EPHESUS (Turkey) (1018rev)

1. Executive Summary of the Report

There have been certain improvements at the property especially in terms of legal measures taken within the property since its inscription on the World Heritage List. Firstly; process for definition of conservation zone on the south part of the ancient channel is underway. Secondly, 1/1000 scale conservation plan for Ancient City of Ephesus and Long-Term Development Plan for Meryem Ana Nature Park Area, which both define policies and provisions for regulation of any development at the property, were approved by the related authorities. Thirdly, legal instruction for initiation of heritage impact assessment for cable car project proposed near to House of Virgin Mary was given to the contractor company and process for determination of itinerary line is still ongoing in close collaboration with regional conservation council.

2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

a) Raising the legislative protection of the entire buffer zone to the highest level;

The buffer zone proposal in the nomination dossier had been based on the national conservation boundaries and coincided with the urban and 3rd degree archaeological conservation site boundaries. However, buffer zone boundaries of the property were enlarged during the evaluation process in consensus with ICOMOS in respect to the first proposal submitted, which resulted in inclusion of additional lands (at south of the ancient channel) which do not stay in any of conservation boundary. The committee in its decision 39 COM 8B.37 approved the enlarged buffer zone and recommended to increase the protection measures for the entire buffer zone to the highest level.

According to the legal procedure in Turkey, the definition and registration of any conservation boundary is under the legal responsibility of regional conservation councils. Izmir No: I Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Heritage has already launched the field survey in order to define the most proper status for the area as well as the process to gather legal opinions of related authorities for the possible enlargement as a legal necessity. It is estimated that the legal registration of the conservation status of the south part of the ancient channel will be completed by the end of the year.

The map showing the area that is examined by the regional conservation council on the field is presented as annex.

b) Completing the Management Plan as proposed to include the research programme and conservation programme for the overall property with provision for findings to be integrated into future management, education and interpretation and the
extension of the monitoring system to relate to the inventory/database of the property;

Pursuant to the related legislation in Turkey, comprehensive revision of a management plan is held at every 5 year following its approval. The revision in this scope and extent also requires a long term preparatory and negotiation process. The management plan is completed and approved on 11th of September, 2014 and yearly inspection of the action plan and close monitoring of execution of the projects is still being held by the site manager.

After registration of conservation status of the buffer zone, the studies for revising the management plan will be launched and approval of the revised plan is estimated to be completed in due course.

c) Carrying out impact assessments of all new management planning proposals including visitor management, infrastructure, landscaping, and transport/coach park proposals in line with Paragraph 110 of the Operational Guidelines and in accordance with ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties;

The Long-Term Development Plan for the Meryem Ana Nature Park Area was approved by the related authority (namely Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs) on the 30th of December, 2015 upon the legal consent of the regional conservation council.

The main aim of the plan is to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources of the site and to develop necessary circumstances, implementation instruments and methods for co-existence of the natural eco-system in the site together with archaeological, historical and cultural values of House of Virgin Mary.

Objectives of the plan are as follows:

1. To conserve archaeological, historical and cultural specialities of House of Virgin Mary which are the main resource values of the Nature Park,
2. To ensure the continuity of the religious tourism activities, one of the resource values of the site
3. To conserve the ecological balance and ensure its persistence,
4. To conserve the geological and geomorphologic structure and ensure its persistence,
5. To ensure the visits within the site not negatively affect the religious activities and to increase the awareness of visitors and local administrations in this respect,
6. To take necessary precautions in order for preventing from the environmental pollution (air, soil, water and noise)
7. To ensure the coordination among different conservation status within the site via a management plan

The project tender for the cable car project, which is specified in the Long-Term Development Plan, was held on the 18th of April, 2016. The company has already defined 7 alternative lines for the itinerary of the cable car and 5 of them were rejected by the regional conservation council on the grounds that they all may have negative impact on the
archaeological values at the property and finally recommended the lines should be defined outside of the 1st degree archaeological conservation boundary which coincides with the buffer zone of the property. That is, proposed new cable-car line will be outside of buffer zone of the property. Therefore, one of the remaining alternatives was agreed by the authority and now is in approval stage by the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs.

The Ministry has already given the instruction to the company on the 2nd of September, 2016 to initiate a heritage impact assessment for the project in line with the ICOMOS Guideline, but as there is no any approved specific line or project yet, initiation of this analysis would not be possible until now. The project details and the heritage impact analysis will be shared with ICOMOS once they are materialized.

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property’s Outstanding Universal Value

1/1000 scale conservation plan for the Ancient City of Ephesus was approved by regional conservation council on 12th of August 2016.

4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

No major restoration, alteration and/or new construction which may affect Outstanding Universal Value of the property are intended within the world heritage property or buffer zone.

5. Public access to the state of conservation report


6. Signature of the Authority

Yalçın KURT
Genel Müdür V.