

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref. GB/AS/1548/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 19 December 2016

H. E. Mrs Eliana Zugaib
Permanent Delegation of Brazil to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO
1, rue Miollis
75732 Paris Cedex 15

World Heritage List 2017
Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site (Brazil) – Interim report

Dear Madam,

As prescribed by the revised Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies have been requested to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2017. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation process.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to “Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site” was carried out by Daniel Schavelzon (Argentina) from 19 to 23 September 2016. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organization and implementation of the mission. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided to the mission expert during the technical evaluation mission, including a revised map with revised buffer zone boundaries, a programme of activities for Valongo Wharf, plans and concepts related to the projected museum on site, as well as more detailed reports on the excavation and analysis of conservation challenges.

At the end of November 2016, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2017. The additional information, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2017.

We thank you for the availability of your Delegation to the meeting held on 25 November 2016 with some representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. During the final part of the Panel meeting that followed, the ICOMOS Panel has identified areas where it considers that further information is needed.

While the ICOMOS Panel considered that “Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site” as a landing sites of enslaved Africans into the Americas might have the potential to meet the requirements for Outstanding Universal Value, this has not yet been clearly demonstrated.

Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

Justification for inscription

ICOMOS would suggest to further focus the justification for inscription to solely the elements which the site can represent within its boundaries by critically reviewing the contribution and inclusion of elements such the quarantine facilities, store houses, market of enslaved people and New African's cemetery, which do not seem localized within the present boundaries or are not known or represented in archaeological remains.

Comparative analysis

In this context, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel would also suggest to further augment the comparative analysis with a specific focus on Valongo Wharf as a landing point (debarkation) of African enslaved people into the Americas and to this end, in particular, compare Valongo Wharf with other debarkation sites in the Americas, which could tell a similar story, such as for example Gadsden's Wharf in Charleston, South Carolina, (United States of America) or ports in the West Indies. Please note in this context, that a comparative analysis does not need to be limited to properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Integrity

When considering the integrity of the site the ICOMOS Panel deliberated on the current relationship between the Valongo Wharf Archaeological Site and the seafront to which it was previously connected. It was noted with regret that this connection appears rather disrupted today. Could the State Party consider any measures in terms of interpretation approaches that would allow to re-establish the connection to the sea for the contemporary visitor?

Protection

Lastly, in terms of the protective provision for the buffer zone, discussions highlighted that ICOMOS Panel felt the explicit protection, and where possible, further exploration of underground archaeological remains was essential. ICOMOS would appreciate to receive further information as to how underground archaeology is presently covered in the buffer zone protection measures.

We look forward to your responses to these points, which will be of great help in our evaluation process.

We would be grateful if you could provide ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre with the above information by **28 February 2017 at the latest**, the deadline set out in paragraph 148 of the Operational Guidelines for supplementary information on nominations to be received. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by ICOMOS in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while ICOMOS will carefully consider any supplementary information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. So we request to keep your response concise and respond only to the above requests.

We thank you for your support of the World Heritage Convention and the evaluation process.

Yours faithfully,



Gwenaëlle Bourdin
Director
ICOMOS Evaluation Unit

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 UNESCO World Heritage Centre