



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

# World Heritage Patrimoine mondial

41 COM

Paris, 19 May 2017  
Original: English

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,  
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES  
POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

CONVENTION CONCERNANT LA PROTECTION DU PATRIMOINE  
MONDIAL, CULTUREL ET NATUREL

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE / COMITE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Forty-first session / Quarante-et-unième session

Krakow, Poland / Cracovie, Pologne  
2-12 July 2017 / 2-12 juillet 2017

Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and/or on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Point 7 de l'Ordre du jour provisoire: Etat de conservation de biens inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et/ou sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en péril

MISSION REPORT / RAPPORT DE MISSION

Western Caucasus (Russian Federation) (900)  
Caucase de l'Ouest (Fédération de Russie) (900)

1 – 3 November 2016



**IUCN Advisory Mission  
to the Western Caucasus World Heritage  
1-3 November 2016**

**MISSION REPORT**



Picture : EMC2I-LETHIER.

**Citation :** LETHIER, H., 2016 - IUCN Advisory Mission to the World Heritage property "Western Caucasus", Sochi, 1-3 November 2016, Mission report, December 2016, IUCN, Gland, Switzerland, 37 p.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
1. Background of the mission	8
2. Context	9
3. Assessment	12
4. Conclusion	19
<b>List of annexes</b>	<b>22</b>

## FOREWORD

This report presents the major findings and recommendations by the IUCN Advisory mission which took place from 1 to 3 November 2016, upon invitation from the Russian Government.

According to the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the mission (**Annex 1**), the mission visited the Western Caucasus World Heritage Property ("property") and made the necessary assessments, in order to develop recommendations regarding:

- the recent legislative changes and possible impacts of existing development plans on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- issues related to the property's boundaries, taking into account the evaluation of past proposals for boundary modification.

The mission reviewed the condition of the property and performed its assessment, focusing on the potential development of mass tourism inside the property or in its immediate vicinity.

The mission visited the areas where private companies had so far expressed their interest to develop tourism infrastructure within the property, met with national and local stakeholders during plenary sessions, and had discussions with local NGOs, experts and specialists (**Annex 2**).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The mission acknowledges all officials and colleagues met during its visit whether or not named here below: Amirkhan Amirkhanov, Deputy Chair of the Federal service for the control of use of natural resources of the Russian Federation, head of the Russian delegation; Irina Fominykh, Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE); Vsevolod Stepanitskiy, Deputy Director of Department of the State Policy and Regulation for Environmental Protection (MNRE), for their hospitality and continuous presence and assistance throughout the mission.

Further thanks go to Sergei Shevelev, Director of the Caucasus Nature Reserve (CNR), who welcomed the mission, and to other official participants, amongst them, Nikolai Penkovskiy, Director of Sochi National Park (SNP) and Rustam Rabadanov from the MNRE.

The mission was most honoured to exchange with the NGOs representatives met during the visit and representing Environmental Watch on North Caucasus, Greenpeace, NABU Caucasus, the Sochi branch of the Russian Geographical Society and WWF Russia; their contribution greatly facilitated the mission's work (**Annex 3**).

The mission also expresses gratitude to the scientists, specialists and other colleagues from the Academy of Science and the SNP, who shared their extensive expertise and wide knowledge of the context of the property; as usual, their contribution was indispensable and irreplaceable to build an open and honest public debate between all stakeholders and the mission (**Annex 4**).

The mission did not have the chance and opportunity to meet representatives of the companies - in particular Gazprom and Rosa Khutor - that expressed potential interest in resort development in the area.

Special thanks to Nicolai Yeskin, Deputy Director of the CNR who was instrumental in preparing and organizing the mission and whose availability and assistance throughout the mission were very much appreciated; the mission wishes to thank him for providing official information and data on the context of the property, and for organizing the mission perfectly.

Last but not least, many thanks to the interpreter, for her outstanding work and support.

## INTRODUCTION

The property is inscribed on the World Heritage List under natural criteria (ix) and (x).

It property includes the Caucasus Nature Reserve (CNR) and its buffer zone (286 335 ha), the Bolshoy Thach Nature Park (3 700 ha), the Ridge Buijnij (1 480 ha), the River Tsitsa headwaters (1 913 ha), as well as the Headwaters of Rivers Pshecha and Pshechashcha (5 776 ha) Nature Monuments (**Map 1**).



**Map 1** – The WH property (Source : MNRE).

Further details on the territory and on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property can be found in the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission report<sup>1</sup>.

On several occasions since 2001, the World Heritage Committee (the Committee) expressed its concerns State Party regarding management of the property, amongst others:

- **in 2013, at its 37<sup>th</sup> session** (Phnom Penh, Decision 37 COM 7B.23) the Committee expressed its concerns about the changes in the legal protection of the property which make it possible to develop large scale tourism infrastructure situated within the property boundaries and reiterated its request to the State Party to ensure that no large scale ski or tourism infrastructure is built within the property. The Committee also urged the State Party to implement all recommendations of the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission, in particular to:
  - develop an overall sustainable tourism strategy and comprehensive plan for the property and adjacent specially protected areas, privileging low impact tourism activities and ensuring that proposed tourism and recreational infrastructure does not impact on the OUV of the property,

<sup>1</sup> [Report on the Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Western Caucasus \(Russian Federation\), 23-27 September 2012.](#)

- ensure that no area of high biodiversity and key to the OUV of the property is included within the components of the biosphere polygon of the Caucasus Strict Nature Reserve, which might be used for construction of recreational infrastructure and that no activity is permitted within the polygon which is contrary to the property's integrity;
- ...  
○ ensure that the potential impacts of any proposed infrastructure upgrading inside the property on its OUV are carefully assessed and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is sent to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, before a decision is taken, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* ;
- finalize the exact delineation of the boundary of all components of the property, establish a functional buffer zone for the property and submit an updated map of the property and its buffer zone to the World Heritage Centre;
- ensure the implementation of an overall management plan for the property by developing an operational plan and establishing an overall coordination body;
- ... halt all construction and/or extension of buildings and facilities in the upper Mzymta Valley within the property boundaries and upgrade the legal protection status of this area ;
- **in 2014, at its 38<sup>th</sup> session** (Doha, Decision 38 COM 7B.77) : the Committee expressed its utmost concern about the adoption of amendments to Federal Law N°406-FZ, dated 28 December 2013, which make it possible to develop large scale tourism infrastructure in strict nature reserves, and could also impact other natural World Heritage properties in the Russian Federation. The Committee reiterated its request to the State Party to ensure that no large scale ski or tourism infrastructure is built within the property; the Committee noted with concern that development pressures on the property appear to increase continuously, as noted by reports that new construction works have been conducted inside the property without prior assessment of their potential impact on its OUV. The Committee urged the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts of any proposed infrastructure upgrading inside the property on its OUV are carefully assessed and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is sent to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, before a decision is taken, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It also reiterated its request to the State Party to implement all the recommendations of the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission and to report on the status of the proposed Persian leopard reintroduction project by providing the World Heritage Centre with detailed information and data on this project, in line with the 2013 IUCN Guidelines for reintroductions and other conservation translocations ;
- **in 2016, at its 40<sup>th</sup> Session** (Istanbul, Decision 40 COM 7B.101), the Committee welcomed the information provided by the State Party concerning the reintroduction of the Persian leopard, and encouraged the State Party to continue its efforts in that regard, in consultation with the IUCN Species Survival Commission Reintroduction Specialist Group; the Committee noted that amendments to a number of federal legal provisions concerning protected areas have been proposed and were being considered by the Russian parliament ; the Committee requested the State Party to provide further details on the proposed amendments, including on how they are related to past legislative changes over which concerns were raised in previous Committee decisions, namely the Federal Law N°406-FZ and the Order of the Government of the Russian Federation No 603-r. The Committee also noted with concern further legislative changes, specifically the amendments adopted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology (MNRE) in 2015 to the Decrees on the SNP and the Sochi Federal Wildlife Refuge, providing for expansion of recreational zones and construction of large scale tourism infrastructure in these protected areas, which adjoin the property, and considered that such amendments could have negative

impacts on the property, including on the efforts to reintroduce the Persian leopard in the property by disrupting the connectivity of its natural habitat. Finally, the Committee further reiterated its request to the State Party to implement all other recommendations of the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission.

On 11 October 2016 the State Party invited a World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission; as outlined in the invitation letter, the main objectives of this mission were to:

- assess the recent legislative changes and possible impacts of existing development plans on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
- discuss any issues related to the property's boundaries, taking into account the evaluation of past proposals for boundary modification.

The requested advisory mission was organized from 1 to 3 November 2016. The mission was composed of Hervé Lethier, representing IUCN. It was agreed that the World Heritage Centre would not participate in the mission.

The mission was able to consult with a range of stakeholders, including national and local NGO representatives. The mission was able to conduct visits on the ground and to fly over the property by helicopter, in order to obtain an overview of the situation; the mission also had several meetings with the representatives of Russian authorities, as well as with NGOs, experts and specialists.

## **1. BACKGROUND OF THE MISSION**

For several years the Committee has expressed its concerns regarding potential threats to the property, due to the development of tourism infrastructure and activities near and/or inside the property.

In addition, a series of legislative changes had been adopted in the recent past that changed the legal regime of protection of the property:

- the Federal Law №406-FZ was amended on 28 December 2013, making possible the development of large scale tourism infrastructure in strict nature reserves.<sup>2</sup> The Committee expressed and reiterated its utmost concern on this new legislation which weakens significantly the legal regime of protection of the property and may lead to the development of socioeconomic activities in "*biosphere polygons*", with deleterious effects on the property ;
- art. 10 of the Federal Law №33-FZ on "*specially protected areas*"<sup>3</sup> was also amended in 2016<sup>4</sup> ; this change enabled establishment of "*biosphere polygons*" in State Nature Reserves (SNR)<sup>5</sup>.

