of species quoted in the nomination form may be far in excess of the current true situation, if poaching has been as serious a problem as elsewhere in East Africa. Much of the infrastructure of the site (roads, guardposts, water systems, etc.) has deteriorated in recent years, due to lack of sufficient funding.

7. COMPARISON WITH OTHER AREAS

Selous is four times the size of Serengeti, and is in quite a different biogeographic province; being woodland rather than savanna, it lacks the large concentrations of easily-viewed wildlife typical of Serengeti and Ngorongoro. The most comparable Miomo woodland habitat is in the Kafue National Park in Zambia: at 2.2 million ha, Kafue is less than half the size of Selous; Kafue is more accessible and perhaps more scenic; but Kafue has relatively few rhinos and elephants.

8. EVALUATION

Selous meets criteria ii and iv of the Convention. Its vast size has provided its best protection to date, but increasing pressures will require that management be upgraded if it is to continue as a World Heritage-quality site.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Selous should be added to the World Heritage List. Support to Selous from the World Heritage Fund would be entirely appropriate, particularly for equipment which is not obtainable in Tanzania.



International Union for Conservation of
Nature and Natural Resources

15 April 1982