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# Kakadu National Park (Australia)

## No 147ter

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### 1 Basic data

#### State Party

Australia

#### Name of property

Kakadu National Park

#### Location

Northern territory

#### Inscription

1981, 1998, 1992

#### Brief description

This unique archaeological and ethnological reserve, located in the Northern Territory, has been inhabited continuously for more than 40,000 years. The cave paintings, rock carvings and archaeological sites record the skills and way of life of the region's inhabitants, from the hunter-gatherers of prehistoric times to the Aboriginal people still living there. It is a unique example of a complex of ecosystems, including tidal flats, floodplains, lowlands and plateaux, and provides a habitat for a wide range of rare or endemic species of plants and animals.

#### Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

10 March 2011

### 2. Issues raised

#### Background

The World Heritage Committee at its 22<sup>nd</sup> Session (Kyoto, 1998) considered a report on mining in the Kakadu National Park. In ANNEX VI.1 p.117 of the Committee report which summarises a mission report (document reference: WHC 98/CONF 203/INF. 18), it is stated that in relation to the Koongarra Mineral Lease: *"The mission recommended that all efforts be made to seek the agreement with the traditional owners to include the third Mineral Lease, the Koongarra Mineral Lease, in the Park and therefore preclude mining"*.

#### Modification

The modification proposed by the State Party is stated to be addressing a request of the Committee at its 22<sup>nd</sup> session to add the Koongarra Project Area (Koongarra) to the property, although as stated above it was a recommendation of a mission that was reported to the Committee.

The Koongarra area extends to 1,228 hectares and is in the eastern part of the Kakadu National Park, completely

surrounded by the property, which currently extends to 1.98 million hectares.

The Koongarra area is Aboriginal land. It was originally excluded from the property due to potential mining interests. No mining authorisations have ever been granted at Koongarra because the required authorisations, including from traditional owners, under the Australian Government's *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* have not been met.

The Northern Land Council, on behalf of the traditional owners, requested that Koongarra become part of the Kakadu National Park and the Park Board of Management agreed. In July 2010 the State Party approved its inclusion.

Koongarra lies next to the Kakadu escarpment and is approximately three kilometres east of Nourlangie Rock. It is located in a valley bounded by the Mount Brockman outlier and the Arnhem Land plateau. The catchment of Koongarra Creek feeds Nourlangie Creek and then drains into the South Alligator River. Detailed maps have been provided and descriptions of the boundary.

The Koongarra area includes the Nourlangie rock art sites. This and the Ubirr rock art site, 50 kilometres to the north-east, are the two major foci of rock art in the Park.

The information provided by the State Party does not include any details of the rock art, in terms of scope and extent, documentation, archaeological research or how the sites are specifically protected and conserved.

### 3. ICOMOS Recommendations

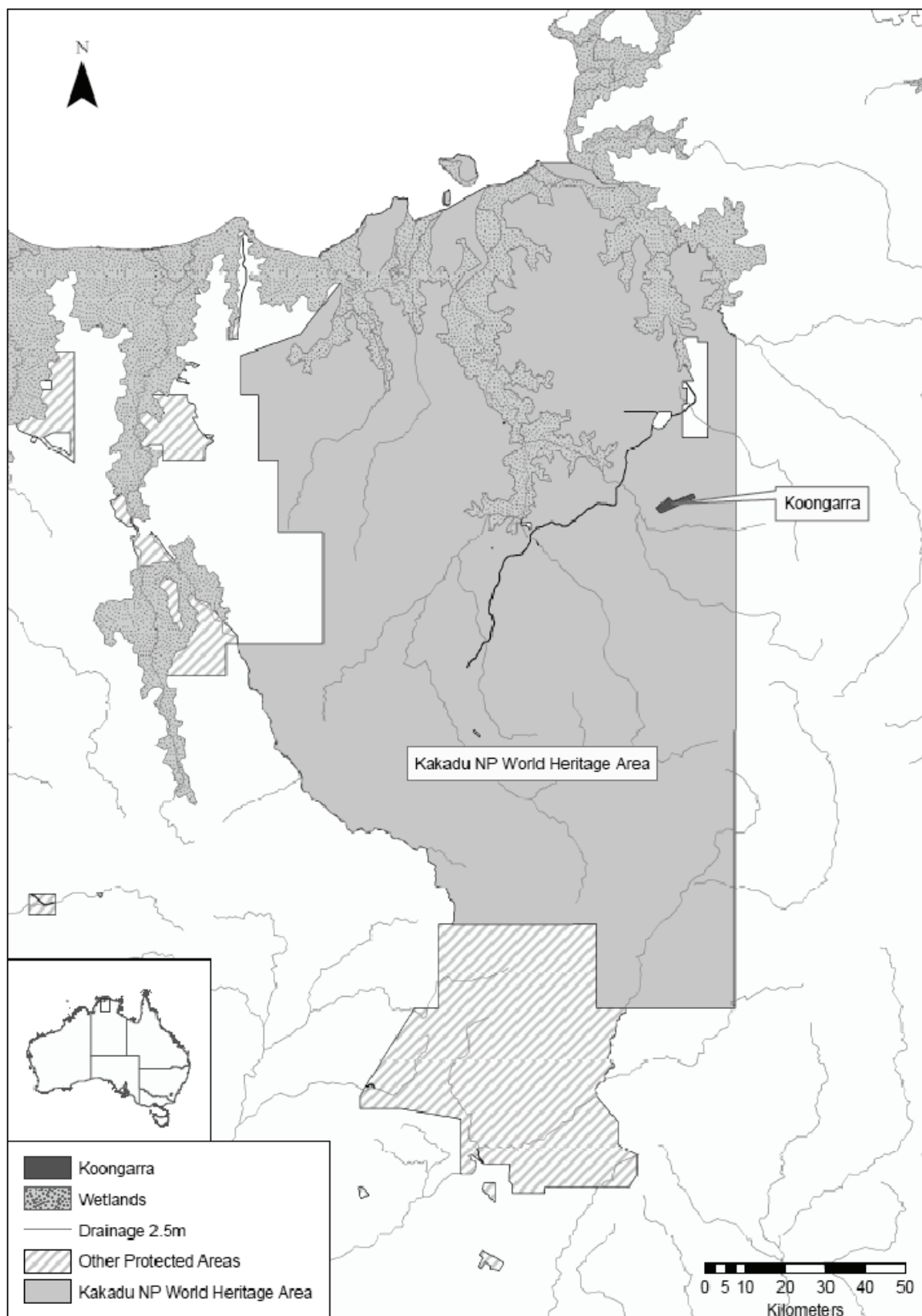
#### Recommendation with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that the proposed minor modification to the boundary of Kakadu National Park, Australia be **approved**.

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party provide to the World Heritage Centre by 1st February 2012:

- An inventory of the rock art sites within the extension, including a map, and of their associated archaeological sites;
- Details of their state of conservation;
- Details of their conservation management arrangements.

ICOMOS also recommends that the State Party ensures that the rock art sites are included as attributes in the draft retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value that is to be drafted as part of the Periodic Reporting process and submitted to the World Heritage Committee for approval.



Map showing the revised boundaries of the property