In addition some of the stakeholders met by the mission noted that a new draft Law had been presented for public consultation, introducing a new article in the Federal Law on specially protected areas, which would allow the government to modify the boundaries of specially protected areas and to exclude lands from their territories, amongst other reasons, in order to extend settlements, enhance security or based on decisions of the

---

<sup>2</sup> See also the Federal Law law № 365-FZ dated 30 November 2011 which allows the *construction of venues, infrastructures and related equipment listed by the Government of the Russian Federation for every biosphere polygon, in areas defined by the Federal authority in charge of the state nature biosphere reserve, according to the rules applied on this polygon, for the development of educational tourism, physical culture and sport*" (non official translation).

<sup>3</sup> Dated 14 March 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Federal Law № 254- FZ of 3 July 2016.

<sup>5</sup> <http://publication.pravo.gov.ru/Document/View/0001201607040003?index=1&rangeSize=1>.

President of the Russian Federation. This information communicated to the mission during its visit and needs to be assessed further.

## 2. CONTEXT

### 2.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1.1 Federal level

The property is governed by the federal law "*On environmental protection*" updated in 2002 and the federal law "*On specially protected nature areas*" amended in 2016.

- the first law defines standards for environmental quality, makes provisions for the protection of biota and provides a basis for federal protected areas and activities permitted within this areas ;
- the protected area law regulates the organization, protection and use of protected areas ; this legislation recognizes several types of protected areas such as strict nature reserves, national parks and nature monuments, at the federal level, and, nature parks, nature reserves and nature monuments, at the regional level.

The major part of the property is a federal protected area with the status of a "*Strict Nature Reserve*"<sup>6</sup>, the CNR. This status corresponds to IUCN protected area category I, and enjoys a high protection status where no economic use was allowed, until the recent modification of the law that gives now the government the possibility to establish "*polygons*" in any such areas if they also have a status of biosphere reserves, in order to develop socioeconomic activities (see here above)<sup>7</sup>.

The property also includes the buffer zone of the CNR, created on the North<sup>8</sup>.

All uses and activities that may affect the ecological characteristics of the CNR are forbidden by the federal Law. However, since 2016, the government can establish biosphere polygons on part of its territory.

At the time of the mission, the implementing regulations of this law were not yet adopted, but:

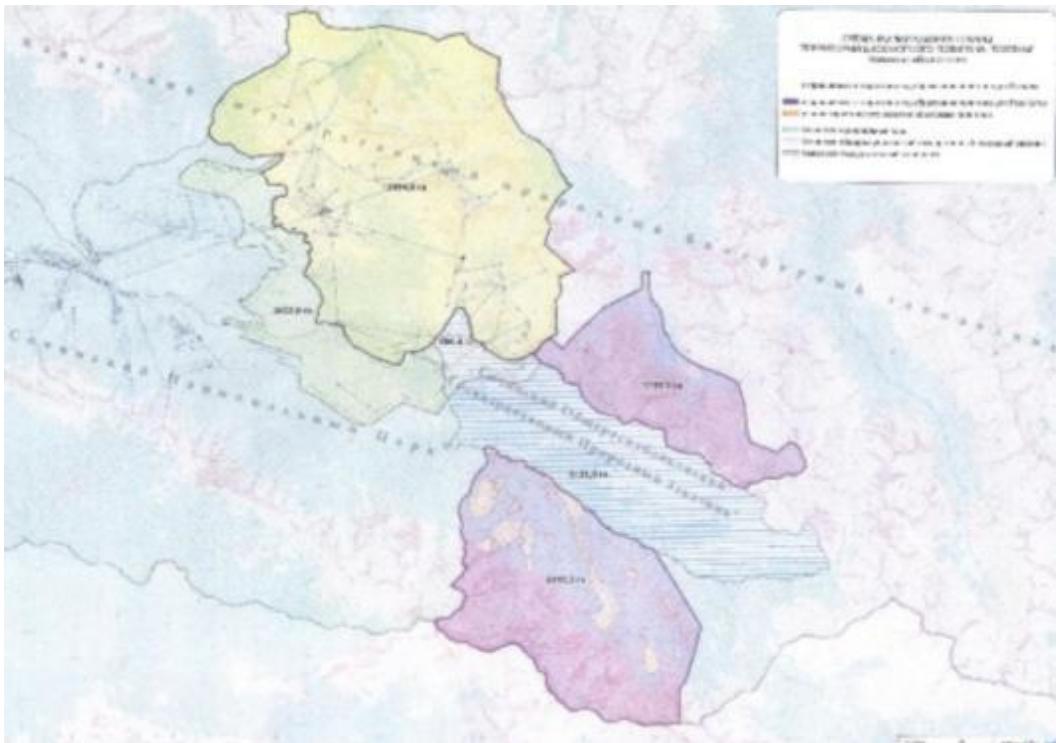
- the President of the Russian Federation has requested the Prime Minister on 14 July 2016 (**Annexe 5**), to prepare a governmental decision outlining the rules on the basis of which the Government can establish biosphere polygons in SNRs in general; according to the draft decision provided to the mission on the "*rules for establishing biosphere polygons inside SNRs*", the establishment of biosphere polygons in SNRs must comply with the obligations and other requirements of the international environmental law. Those rules must also comply with the Federal forest law forbidding clear cuttings in SNRs; amongst other provisions, natural landscapes must be preserved, as well as all environmental features of the reserves, including migratory routes for species and their wintering and breeding grounds.

<sup>6</sup> "Zapovednik".

<sup>7</sup> For the record, the 4 other components have a regional protected area status : Bolshoy Thach Nature Park<sup>7</sup>, Ridge Buijnij Nature Monument<sup>7</sup>, River Tsitsa headwaters Nature Monument<sup>7</sup> and Headwaters of Rivers Pshecha and Pshechashcha<sup>7</sup> Nature Monument ; these regional protected areas have a much weaker protection status, equivalent to IUCN category III (nature monuments) or category IV (nature parks). Certain uses, such as recreational use, can be allowed by the regional administrations they are managed by.

<sup>8</sup> The buffer zone was established by the Adygea Republic (Decree of the President of Adygea Republic n° 322, 26 July 1996). According to the federal law, the regional authorities had in the past the authority to create - and therefore also to abolish - buffer zones to federal strict nature reserves ; this provision was changed in 2004, which returned this authority to the Federal Government

- the Vice Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, M. Dmitry Kozak, has also requested the MNRE on 5 September 2016<sup>9</sup>, to submit to the government a draft decision with a delimitation of a biosphere polygon in the property by 15 October 2016 ; a map of the location of the polygon project has been officially provided to the mission during its visit, showing where this polygon may be established in the future (**Map 2**) ; it would encompass the lands where two companies - Gazprom and Roza Khutor - have "expressed their interest" in developing mass tourism infrastructures, including an area adjacent to the CNR, the "*Sochi State Wildlife Sanctuary*" (SSWS) which is a "zakaznyk" covering part of the upper Mzymta valley<sup>10</sup>.



**Map 2** – Map of location of the areas where companies expressed their interests to develop their activities and where the "polygon" may be established (Source: MNRE).

**Proposed polygon:** Yellow area/Gazprom express of interest; pink areas (2)/Rosa Khutor express of interest – all located within the boundaries of the property.

**Sochi National Park (core zone):** light green area/Gazprom express of interest.

**Sochi "zakaznik":** green striped area/area requested for construction; yellow striped area/land dedicated to recreational use.

## 2.1.2 International level

### 2.1.2.1 With respect to the World Heritage Convention

The State Party must also fulfil a series of obligations and meet various requirements, coming from the World Heritage Convention itself and from its operational guidelines, mainly the following which are in relation to the context of (1) establishing a biosphere polygon in the property and (2) developing mass tourism activities within it and its vicinity :

<sup>9</sup> N°DK-PR-5308 dated 5 September 2016.

<sup>10</sup> [https://meduza.io/feature/2016/10/12/gazprom-i-roza-hutor-sobirayutsya-stroit-kurorty-v-zapovednike-chem-eto-grodit-prirode?utm\\_source=vk.com&utm\\_medium=share\\_vk&utm\\_campaign=share](https://meduza.io/feature/2016/10/12/gazprom-i-roza-hutor-sobirayutsya-stroit-kurorty-v-zapovednike-chem-eto-grodit-prirode?utm_source=vk.com&utm_medium=share_vk&utm_campaign=share).

- sustain the OUV of the property and preserve its integrity<sup>11</sup> ; these obligations must be interpreted in the light of the two criteria, (ix)<sup>12</sup> and (x)<sup>13</sup>, on the basis of which the property was listed ;
- ensure that sustainable use or any change does not impact adversely the OUV of the property<sup>14</sup> ;
- inform the Committee of its intention to undertake or authorize new constructions which may affect the OUV of the property<sup>15</sup>.

#### 2.1.2.2 *With regards to the Committee decisions*

The State Party has been urged by the Committee to implement a series of recommendations, amongst others “*to halt all construction and/or extension of buildings and facilities in the upper Mzymta valley within the property boundaries and upgrade the legal protection status of this area*” (Dec. 37 COM 7B23) ; the Committee has reiterated its decision, at its next session (Dec. 38 COM 7B.77).

