
Mount Huangshan (China)

No 547

1 Basic data

State Party

People's Republic of China

Name of property

Mount Huangshan

Location

The City of Huangshan, Anhui Province

Inscription

1990

Brief description

Huangshan, known as "the loveliest mountain of China", was acclaimed through art and literature during a good part of Chinese history (the Shanshui "mountain and water" style of the mid-16th century). Today it holds the same fascination for visitors, poets, painters and photographers who come in pilgrimage to this enchanting site, renowned for its magnificent scenery made up of many granite peaks and rocks emerging out of a sea of clouds.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

14 March 2012

2 Issues raised

Background

The report of a UNESCO systematic monitoring mission to the mixed and natural World Heritage sites in China in 1998 noted that the main conservation concern for site managers apart from the control of tourism was the advance of pine wilt disease throughout eastern China and its progress through Anhui Province. The site management were undertaking strenuous quarantine efforts to limit its entry to the site by banning the importation of untreated timber and only using local seedlings in reforestation. Monitoring for any presence of pine wilt disease was a top priority.

The 2003 Periodic Reporting recorded that A 'Pine Wood Nematode Control' programme had invested about US\$ 150,000 for preventive measures, involving 100 people.'

The existing buffer zone as shown in maps provided with the request by the State Party covers 14,200 ha and surrounds the property of 15,400 ha. According to the State Party the area of the property is now updated to 16,060 ha as a result of computerised measurement. The buffer zone covers adjacent hillsides around the

property and highways leading into the property. It encloses villages at four locations along the property boundary and a nunnery outside the property to the north but a small section of the property boundary along the east side through Wuniguan village is not enclosed by the buffer zone.

Modification

The current request is for extension of the buffer zone in order to cover the 4km isolation zone for control of the pine wood nematode disease. The proposed new buffer zone boundary completely surrounds the property and existing buffer zone and encloses five towns (Tangkou, Tanjiaqiao, Sankou, Gengcheng and Jiaocun) and Yanghu Tree Farm along their administrative boundaries, to encompass an area of 49,000 ha; nearly four times the existing buffer zone. These areas are currently under the jurisdiction of Huangshan District.

It is also proposed as justification that "the unity of the buffer boundaries and administrative boundaries helps clarify the responsibilities of the buffer zone management, and enhance the feasibility of the management measures, such as the protection of resources and environment, tourism development and the coordinated development of the community".

The State Party contends that the enlarged buffer zone will contribute to the maintenance of the outstanding universal value of the property through enabling unified management to control negative impacts on the property. It is protected under National Park management regulations and the Master Plan of Huangshan National Park, which was approved by China's State Council in 2007 and registers 16,060 ha as the core area of Huangshan National Park and 49,000 ha as the buffer zone. The Special Plan for Huangshan Buffer Zone is being prepared by Huangshan District government for coordinating the functional arrangements of resource protection, tourism service facilities, traffic and other aspects of the buffer zone aimed at avoiding conflicts and duplications of constructions.

While ICOMOS is not against the extension of the buffer zone it considers that the proposal has been drafted from a natural perspective only. No information is given on any cultural components of the buffer zone and no photographs have been provided by the State Party.

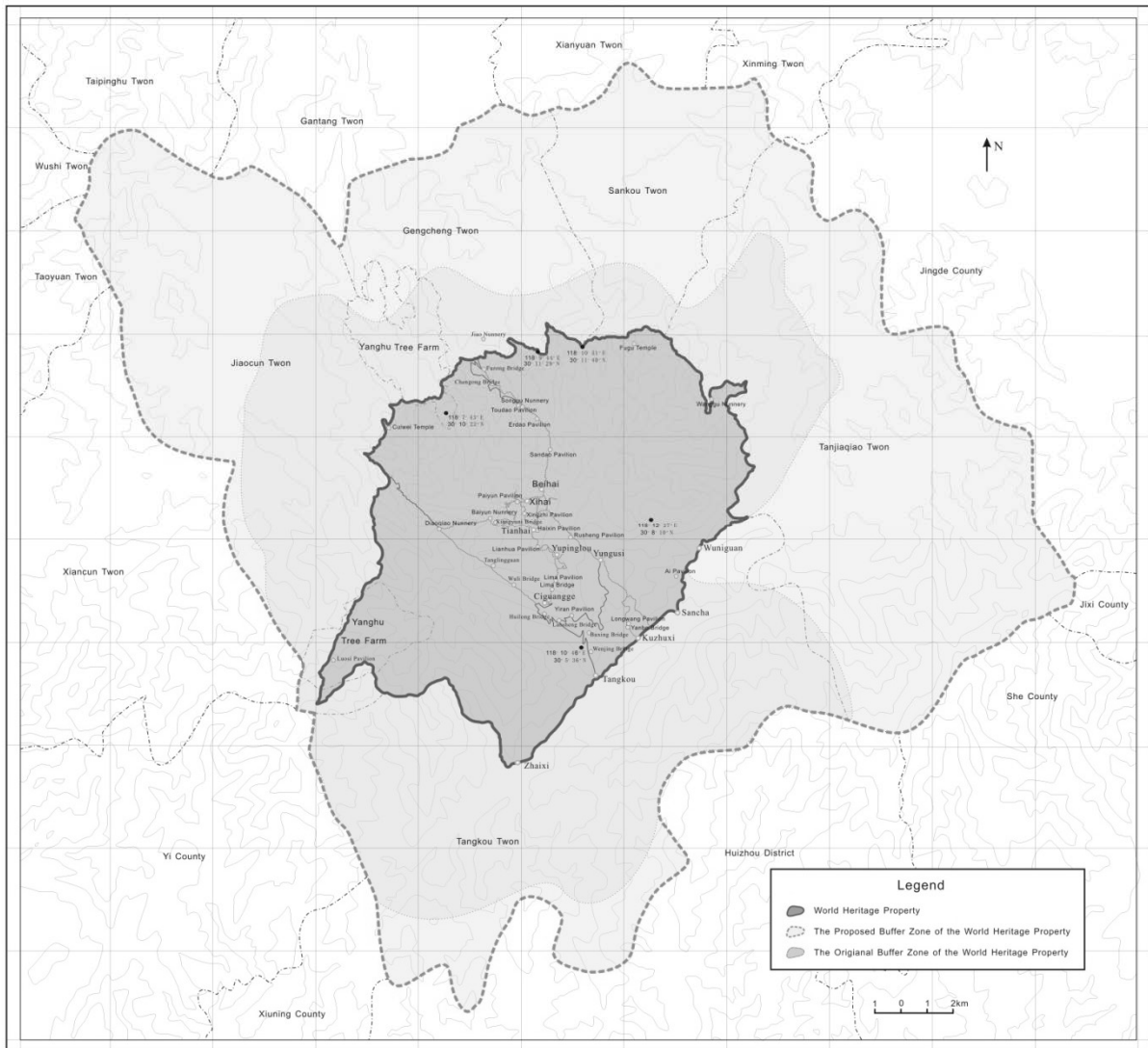
ICOMOS considers that there is insufficient information about the need for the enlarged buffer zone in relation to the cultural values. ICOMOS notes that no details are given as to how development will be controlled in the buffer zone by the Special Plan for Huangshan Buffer Zone.

3 ICOMOS Recommendations

Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed buffer zone for Mount Huangshan, China, be **approved**.

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party be requested to provide descriptive information on the proposed buffer zone extension in relation to cultural values and to provide information regarding the controls applicable to development in the Special Plan for Huangshan Buffer Zone.



Map showing the revised boundaries of the buffer zone