

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

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Permanent Delegation of Turkey to UNESCO
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World Heritage List 2018

Göbekli Tepe (Turkey) – Interim report and additional information request

Dear Sir,

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 2018. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation process.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to "Göbekli Tepe" was carried out by Professor Gabriel Cooney (Ireland) from 02 to 06 October 2017. The mission expert highly appreciated the resources and support provided by the experts in your country for the organization and implementation of the mission.

On 21 September 2017, a letter was sent by ICOMOS to request further information regarding the ownership, protection and management, tourism and interpretation, development projects and financial resources. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 26 October 2017 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

At the end of November 2017, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2018. The additional information, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2018.

We thank you for the availability of your Delegation for the meeting held on Thursday 23 November 2017 with some representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. During the final part of the ICOMOS Panel meeting that followed, the ICOMOS Panel identified areas where it considers that further information is needed.

While the ICOMOS Panel considered that "Göbekli Tepe" might have the potential to meet the requirements for Outstanding Universal Value, this has not yet been demonstrated.

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

Justification of Outstanding Universal Value

The ICOMOS Panel considers that the statement of Outstanding Universal Value and the justification of criteria as presented in the nomination dossier would run the risk of fixing the interpretation of the property

and its proposed Outstanding Universal Value within a framework that has not been sufficiently debated and clarified. There would be a need to acknowledge these scientific debates and possible interpretations in the nomination dossier and in the formulation of the proposed Outstanding Universal Value and of the criteria. Could the State Party redraft the statement of Outstanding Universal Value by providing full justification for – or alternatively avoiding usage of – expressions like “the world’s first temples”, “common cultic community” and similar interpretations for which little specific scientific information is provided.

Comparative Analysis

The ICOMOS Panel would be pleased if the State Party could further expand and consolidate the comparative analysis, by providing more detailed and better documented information on a number of sites in the region that are mentioned in the dossier, and more generally on other sites of Pre-Pottery Neolithic A (PPNA) and Early Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (EPPNB) in the region.

Scientific Research

Given the nature of the property, the understanding of the site, its functions and development through time appears to be still in its infancy and in great need of further research and publications. In this respect, the ICOMOS Panel considers that there is an imbalance between the scientific research requirements and prospects as indicated in the nomination dossier, and the proposed management plan.

Could the State Party provide further information on the ongoing and future academic research strategy of the German and Turkish institutions and the coordination of research and conservation?

It would be helpful if the State Party could clarify the involvement of Turkish and Turkey-based scholars in the research work, with special regard to academic transfer of skills and capacity building, and also in terms of co-authored international publications.

Could the State Party provide information on the arrangements, if any, with regard to opportunities for access to data by foreign scholars (other than German or Turkish)?

The ICOMOS Panel would appreciate if the State Party could provide reassurances regarding the continuing medium-and long-term funding of fundamental, independent, scientifically motivated and managed research programmes.

Protection

The ICOMOS Panel understands that because the site has had the status of a ‘Heritage Site’ since 2013 the 1st degree Archaeological Conservation Area – encompassing the nominated property – has allowed the construction of structures (shelters) for the protection of the excavated area, but also for visitors. With regard to the 3rd degree Archaeological Conservation Area, – encompassing the buffer zone - the ICOMOS Panel also notes that constructions are authorized if no archaeological remains have been previously identified through preventive archaeology. Could the State Party provide more information on what this implies in terms of protective measures for the nominated property and its buffer zone?

Could details be please provided as to how the larger protected area – presented in the management plan and currently called the management area – will be equipped with juridical and actual protective measures to ensure its effective function?

Factors Affecting the Property

The ICOMOS Panel understands that a number of protective and visitor structures have been constructed but it does not seem that any assessment of their impacts has been undertaken. Could the State Party clarify the strategy in this regard for the future and how do they see the future of the already built structures?

The additional information suggests that “compulsory infrastructure” may be seen as not requiring assessment of its potential visual and archaeological impact on the site. The ICOMOS Panel considers that potential threats coming from these infrastructure works could affect the protection of the values of the property. Could the State Party provide detailed information concerning these compulsory infrastructures and their future locations? Could the State Party clarify whether there will be any impacts on the site or its setting

from any such proposed infrastructure, such as the rail network mentioned in the nomination dossier? We understand that conservation and land-use for Göbekli Tepe and its environment are defined in the 1/100.000 scaled environmental plan of Adıyaman-Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır. The ICOMOS Panel would welcome further information on the 1/100.000 scaled environmental plan of Adıyaman-Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır.

There would be a need to reduce the visual impact of the irrigation canals located east and southeast of the nominated property, as well as the limestone quarry near the village of Örencik. Could the State Party provide information on future planned landscaping as part of the overall management strategy? Could the State Party please share with ICOMOS whether the limestone quarry has ceased its activity?

Conservation

It would be helpful if the State Party could clarify the development of a conservation policy and plan. The ICOMOS Panel notes that the property is currently in acceptable state of conservation, given that the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) has implemented conservation measures. In the additional information already received by ICOMOS, it seems that the DAI is expected to terminate its mandate in 2021. Could the State Party share with ICOMOS which institution, at what administrative level (regional or national) and with what legal and professional competencies, will be in charge of the conservation maintenance of the archaeological remains, explaining what would be the basis for the plan and the policy and how these conservation plan will be articulated with long term scientific study of the site, and its visitor management plan?

Management Plan

The ICOMOS Panel suggests that consideration should be given to developing an operational conservation plan, a maintenance plan, a visitor plan, as well as a risk management plan (conflicts, natural disasters, climate change), that could be delivered as part of the management system. It would be helpful to understand how will such a strategy be developed and what will be the timeframe for its implementation. Could the State Party specify its intentions with regard to appoint a manager of the site with onsite and year round responsibility for the coordination and effective implementation of the management system?

Tourism and Development Plan

We understand that the focus of the visitation programme seems to be the excavated part of the property, which is a limited area with no alternative paths and circuits. As tourist saturation could become a major issue for this property, there would be a need for a detailed visitor management plan to ensure that the site's proposed Outstanding Universal Value and the archaeological potential - further knowledge and values that might emerge through research - are safeguarded in the face of tourism pressure. Could the State Party provide additional information on the preparation of a visitor management plan, including the timeframe for its implementation?

The ICOMOS Panel considers that the management planning and its implementation should include not only the site itself, but also the vicinity of the site and more broadly the regional or sub-regional level where development related to tourism visitation is already planned or anticipated. The ICOMOS Panel would suggest that consideration should be given to developing a sustainable development strategy for the relevant surroundings of the site and region that could be delivered as part of the management plan. It would be helpful to understand when such a strategy could be developed and to specify the timeframe for its implementation.

Resources and Management Agreement

Given the strategic and long-term importance of the partnership with the Doğuş Group, the ICOMOS Panel considers that the role of the Group in the management process should be clarified. Could you explain what are the contractual aspects, which link the Doğuş Group to the management plan? Will they be in charge of the infrastructure works in the property, the buffer zone, and the vicinity? Could you please clarify their position in relation to the management plan, the tourism strategy, the research perspectives and the funding priorities?