The Committee also urged the State Party to implement all recommendations of the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission<sup>16</sup> ; several of these recommendations, mentioned above, are directly related to the context of this advisory mission (see above Dec. 37 COM 7B23)<sup>17</sup>.

#### 2.1.3 Other commitments

UNEP’s engagement and recommendations related to the CNR and environmental components of the Sochi Olympic Games in 2014, resulted in the approval by the MNRE, of a “*Plan of measures for the restoration of Mzymta river, comprehensive environmental monitoring and preparation of compensatory measures as part of environmental component of preparation for the XXII Winter Olympic and XI Paralympic Games in Sochi in 2014*”.

This Plan foresees the expansion of the CNR by the inclusion of (1) the core zone of the SNP, and (2) the SSWS, in the upper Mzymta valley where the project of polygon is situated.

The following measures, amongst others, were also included in the compensatory measures component of it:

- the establishment of a minimum 1 km wide buffer zone around the entire Caucasus State Natural Biosphere Strict Reserve ;
- the re-establishment of a sustainable population (minimum of 50-60 individuals) of the Persian leopard as an important component of the Caucasus ecosystem ;
- the changes of SNP zoning, from recreational to strict protection, for lands adjacent to the zakaznik and bordering the Mzymta River.

---

<sup>11</sup> See art. 88, 94 and 95 of the operational guidelines.

<sup>12</sup> As “*an outstanding example representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals*”;

<sup>13</sup> A property containing “*the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation*”.

<sup>14</sup> Art. 119 of the Operational Guidelines

<sup>15</sup> OGs, art. 172.

<sup>16</sup> <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/documents/> .

<sup>17</sup> In the context, the WHC decision was related to another project of polygon located in the North part of the CNR, nearby the Lagonaki Plateau ; however, it is more than evident that this recommendation and the following would be made by the WHC for any other polygon located within the property boundaries.

This Plan was also part of the bid-book for the Sochi Olympic Games, without prejudice to the agreements made between the Russian Government and the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

As such, it may not represent an internationally binding commitment, but should be seen as "*an intrinsic commitment of the Russian Federation to international sports and environmental community*"<sup>18</sup>.

### **3. ASSESSMENT**

This assessment will address the two objectives of the advisory mission, as defined in the ToRs.

#### **3.1 Possible impacts of existing development plans on the OUV of the property**

##### **3.1.1 Contribution of the area to the OUV of the property**

Basic documentation was provided to the mission which led to the following comments.

At the time of the mission:

- the government had not yet adopted the rules and the borders of what could become a biosphere polygon within the boundaries of the property and adjacent to it;
- the two companies did not come to the meeting organized during the visit of the mission and one cancelled a bilateral appointment with the mission; at this stage, they would have only "*expressed their interest*" in developing tourism infrastructure in the property and in the adjacent SSWS that covers the upper Mzymta valley.

The polygon would cover several clusters in the CNR; it would be located in very sensitive areas of high ecological value (**Map 3**):

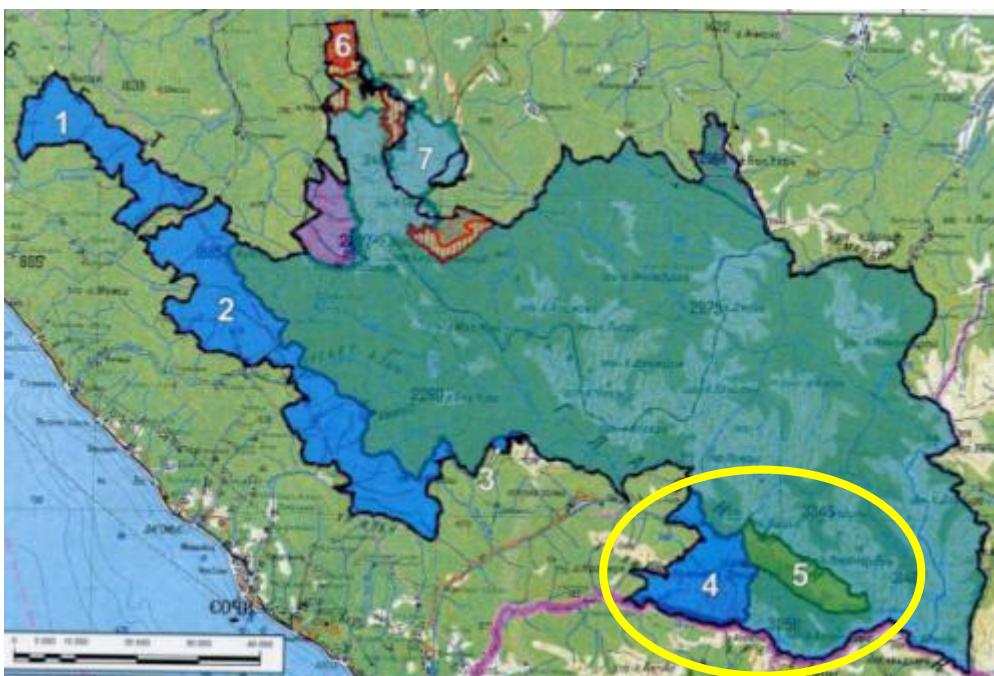
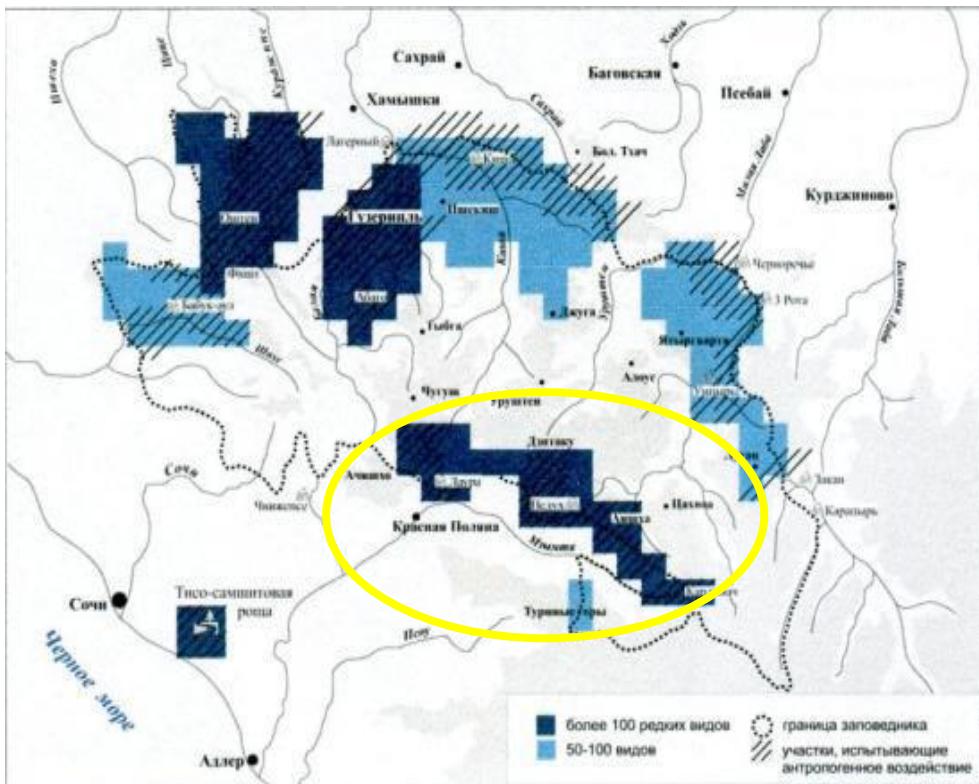
- the overall area, both within the boundaries of the property and adjacent to it, is known for long as a very important breeding and wintering area for many species that contribute directly and significantly to the OUV of the property<sup>19</sup>, especially under criterion (x);
- this ecological value has been confirmed recently by a group of scientists and experts from the CNR and the SNP in a recent note which leaves no doubt about the value of the area (**Annex 6**), under both criteria, (ix) and (x) ;
- the Government itself recognizes the unique biological value of the areas adjacent to the property within the SNP and the SSWS and its contribution to the natural processes of the Western Caucasus ecosystem. The State Party proposed these areas as extension of the property under criteria (ix) and (x) in 2014<sup>20</sup> (**Map 4 – clusters 4 and 5**) ;

---

<sup>18</sup> Letter from A. Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, to I. Chestin, WWF Russia Chief Executive Officer, dated 14 April 2016. This is also the sense of the response received by the Russian Olympic Committee from M. Valentik, Deputy Minister at the MNRE and head of the Forest federal Agency (Source : letter from M. Ch. De Kepper, Director general of the IOC, to M. Lambertini, Director general, WWF International, dated 08 March 2016.

<sup>19</sup> See UNESCO/IUCN joint monitoring reactive missions, 2008 and 2010.

<sup>20</sup> This extension was then withdrawn by the Government in 2016.



In conclusion, the proposed polygon would cover parts of the territory of the property; the development plans would also cover adjacent areas being recognized as very sensitive and of very high ecological value and contributing to the OUV of the property (**Map 4**).

### 3.1.2 Impacts of the “*development plans*” on the OUV

No relevant and detailed document showing the existing plans for tourism infrastructure development within and around the property, was provided to the mission during its visit.

The discussions and meetings during the mission suggested that only “*declarations of interest*” have been made so far by two companies, Gasprom and Rosa Khutor, in relation to potential mass tourism development within the property and in the SSWS, the adjacent zakaznyk, including the construction of new large-scale infrastructure and facilities.

