

AFRICA

NGORONGORO CONSERVATION AREA

TANZANIA

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION - IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

NGORONGORO CONSERVATION AREA (TANZANIA) - ID N° 39bis

The Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 1979 as a natural property under all four natural criteria. It has been re-nominated as a mixed site under additional criteria of (iii), and (iv), for consideration at the 34th Session of the Committee. IUCN joined ICOMOS for its evaluation mission in relation to this renomination. The following comments take into account the findings of the IUCN expert on this mission, comments from five external reviewers, internal desk review, and consideration of the IUCN World Heritage Panel. IUCN provided the following comments to ICOMOS as an input to their evaluation process, and in the event ICOMOS consider inscription under cultural values, IUCN considers these issues should be addressed in framing the recommended Committee decision, the revised Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, and any proposals related to the protection and management of the property.

1. UNADDRESSED ISSUES WITH RESPECT TO CURRENT MANAGEMENT

IUCN notes with concern that many recommendations that have resulted from reactive monitoring missions to the property undertaken in 2007 and 2008 have not been implemented. Indeed, it is considered that if these recommendations are not implemented there is a danger of degrading or losing the natural values that were the reason for its inscription on the World Heritage List. Above all, there is an urgent need to reconcile the conservation of the area's outstanding universal value in relation to natural values, with the demands for development and the rapidly expanding population within the property. The issues of concern are identified in the relevant State of Conservation Reports that have been made to the World Heritage Committee, including accompanying missions were relevant.

IUCN is concerned that the new nomination makes little mention of these issues. Despite the fact that the evaluation of the renomination is required to be made only in relation to cultural values (according to the Operational Guidelines), it would have been desirable for the renomination document to have clearly set out the existing natural values of the property, and also outline the ways in which the protection and management of the property would need to be adapted to take account of the possible recognition of the cultural values of the property. IUCN considers that the renomination of the the property could provide an opportunity to address the above issues, however this appears to be unlikely given the present state of the nomination document.

2. MAASAI PASTORALISM

The Maasai have lived in the NCA for the last few centuries. Maasai traditional culture values living in harmony with the wildlife. They are not unique in this sense, but this is an important aspect of their

heritage. The lifestyle of the Maasai is also under pressure of change. Adoption of settled agriculture and difficulties in maintaining a nomadic lifestyle are a clear reality for the Maasai communities living in Ngorongoro. The absolute numbers of people living in the crater is also a key issue, as noted above.

The nomination document notes the interaction of the Maasai with the landscape of Ngorongoro, but this appears to be very much a secondary consideration, relative to the palaeontological sites related to human evolution.

Reviewers noted that there is little or no information presented in the nomination regarding consultation with the Maasai as key stakeholder in Ngorongoro. It is suggested important to confirm that the nomination was prepared with free prior and informed consent from the Maasai. ICOMOS should also consider how the Maasai are represented with respect to management of the NCA, and whether this is credible and effective.

Reviewers also note the potential importance of the indigenous knowledge of the Maasai to help inform strategies for adaptation to climate change, for example with respect the human and animal migratory systems, use of different altitudes for livestock, changing stock density during droughts, systems of animal husbandry and traditional medicine.

Reviewers also note that there is a UNESCO backed programme on cultural landscape mapping and modern techniques for community based ethnobiological surveys, and noted that this should be used to help inform management decisions.

3. GOVERNANCE

Governance appears to be a central issue with respect to the nomination. The renomination

provides an opportunity to reconsider governance arrangements, but this is not covered in the nomination document. IUCN considers a central focus should be to ensure that the management body has the capacity, skills and resources to fulfil its role effectively. This role would potentially be redefined by the renomination of the property. The renomination, if accepted, would introduce new requirements for management of the property, in relation to the increased consideration of its cultural values. IUCN considers that a fully integrated management system would be required to ensure that there is an effective overall approach to the management of the property. This would need to consider natural and cultural aspects, and the interaction between them. Protection of the natural values of the property should continue to be a central objective in the management system for the property if recognized as a mixed site.

The role of the Maasai is also significant in this regard. If, as the renomination states, “the living culture of the Maasai communities identified with the nominated property is of an outstanding significance for effective conservation”, then it would seem essential to establish a co-management governance regime with the NCA, the Department of Antiquities, and the resident Maasai community. These should deal transparently and equitably with land right and tenure issues, and also be capable of resolving disputes. In addition, there will be a need for community training so can participate effectively in governance.

IUCN requests that ICOMOS discuss any proposed advice on protection and management of the property with IUCN, prior to finalizing this advice to the World Heritage Committee. IUCN suggest that this would be valuable, in order to seek to ensure the maximum coordination of guidance on the management of the cultural values of the property, with aspects relevant to the existing recognised natural values of the property.

4. INTEGRATION INTO THE LARGER LANDSCAPE

There is also little mention in the renomination file of how the management of the NCA could be integrated into the broader regional context. The economic and sustainability issues surrounding Ngorongoro have not been discussed adequately nor is there mention of opportunity to address wider issues through the Serengeti Ecosystem Forum. It would appear that there is the need to consider a buffer zone in the south-east where heaviest population pressure is near Karatu.

5. RECOGNITION OF FOSSIL VALUES, USE OF CRITERION (VIII)

IUCN notes that there is an option to suggest that the fossil values of the property could be recognized, wholly or in part, under the existing natural criterion viii, as was the case in relation to the recognition of such values in the 1997 inscription of Lake Turkana National Parks (Kenya). This option could be discussed with IUCN if it was felt appropriate for further consideration.

6. MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

Given the complexity of management of this property, and the large number of existing issues regarding its conservation and effective management, IUCN notes that it would be highly desirable to undertake an evaluation of management effectiveness of the property, taking account its existing conservation issues, in the context of the renomination. IUCN notes that the World Heritage Committee has recently agreed to provide International Assistance for such an assessment in Ngorongoro, and suggests that the State Party carefully consider the brief for this study to ensure that it contributes to addressing any issues raised by the ICOMOS evaluation, as well as the existing, well known issues of management effectiveness facing the property.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the responsibility of ICOMOS in this case to assess whether or not the re-nominated property should be recommended for inscription on the World Heritage List under cultural criteria, and which of the cultural values of Ngorongoro could be considered as being of Outstanding Universal Value. On the basis of its review, IUCN suggests that ICOMOS may wish to consider whether the outstanding issues regarding the integrity, protection and management issues facing the property mean that the time is right for the inscription of the property in relation to cultural values. As noted above, IUCN would also welcome the opportunity to discuss the draft conclusions of ICOMOS regarding the integrity, protection and management of the property. IUCN suggests it would be important for IUCN and ICOMOS to coordinate advice to the Committee and the State Party to ensure that the renomination leads to the best possible conservation of Ngorongoro (including addressing existing issues), promotes the effective management of the property, and leads to equitable benefits to all stakeholders.