Draft Decision: 42 COM 7B.44 Lower Omo

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/18/42.COM/7B,

2. Recalling Decisions 36 COM 7B.3, 39 COM 7B.4, 40 COM 7B.80, 41 COM 7B.68, adopted at its 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 41st (Krakow, 2017) sessions respectively,

3. Welcomes the updated information on the Kuraz Sugar Development project (KSDP) submitted by the State Party and notes that the project is well advanced and has been reduced in scale to four sugar factories with sugar cultivation of 100,000 ha, but that there has been in increase in access roads, drainage canals and secondary and tertiary canals;

4. Also notes that no details have been provided on ancillary development near the property linked to the main project, such as feeder roads, supplementary settlements or areas of extraction for construction materials; and requests the State Party to provide these;

5. Regrets that the adequate impact assessments have not yet been carried out in a timely manner regardless of the project’s advanced stage, and also requests the State Party to augment the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) carried out in June 2017 by including the full details and of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the KSDP and its ancillary projects by and taking into account ICOMOS’ Technical Review of November 2017; and to update integrate the existing HIA within with the results of the proposed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);

6. Further notes that the EIA scoping study reports that the project has received the full consent of the residents as a result of consultations held with the local communities as part of about the project concerned villagization programme in conjunction with the Ethiopian...
Sugar Corporation; and further requests the State Party to submit the outcomes of the consultations held in conjunction with the EIA on KSDP for review by the Advisory Bodies;

7. Considers that the EIA scoping study does not adequately address the full potential impacts of the KSDP on the property and its setting, and requests furthermore the State Party to strengthen the analysis of indirect impacts on cultural aspects, in particular from new ancillary projects associated with the main project, and to examine all potential impacts of the project on both Lower Valley of the Omo and Lake Turkana National Parks World Heritage properties and their settings, in line with the IUCN and ICOMOS guidelines on impact assessments, and to submit this to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

8. Expresses its deep concern that the State Party, while progressing the KSDP project, has provided insufficient information on the status of the SEA that was requested by the Committee from the States Parties of Ethiopia and Kenya since 2012 (Decision 36 COM 7B.11, 39 COM 7B.4 and 40 COM 7B.80), to assess the potential cumulative impacts of the KSDP and other development projects in Ethiopia and Kenya on the Lake Turkana basin, including the Lake Turkana in Kenya and the Lower Valley of the Omo in Ethiopia, as a precursor to detailed impact assessments of individual projects; and urges the State Parties of Ethiopia and Kenya to undertake the long-overdue Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) without further delay in order to assess the potential impacts of these projects and to identify urgently needed mitigation measures;

9. Notes furthermore the progress with the EU-funded boundary project, but expresses concern that the boundary work has not been completed by the Ethiopian Mapping Agency, and requests moreover the State Party to give priority to progressing this work, which is needed to underpin the HIA, EIA and SEA, and the Management Plan of the property, and to submit draft boundary proposals to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decisions are made;

10. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2019, a progress report and, by 1 December 2019, an updated report, on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.