The only technical information received by the mission is a PowerPoint document presented by Gasprom at the MNRE in 2016; this “*Gasprom plan*” foresees construction of large scale tourism infrastructure within the property, including 39 ski lifts and 180 km of alpine ski slopes (**Annex 7**).

The mission did not receive further information on this plan, nor on the Rosa Khutor plans, and did not have the opportunity to exchange directly with the representatives of these companies during its visit<sup>21</sup>.

A meeting with the developers, Gasprom, Rosa Khutor and Ober Khutor was initially scheduled on 2 November; this meeting was however cancelled due to the absence of the companies. The organisers fixed later on an appointment with a Rosa Khutor official who cancelled it at the last moment.

Based on the information provided to the mission, it is likely that the above-mentioned plans may have significant impacts on the integrity of the area and may potentially threaten the property; they may also not be fully compatible with the other obligations and commitments of the Russian Federation mentioned above and may impact the efforts of reintroducing the Persian leopard by disrupting the connectivity of its natural habitat (**Map 5**).

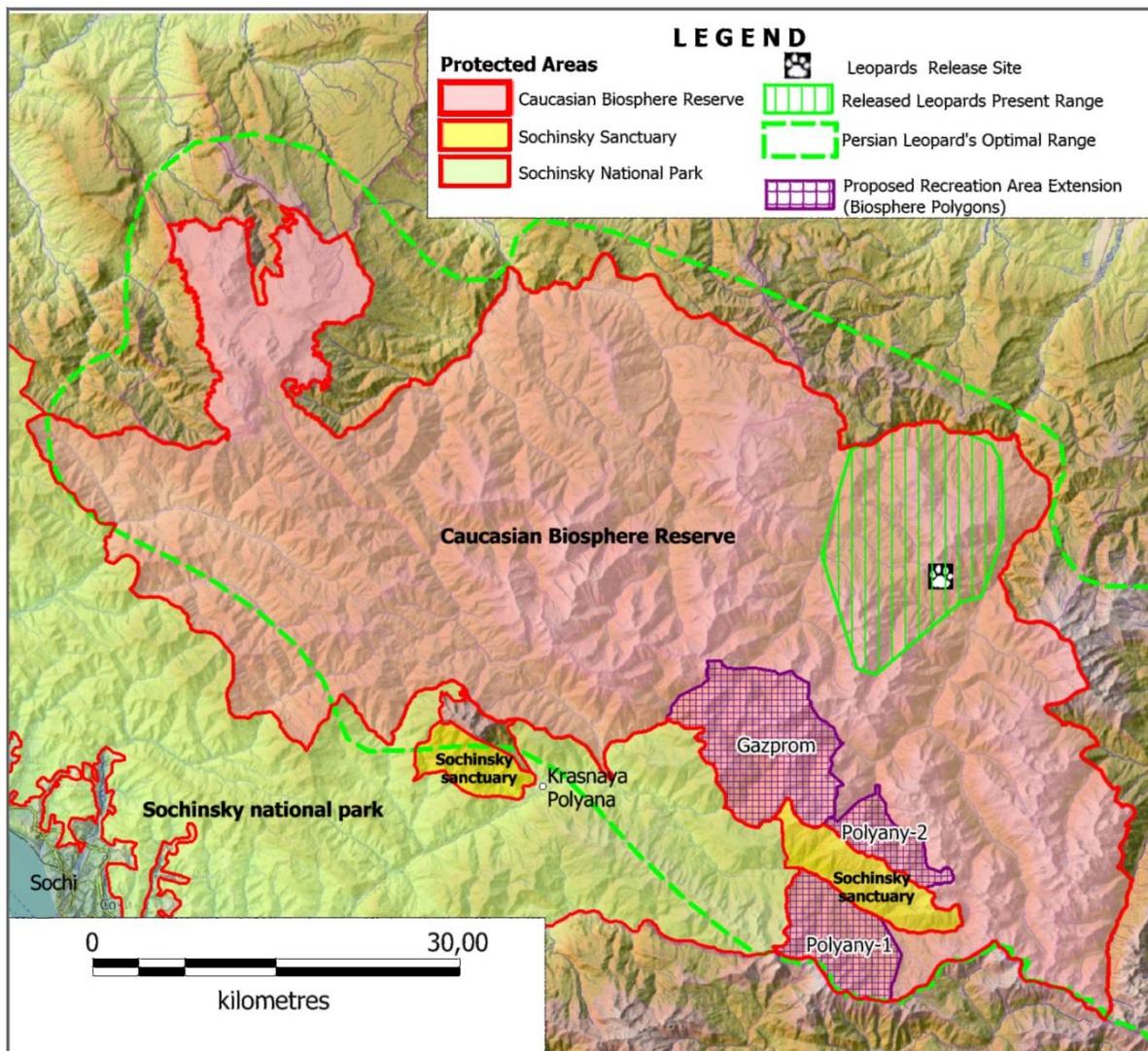
In the short term, the government should invite the developers (1) to elaborate further their plans, (2) to communicate them to the Government officially, and (3) to assess, from the beginning of the on-going process, the potential environmental impacts of their plans on the overall area, paying particular attention to any potential impacts on the OUV of the property.

- those companies should be urged to elaborate Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for their projects, meeting the international standards and guided by the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment<sup>22</sup>;
- those EIAs should contain prevention and mitigation measures to any threats to the OUV of the property ;
- they should then be submitted by the Government to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, before the decision to establish the polygon is taken.

---

<sup>21</sup> Only one person from Rosa Khutor (M. Vladimir Klyushkin) was met during the field visit; however, this person did not have the mandate to exchange with the mission on the development of the Rosa Khutor mountain resort.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.iucn.org/theme/world-heritage/resources/iucn-policies/environmental-assessment>



**Map 5** – Optimal Persian leopard habitat (Source : WWF Russia/Severtsov Institute of Ecology and Evolution of the Russian Academy of Sciences).

The companies could contact IUCN, would they wish, for advice on the implementation of the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

In line with the Operational Guidelines, paragraph 172, the State Party should submit the EIAs conducted for those plans, inside or adjacent to the property, to the World Heritage Centre, and, as soon as possible when available, maps showing the exact location of all proposed or planned infrastructure, as well as all other relevant technical documentation.

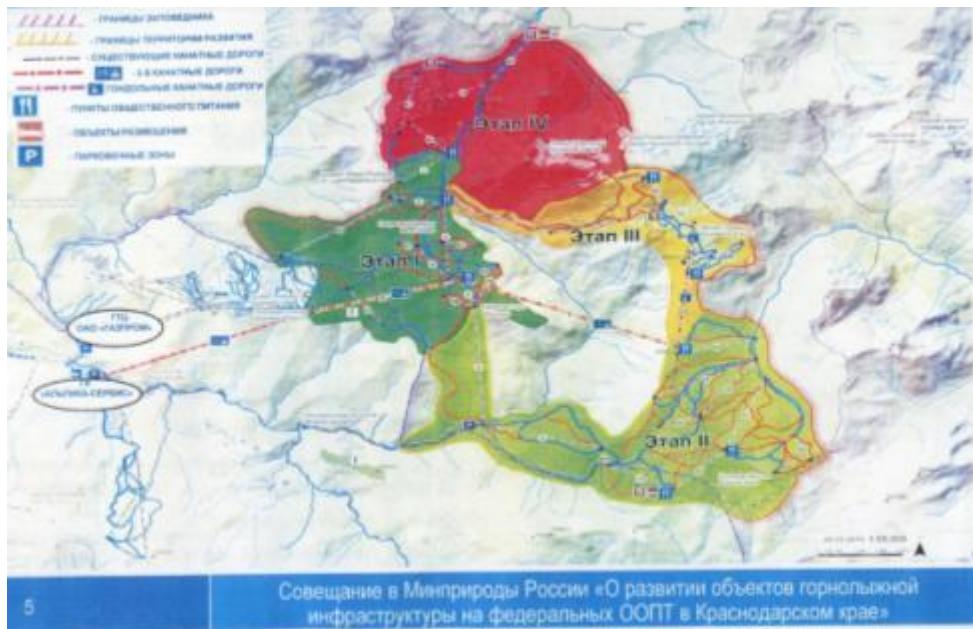
As urged several times by the Committee, the State Party should also develop an overall sustainable strategy and comprehensive plan for the whole property and its adjacent protected areas, privileging low impact tourism activities and ensuring that the proposed tourism and recreational infrastructures will not impact the OUV of the property.

This strategy should be elaborated in close cooperation with the companies and then be submitted by the State Party to the Committee, for review by IUCN, in line also with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

### 3.1.2.1 The polygon

The establishment of the polygon itself may potentially threaten the OUV of the property. This will depend on:

- its location (in a more or less ecologically sensitive area) and size. According to **Map 2**, it would be situated in a key area for sustaining biodiversity and ecological processes and therefore for the OUV of the property;
- the uses and activities that will be developed inside the polygon and their impacts on the OUV of the property. It should be noted that alpine ski resorts and mass tourism have been recognized in the past by the Committee as potentially threatening the property. Specifically in its Decision 38COM 7B.77 the Committee reiterated its request to the State Party to ensure that "no large scale ski or tourism infrastructure is built within the property".
- the rules that will be defined in order to regulate those uses and activities and minimize their impacts. The companies have expressed their interest to develop mass tourism which is not compatible with the strict level of protection of a SNR, except in specific polygons where this can be allowed under the Federal Law. However, it is most likely that the provisional plans that Gazprom intends to develop in this area<sup>23</sup> **will impact the property and that effects of such plans, in general, even minimized, will remain significant.**



**Map 6** - Development of the mountain ski infrastructure in the federal protected areas in Krasnodar krai" (Source : Gazprom.).

- whether those plans would be compatible with the maintenance of the ecological character of the CNR under the Federal Law, and the provisions that justify establishment of biosphere polygons;

According to the conclusions of the 2008, 2010 and 2012 World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring missions and in line with the previous decisions of the Committee, it is most likely that **the proposed plans for large-scale tourism infrastructure development will not be compatible with the World Heritage requirements and the maintenance of the OUV of the property and may degrade its integrity.**

<sup>23</sup> Source : this map was presented by M. Proforov, board member and head of the Gazprom Department on public corporation, at a meeting in the MNRE on "development of the mountain ski infrastructure in the federal protected areas in Krasnodar krai".

In that case, the property may face potential danger due to the development of plans and projects which may affect its inherent characteristics (OGs, art. 178), and the Committee may need to consider whether this would constitute a case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in line with paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines.

As mentioned above, the development of mass tourism infrastructure and year-round activities in the proposed polygon may also compromise the success of reintroduction of the Persian leopard and the development of a minimum viable population at the level of the Caucasus region (eg. disturbances, loss of ecological connectivity, habitat degradation, poaching).

In conclusion, it is strongly recommended that the State Party submit the project of boundaries and rules for the establishment of the polygon within the property, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, prior to making any decision.

It is also recommended to submit the proposed tourism infrastructure development plans and the EIAs when available, to the IUCN SSC/Cat Specialist Group to seek their advice with regards to potential impacts of this development on the success of the project of reintroduction of the Persian leopard.

### **3.2 Issues related to the property's boundaries**

The mission focused on the delimitation of the Southern part of the property, in relation to the establishment of the polygon and to the extension of the existing ski resorts assessed above.

#### **3.2.1 Procedural context**

The boundaries of a World Heritage property can be modified according to the Operational Guidelines, § III.I; the process will differ depending on whether the proposed boundary modification is considered minor or significant.

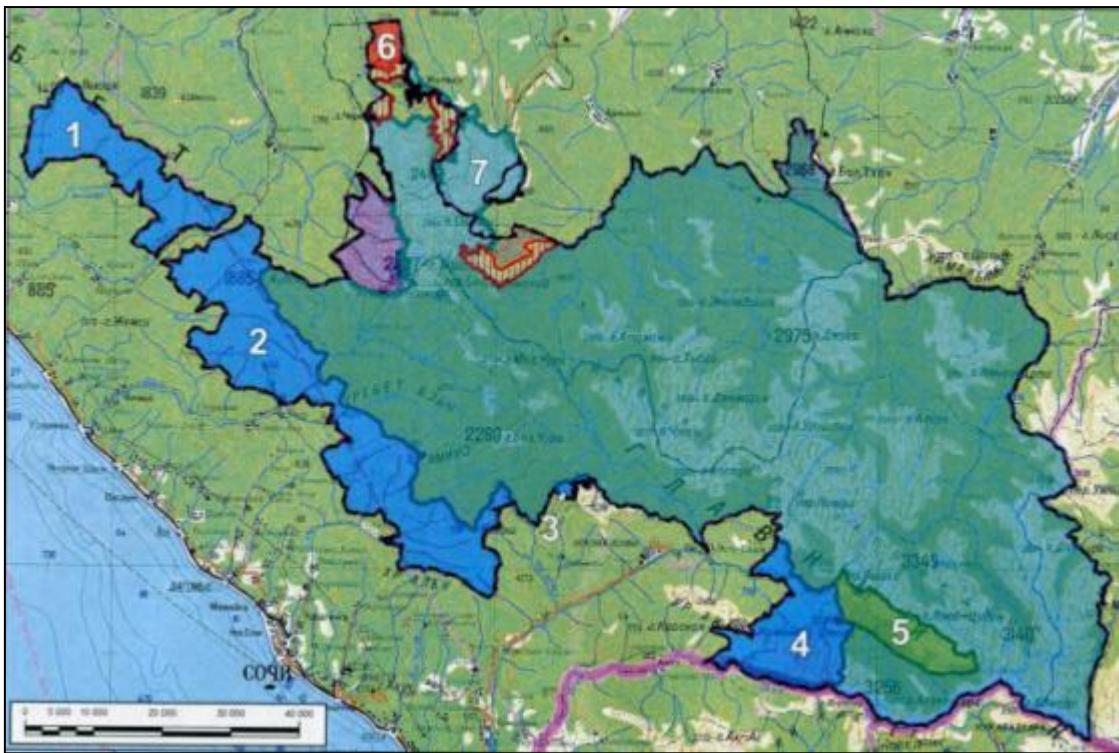
In the context of development of mass tourism plans and large scale tourism infrastructure, an exclusion of areas covering several thousand hectares of land, recognized as being sensitive and of high ecological value and important for the preservation of the OUV of the property, will be deemed significant and potentially significantly affecting the OUV.

#### **3.2.2 Historical context**

In 2014, the State Party had proposed an extension of the property to the SSWS (plot 5) and to insert areas from the SNP (plots 1 to 3), including its South Eastern part (plot 4) (**Map 7**).

This proposed extension responded to the international commitments made by the Russian Federation, including those associated with the Olympic Games in Sochi, as mentioned above, to extend the property and to include (1) the core zone of the SNP and (2) as well as the Upper Mzymta valley.

This proposal was withdrawn by the State Party before it was considered by the Committee at its 40<sup>th</sup> session (Istanbul, 2016).



**Map 7** – Proposal for inscription on the UNESCO World Cultural and natural Heritage List, 2014  
(Source: MNRE of the Russian Federation).

### 3.2.3 Current context

The mission is not aware of any current proposal of extension or reduction of the property.

The State Party should be invited to propose again the extension of the property to the core zone of the SNP and, in priority, to the SSWS which (1) offers key habitats for fauna species migrating seasonally from the property, for wintering and breeding in that protected area, and (2) hosts a high floral biodiversity which would strengthen the OUV of the property.

This nomination would also be in line with the international commitments of the Russian Federation to the international sport and environment communities.

However, it should be noted that the areas proposed for large-scale tourism infrastructure, as outlined above, would include large areas of the SSWS and if the plans for infrastructure development were to proceed, the impacts on the SSWS may potentially be significant.

### 3.3 Other issues

In the framework of an advisory mission, the mission has considered that the matter of climate change and its effects on both the OUV of the property and its resilience against adverse effects, should be addressed.

According to research works carried on climate change in the Caucasus region, climate change is an important issue for the protection of the mountain ecosystems. This matter should appear very high in the political agenda and should also require greater consideration by policymakers and business companies.

Present climatic situation in the Caucasian region and the climate change scenarios should be analyzed in further details, before construction of new resorts in the Western Caucasus<sup>24</sup>. The economic and financial cost-effectiveness of mountain ski resorts is directly linked to the duration of the snow cover availability, especially in areas like the South Western Caucasus where solid precipitation is likely to drastically decrease by 2050, as well as the duration of snow cover available for skiing. In that context, artificial snow will be more and more needed in an area where integrated water management should be a top priority for the Government and the Sochi conurbation<sup>25</sup>.

Furthermore, closely associated to the significant reduction of snow already observed in the Mzymta valley<sup>26</sup>, avalanches may become a growing and significant problem in the near future, especially in low mountain and relatively warm areas, such as the Mzymta valley; this risk leads to the establishment of assessment methods and to the creation of a strong monitoring programme based on accurate avalanche and meteorological data<sup>27</sup>.

Based on the above observations, the mission makes the following recommendations:

- the monitoring system of the property and the whole area should be strengthened , in line with the "*Plan of measures for the restoration of Mzymta river, comprehensive environmental monitoring and preparation of compensatory measures as part of environmental component of preparation for the XXII Winter Olympic and XI Paralympic Games in Sochi in 2014*" adopted by the Russian Federation ;
- a specific programme of activities should be developed under the leadership of the MNRE, in cooperation with the SNP, towards the creation of an operational Integrated Environment Information and Monitoring System (IEIMS), integrating all existing data on the Western Caucasus in a GIS system ;
- a strong monitoring programme should be developed on the financial outputs of the development of tourism and recreational activities in the region, compared to its socio economic effects on public safety, environment - in priority water resources - at the watershed level;
- concrete measures should be taken to ensure optimal prevention and mitigation against the adverse effects of this development on the OUV of the property.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Four major issues were considered by the mission, in relation to its two objectives:

- the obligations of the State Party regarding the World Heritage Convention;
- the implementation of the Committee's decisions;
- the international commitments of the Russian Federation, particularly those associated with the Sochi Olympic Games;
- the potential effects of the establishment of a polygon within the property which would allow the future development of large scale tourism infrastructure in the property and adjacent protected areas.

---

<sup>24</sup> See : Sokratov S.A., Seliverstov Y.G., Shnyparkov A.L. Assessment of the economic risk for the ski resorts of changes in snow cover duration. *Ice and Snow*. 2014;54(3):100-106. (In Russ.) DOI:10.15356/2076-6734-2014-3-100-106.

<sup>25</sup> See the "restoration of the Mzymta river" component of the "*Plan of measures for the restoration of Mzymta river, comprehensive environmental monitoring and preparation of compensatory measures as part of environmental component of preparation for the XXII Winter Olympic and XI Paralympic Games in Sochi in 2014*".

<sup>26</sup> See : Oleynikov A.D. Snow resources of Krasnaya Polyana area (Western Caucasus). *Ice and Snow*. 2013;53(4):83-94. DOI:10.15356/2076-6734-2013-4-83-94.

<sup>27</sup> See amongst others : Komarov, A. Y., Seliverstov, Y. G., Glazovskaya, T. G., and Turchaninova, A. S.: Risk assessment in the North Caucasus ski resorts, Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci., 16, 2227-2234, doi:10.5194/nhess-16-2227-2016, 2016.

As noted above, the meetings with private companies who had expressed their interest in ski resorts development within the property and in surrounding areas were cancelled and therefore the mission did not have the opportunity to discuss these plans with the proponents directly, nor was it provided with detailed information on the proposed development.

**However, recalling previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee which expressed its concern over potential development of large-scale tourism infrastructure within the property and based on the information provided to the mission regarding the existing plans for ski resort developments, the mission concludes that it is likely that these plans may have significant impact on the integrity of the property and adjacent protected areas and may potentially threaten the property's OUV.** Therefore, in case a decision is taken to establish a biosphere polygon within the boundaries of the property and to proceed with such plans for tourism infrastructure development within the boundaries of the property and in adjacent protected areas, the Word Heritage Committee may need to consider whether this would constitute a case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in line with paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines.

In addition, the mission wishes to note that given the current and predicted future impacts of climate change in the Caucasus region, development of ski resorts in this area might not be economically viable in the long-term.

These matters lead to the following advice and recommendations:

### **Recommendation 1**

In the short term, the Government of the Russian Federation should invite the companies who have expressed an interest in developing mass tourism infrastructure and activities in the proposed biosphere polygon within the boundaries of the property and in the boundaries of the Sochi State Wildlife Sanctuary (1) to provide detailed information on their projects to the Government, (2) to assess, from the earliest stage and to prior to any decision to proceed with the proposed projects, the potential environmental impacts of these projects on the overall area, including any potential impacts on the OUV of the property, through preparation of EIAs, in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

### **Recommendation 2**

Prior to any decision to proceed with the establishment of a biosphere polygon and to permit large-scale tourism infrastructure development within the property, the State Party should submit, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, to the World Heritage Centre for review and feedback by IUCN the EIAs for each of the proposed projects, ensuring that these EIAs:

- specifically assess any potential impacts on the OUV of the property and identify measures to avoid and minimize those impacts;
- include maps showing the exact location of all proposed or planned infrastructure, as well as technically relevant documentation on the levels of capacities of accommodation and facilities, planned inside or adjacent to the property;

The State Party could contact IUCN for advice on the implementation of the IUCN World Heritage advice note on Environmental Assessment. The State Party should also consider seeking further advice from the IUCN Species Survival Commission Cat Specialist Group

on the proposed plans, in the light of their potential impacts on the success of the reintroduction of the Persian leopard.

### **Recommendation 3**

In response to the Committee's past decisions, the State Party should also develop without further delay, an overall sustainable tourism strategy and a comprehensive plan for the whole property and its adjacent protected areas; this plan should prioritize low impact activities and ensure that the proposed tourism and recreational infrastructures will not impact on the OUV of the property.

This strategy should be elaborated in close cooperation with interested companies and then be submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, in line with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, prior to any decision to proceed with any individual projects.

The mission also recommends that such strategy takes into account the long-term economic viability of ski resorts development in the region given the current and potential impacts of climate change in the Caucasus region and encourages elaboration of cost-benefits analyses of the financial outputs of the proposed development of tourism and recreational activities in the region, compared to their socio-economic effects on public safety, environment and water resources.

### **Recommendation 4**

It is recommended that the State Party submits a new proposal for extension of the property to include the core zone of the Sochi National Park and, as a priority, the Sochi State Wildlife Sanctuary. The Sanctuary (which would also be affected by the plans to develop tourism infrastructure) is considered a priority are because it (1) offers key habitats for endemic, rare and endangered fauna species, migrating seasonally from the property in that protected area, for wintering and breeding, and (2) hosts key natural habitats for those species as well as an outstanding flora biodiversity, and therefore the extension of the property to include this area would strengthen the OUV of the existing property.

This extension will also meet the international commitments made by the Russian Federation to the international sport and environment communities which remain to be acted upon.

### **Recommendation 5**

The State Party is advised:

- to strengthen the monitoring system of the property and the whole area, in line with the "*Plan of measures for the restoration of Mzymta river, comprehensive environmental monitoring and preparation of compensatory measures as part of environmental component of preparation for the XXII Winter Olympic and XI Paralympic Games in Sochi in 2014*" adopted by the Russian Federation;
- to develop a specific programme of activities under the leadership of the MNRE, in cooperation with the SNP, towards the creation of an operational Integrated Environment Information and Monitoring System (IEIMS), integrating all existing data on the Western Caucasus in a GIS system.

**LIST OF ANNEXES**

- Annex 1 - Terms of Reference
- Annex 2 – Provisional agenda
- Annex 3 - NGOS representatives met by the mission during his visit
- Annex 4 - Experts and specialists met by the mission during his visit
- Annex 5 – President Order to the Prime Minister
- Annex 6 – Scientists note
- Annex 7 – Gasprom presentation

**Annex 1****Terms of Reference**

**IUCN Advisory mission to  
Western Caucasus World Heritage Site  
(Russian Federation)**  
**(1-3 November 2016)**

On 25 July 2016 an invitation was received from the State Party for an Advisory mission to Western Caucasus. The invitation letter referred to the recent legislative changes in the Russian Federation concerning protected areas, including World Heritage sites, the Government of the Russian Federation's stated plans for more effective management of territories partially included in protected areas and opportunities for resorts development, including within World Heritage sites. On 11 October 2016 the State Party suggested to undertake the mission during the period of 1-3 November. As outlined in the invitation letter, the main objectives of the Advisory mission are to:

- Assess the recent legislative changes and possible impacts of existing development plans on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
- Discuss any issues related to the property's boundaries, taking into account the evaluation of past proposals for boundary modification;

The mission should be assisted to conduct the necessary field visits to key locations, and to meet all the relevant stakeholders concerned, including a) relevant authorities at federal, regional and local level; b) representatives of tourism sector with potential interests in resort development in the area; c) NGOs.

In order to enable preparation for the mission, the following items should be provided to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN as soon as possible:

- a) relevant documents outlining any recent legislative changes concerning protected areas, including World Heritage sites;
- b) any relevant documents showing the existing plans for tourism infrastructure development within and around the property;

Based on the results of the above-mentioned assessments and discussions with the State Party representatives and stakeholders, the mission will develop recommendations to the Government of the Russian Federation with the objective of providing guidance on the issues addressed in points 1-2 above, in order to ensure the long-term conservation of the property's Outstanding Universal Value.

The mission will prepare a concise mission report no later than 6 weeks after the end of the field visit in the format agreed with the State Party.

**Annex 2**

**Draft agenda of UNESCO/IUCN Advisory mission to the World Heritage  
property "Western Caucasus"**  
**1-3, November, 2016**

1.11.2016	Arrival of participants and experts in Adler. Accommodation in the hotel, kick-off meeting with the Ministry of Natural Resources, coordination of the program. 19.00 Dinner for all participants
2.11.2016	8.00 Breakfast for all participants 09.00–11.00 Helicopter flight over territory of the Caucasian reserve, Sochi refuge and Sochi National Park 12.00–13.00 Meeting with scientists (beginning) 13.00–14.00 Lunch for all participants 14.00–16.00 Meeting with scientists (end) 16.00–19.00 Meeting with developers (OAO «Gazprom», OAO «Rosa Khutor» and OAO «Ober-Khutor»). 19.30 Dinner for all participants
3.11.2016	8.00 Breakfast for all participants 9.00–12.00 Meeting with NGOs 12.00–13.00 Lunch for all participants 13.00–14.00 Final discussion with the Ministry of Natural Resources and developers, scientists and NGOs 14.00 Departure to the airport (Flight to Sheremetyevo at 17.15)

**Annex 3**

<b>NGOS REPRESENTATIVES MET BY THE MISSION DURING HIS VISIT</b>				
<b>Title</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Mr	Igor	<b>Chestin</b>	Chief Executive Officer	WWF Russia
Mr	Andrey	<b>Petrov</b>	World Heritage Campaign Coordinator	Greenpeace Russia
Mr	Mikhail	<b>Kreindlin</b>	Legal adviser	
Mrs.	Yulia	<b>Naberezhnaya</b>	Members	Sochi branch of the Russian Geographical Society
Mrs.	Maraya	<b>Reneva</b>		
Mr.	Felix	<b>Ivanenko</b>		
Mrs.	Natalia	<b>Gudkova</b>		
Mr.	Andrey	<b>Rudhomakha</b>		Environmental Watch on North Caucasus
Mr.	Vladimir	<b>Kumaev</b>		
Mr.	Vitalij	<b>Kovalev</b>		NABU

**Annex 4**

<b>EXPERTS AND SPECIALISTS MET BY THE MISSION DURING HIS VISIT</b>				
<b>Title</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Prof.	Anatoly	<b>Kudakin</b>	Chief researcher	Russian Academy of Science, Institute of Mountain areas
Mr.	Sergueyj	<b>Naidenko</b>	Scientist	Russian Academy of Science, Severtsov Institute of Ecology
Prof.	Boris	<b>Tuniev</b>	Deputy Director on Science	Sochi National Park
Mr.	Nicolaï	<b>Eskin</b>	Deputy Director on Science	Caucasus Nature Reserve

**Annex 5**

**ПРЕЗИДЕНТ  
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ**

**ПОРУЧЕНИЕ**

Д.А.Медведеву

Определите порядок и критерии принятия Правительством Российской Федерации решений о создании биосферных полигонов в границах государственных природных заповедников, предусмотрев проведение государственной экологической экспертизы проектов таких решений, их широкое общественное обсуждение и представление на рассмотрение Президента Российской Федерации.

Срок – 15 октября 2016 г.

A large, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Путин", is written over a yellow rectangular background.

В.Путин

Пр-1333  
14.07.2016

**Annex 6**

### **Nature Protective Value of the Caucasus Nature Reserve in the Upper Reaches of Mzymta River**

The part of the Caucasus Nature Reserve in the upper reaches of Mzymta River represents the areas of Pseashkha Massif, Tabunnya Mountain, Medvezhyi (Bear) Gates, northern slopes of Aishkha Massif, Loiub and Loiub-Tsekhe Mountains till the Agepsta Mountain on the State boundary with Abkhazia – on the right shore of the river as well as Agepsta Massif and Turii Mountains on the left shore. The total square of these lands is about 10,000 ha (pic. 11).

**Nature protective value of this area is undoubtedly proved by the fact that this area was inscribed in the UNESCO World Natural Heritage List since 1999 by the nomination of the Government of the Russian Federation (Western Caucasus property).**

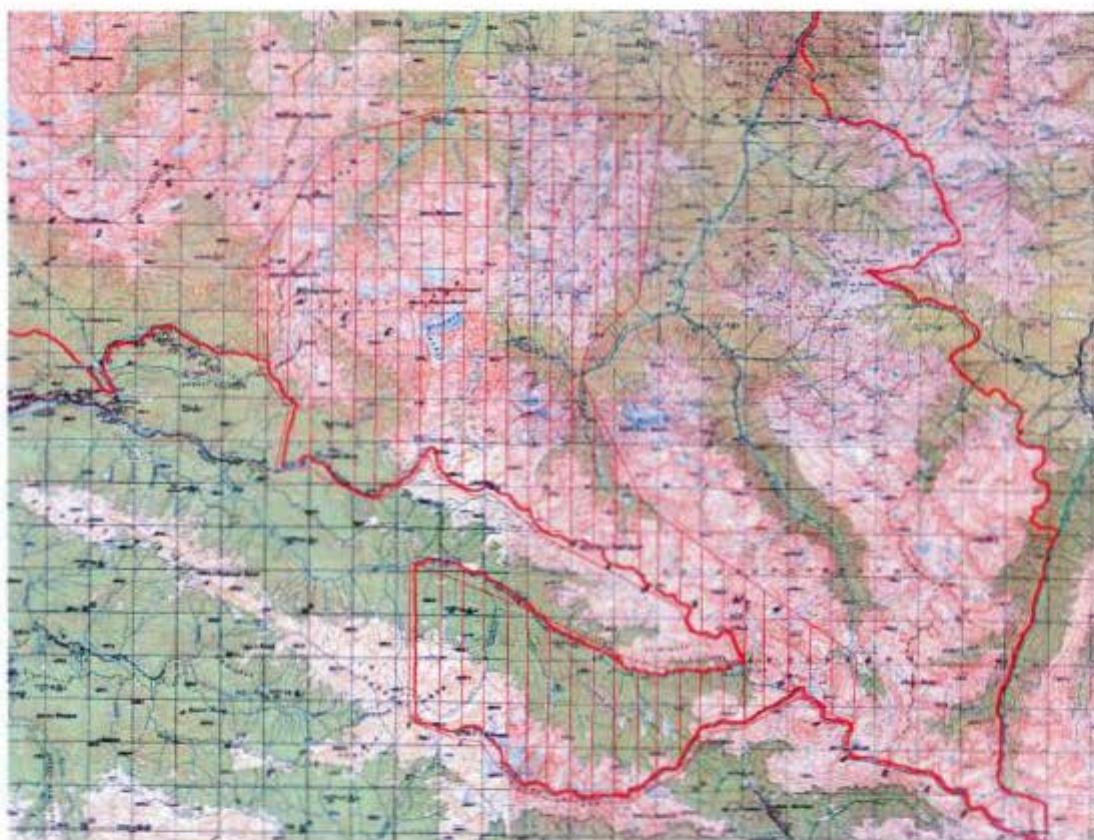
Vegetation of the upper reaches of Mzymta River is represented by a complete number of vertical belts such as Alpine, Subalpine grasslands, oak, beech and fir trees. The upper limit of forest is created by birch and beech crooked forest as well as by high mountain maple forest. The plots of avalanche law forest are numerous.

The area of upper reaches of Mzymta River inside the Caucasus Nature Reserve represents the part of unique floristic and faunistic district of Kolkhida biogeographic province that has no analogues on the territory of the Russian Federation. It is inherent in a high concentration of rare plant, fungi and animal species that are inscribed or recommended for inscription into the Red Lists as well as in high degree of vulnerability of the natural complexes. On a base of these facts the area enters the number of districts in the mountain part of the Western Caucasus with high conservational significance. At present 3 of such significant plots are marked out inside the Caucasus Reserve. They are Khosta yew-box tree grove, Lagonaki upland and Guzeripl district (Specially protected species..., 2009) (pic. 12).

Due to the latest data 127 protected species of plants, fungi and animals inscribed in the Red books of Federal and regional significance as well as endemic and relic species of plants and animals number on the examining area of the Caucasus reserve.

15 species inscribed in the Red Data Book of the Russian Federation (2007) inhabit the examining area.

Areas in the southern end of the Caucasus Reserve in the upper reaches of Mzymta River represent a system of passes that have the key importance as places of intensive migration of birds and as a habitat area of rare and scanty bird species. This area is also one of the most intensive migration corridors in the Western Caucasus. Aishkha-1 and Aishkha-2 passes have a special importance as places of narrowing of birds' migration routes that cross the Main Caucasus ridge (MCR). Migration corridor along the Malaia Laba River with Aishkho pass is the largest in this part of the MCR, that is why this plot has a large importance for migrant birds as a place for rest and roosts.



**Picture 11.** Scheme of the Caucasus Reserve areas that are proposed for reclamation in the framework of Upper Mzymta development.

This area plays an important role as a nesting place of endemic birds' species (Caucasian snowcock, Caucasian grouse and mountain chiffchaff) as well as of Eurasian high mountains biome species (Alpine chough, альпийская Alpine accentor, Caucasian snowcock, Caucasian grouse, mountain chiffchaff, common rock thrush and wallcreeper).

**This district is a part of the natural habitat and represents one of the best habitat places for in the Caucasus Reserve for red deer, tur, chamois, wild boar, roe deer and bear. 20% of the reserve's population of turs, 12% of chamois, nearly 5% of deers and not less than 15% of bears could be numbered here.**

This area is extremely important for conservation of rare, endemic and relic species of plants and fungi. Not less than 50 local species of plants, fungi and lichens are inscribed in the Red Data books such as *Hericium coralloides*, *Woodsia fragilis*, European yew (*Taxus baccata*), *Secale kuperianovii*, *Colchicum*, *Colchicum umbrosum*, *Erythronium caucasicum*, *Lilium*, *Muscari coeruleum*, Woronov's snowdrop (*Galanthus woronowii*), *Galanthus*, *Arafoë aromatica*, *Crocus vallicola*, ghost orchid (*Epipogium aphyllum*), *Traunsteinera sphaerica*, *Laserpitium stevenii*, *Buxbaumia viridis*, *Leptogium*, *Lobaria amplissima*, *Lobaria pulmonaria* and *Usnea florida*.

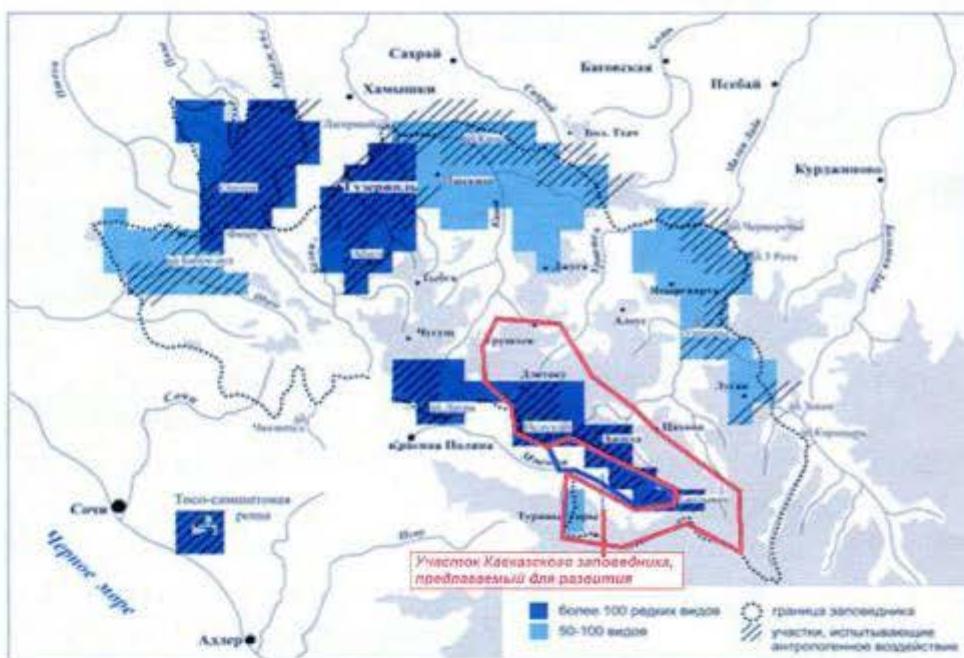
It is necessary to mark specially the importance of this area for conservation of a number of rare plant species whose place of growth in the upper reaches of Mzymta River is the only or one of the few places in the region. The *Delphinium albiflorum* cenopopulations are found in the environs of Azmich stow and on Aishkha Ridge. *Laserpitium stevenii*, the North-Colchian endemic is found on Uglevoi Ridge. It grows in the composition of the tail grasses on subalpine glades of the ridge pectinate zone (this species is extremely rare and could disappear even during light changes of the environmental conditions). The last large scale groves of *Ulmus foliosum* are still preserved in the valley of Tikhia River.

High conservation value of this area is caused also by existence of relic high mountain bog in the source of Mzymta River in the Azmych River valley. Its flora includes a number of wetland species of vascular plants that are the relics of the Pleistocene glaciations and are inscribed in the Red Data book of Krasnodar Krai (2007): *Carex limosa*, *Menyanthes trifoliata* and *Pinguicula vulgaris*. Besides the Azmych bog is the only one place of growth in Krasnodar Krai of such rare for Caucasus sphagnum mosses as *Sphagnum central* and *S. magellanicum*. The populations of a number of such rare plant species as *Allium circassicum*, *Oreopteris limbosperma*, *Secale kuperianovii*, *Crocus vallicola*, *Delphinium albiflorum*, *Woodsia fragilis*, *Taxus baccata* and others are also marked in the upper reaches of Mzymta River.

Such Red data species as *Gymnocarpium robertianum*, *Ruscus colchicus*, *Convallaria transcaucasica*, *Galanthus woronowii*, *Dactylorhiza urvilleana*, *Epipogium aphyllum*, *Platanthera chlorantha*, *Paeonia caucasica*, *Atropa caucasica* and many others are marked sporadically in the forest belt of the whole area.

Such Red Data lichens as *Leptogium asiaticum*, *Fuscopannaria mediterranea* and *Normandina pulchella* are met in the old-growth forests of Mzymta River valley.

Coniferous forests of the upper reaches of Mzymta River are unique in geobotanical respect. It is the south-west limit of mixed forest stands of Nordmann fir and Caucasian spruce rotating with subalpine glades that are sharply displaced down inside the altitudinal zonation. The influence of Pleistocene glaciation in the upper reaches of Mzymta River that is preserved currently as a spacious Khyms-Ane-Kjo glacier on Agepsta Mountain with examples of the traces of xerothermic period in Azych stow and near the Kardiyvach Lake represent the extreme importance for understanding of vegetation and animal world's genesis for the whole Colchis and for the reconstruction of the historical past of Caucasus during the glacial and Holocene period of Cenozoic era.



**Picture 12.** Area of the Caucasus Reserve proposing for reclamation in the framework of Upper Mzymta development in the system of sozological regionalization of the Caucasus Reserve.

Relic narrow-local tall-grass phytocenoses of the upper forest limit and in particular ferny communities of the upper forest limit of the reserve with *Athyrium distentifolium* as well as narrow-local Subalpine tall-grass communities with *Euphorbia eugeniana* (Red Data book of Krasnodar Krai, 2007) and *Arafoe aromatica* – Red Data Books of the Russian Federation (2008) and Krsnodar Krai (2007) represent the huge sozological value.



During strengthening of the recreational load and accessibility of many plots previously untouched by economic activity, the possibility of destruction of habitat places and physical elimination of plants will grow as a result of trampling; infrastructure construction; building, widening and further exploitation of paths and roads; driving four-wheelers over the virgin meadow areas and so on. Besides the introduction of synanthropic plant species including adventives ones brings the large threat to the aboriginal plant communities.

Development of the above-mentioned areas will cause the irreparable damage to the Western Caucasus ecosystems with perspective of the permanent development of negative processes and loose of individual species.

*This document was written and signed by seven persons from the staff of Caucasus Nature Reserve and Sochi National Park including 3 doctors of Biology and 3 Philosophy doctors (Biology).*

**(non official translation).**

Учитывая высочайшую природоохранную ценность хр. Аибга для сохранения полноты биоразнообразия Российской Федерации, включая около 200 редких и исчезающих видов растений и животных, узколокальных эндемиков и реликтов, девственные леса и первозданные горно-луговые ландшафты, не вызывает сомнения необходимость дальнейшего сохранения этой уникальной в планетарном масштабе особо охраняемой территории Российской Федерации.

Заместитель директора  
ФГБУ «Кавказский  
государственный заповедник»

Н.Б. Ескин

Главный научный сотрудник  
ФГБУ «Кавказский  
государственный заповедник»,  
Доктор биологических наук, профессор

А.Н. Кудактин

Старший научный сотрудник  
ФГБУ «Кавказский  
государственный заповедник»,  
Доктор биологических наук, профессор

В.В. Акатов

Старший научный сотрудник  
ФГБУ «Кавказский  
государственный заповедник»,  
Кандидат биологических наук

Т.В. Акатова

Старший научный сотрудник  
ФГБУ «Кавказский  
государственный заповедник»,  
Кандидат биологических наук

С.А. Трепет

Заместитель директора по научной работе  
Сочинского государственного национального парка  
Доктор биологических наук, профессор

Б.С. Тунев

Ведущий научный сотрудник  
Сочинского государственного национального парка  
Кандидат биологических наук

И.Н. Тимухин

**Annex 7****GASPROM PRESENTATION TO MNRE  
(2016)**

**ГАЗПРОМ**

# О РАЗВИТИИ ГОРНОЛЫЖНОЙ ИНФРАСТРУКТУРЫ ГОРНО-ТУРИСТИЧЕСКОГО ЦЕНТРА ОАО «ГАЗПРОМ»

С.Ф. Прозоров  
Член Правления, начальник Департамента ОАО «Газпром»

Совещание в Минприроды России «О развитии объектов горнолыжной инфраструктуры на федеральных ООПТ в Краснодарском крае»



❖ ГОРНО-ТУРИСТИЧЕСКИЙ ЦЕНТР  
ОАО «ГАЗПРОМ»



❖ ГОРНОКЛИМАТИЧЕСКИЙ  
КУРОРТ «АЛЬПИКА-СЕРВИС»

Совещание в Минприроды России «О развитии объектов горнолыжной инфраструктуры на федеральных ООПТ в Краснодарском крае»



ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ РАЗВИТИЯ ГОРНО-ТУРИСТИЧЕСКОГО ЦЕНТРА  
ОАО «ГАЗПРОМ»

- ❖ В ходе подготовки к проведению Олимпийских Игр создана транспортная и туристическая инфраструктура (вокзалы, дороги, отели), возможности которой позволяют обеспечить значительное увеличение посещаемости горнолыжных курортов Красной Поляны.
  - ❖ Существующие канатные дороги ГТЦ «Газпром» расположены на высотных отметках 970 – 1640 м. В связи с этим для обеспечения устойчивого и достаточного для катания снежного покрова лыжных трасс необходимо использовать склоны, находящиеся на более высоких отметках.

Совещание в Минприроды России «О развитии объектов горнолыжной инфраструктуры на федеральных ООПТ в Краснодарском крае»





## ОСНОВНЫЕ ЭТАПЫ РАЗВИТИЯ

**ГАЗПРОМ**

<p><u>Реализация этапа 1:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 12 канатных дорог</li> <li>❖ 50 км лыжных трасс</li> <li>❖ 23 км пеших маршрутов</li> <li>❖ 2,5 км трасс на Леднике Псеашха</li> </ul>	<p><u>Реализация этапа 2:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 12 канатных дорог</li> <li>❖ 71 км лыжных трасс</li> <li>❖ 22 км пеших маршрутов</li> </ul>
<p><u>Реализация этапа 3:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 11 канатных дорог</li> <li>❖ 23 км лыжных трасс</li> <li>❖ 8 км пеших маршрутов</li> <li>❖ Панорамные площадки</li> </ul>	<p><u>Реализация этапа 4:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 4 канатные дороги</li> <li>❖ 36 км лыжных трасс</li> <li>❖ 18 км пеших маршрутов</li> </ul>

Совещание в Минприроды России «О развитии объектов горнолыжной инфраструктуры на федеральных ООПТ в Краснодарском крае»

6

		ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОКАЗАТЕЛИ РАЗВИТИЯ			
		2015 год		2022 год	
Период катания		Декабрь - Апрель		Октябрь - Август	
Количество канатных дорог		14		53	
Протяженность простых (зеленых и синих) горнолыжных трасс	5 км	26%	свыше 70 км	37%	
Протяженность сложных (красных и чёрных) горнолыжных трасс	14 км	74%	свыше 120 км	63%	
Общая протяженность горнолыжных трасс	19 км		свыше 190 км		
Максимальная ежедневная загрузка курорта	6 000 чел/день		30 000 чел/день		
Территория свободного катания (фрирайд)	-		≈ 400 га		
7	Совещание в Минприроды России «О развитии объектов горнолыжной инфраструктуры на федеральных ООПТ в Краснодарском крае»				



**ГАЗПРОМ**

**ВЫВОДЫ И ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЯ**

- ❖ Создание круглогодичного горнолыжного курорта на базе ГПЦ ОАО «Газпром» и ГК «Альпика-Сервис» обеспечит:
  - привлекательность курорта для отдыхающих в районе г. Сочи в любое время года;
  - максимальную загрузку гостиничной инфраструктуры г. Сочи;
  - рост пассажиропотока между Адлером и Красной Поляной.
- ❖ Для дальнейшего продолжения работы по развитию ГПЦ ОАО «Газпром» необходимо решение вопроса о соответствующем изменении границ Кавказского биосферного заповедника.