

**ASIA / PACIFIC**

**JEJU VOLCANIC ISLAND AND LAVA TUBES**

**REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

# WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

## JEJU VOLCANIC ISLAND AND LAVA TUBES (REPUBLIC OF KOREA) – ID No. 1264 Bis

### 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007 under criteria (vii) and (viii) (Decision 31 COM 8B.12) as a serial property comprising (a) three elements of the Geomunoreum lava tube system (c.330 ha in total), (b) Seongsan Ilchulbong tuff cone (c.52 ha), and (c) the summit of Mount Halla, within Hallasan National Park (c.9,093 ha). The total area of the property is c.9,475 ha. Each component of the property has a buffer zone, with the exception of the Geomunoreum where one buffer zone encompasses all three component parts.

At the time of inscription, the World Heritage Committee, following IUCN advice, recommended that the State Party “consider the potential for extension of the nominated property to include other significant lava tube systems and volcanic features on Jeju” (para 6.e of the above-mentioned decision).

### 2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

The proposed boundary modification would result in five new components being added to the property: Suwolbong Tuff Ring (21.1 ha), Chagwido Tuff Cone Complex (120.2 ha), Upper Geomunoreum Lava Tube System (two components with a total of 46.6 ha) and Socheongul Lava Tube (13.2 ha). Each of these proposed new component parts is proposed with its own buffer zone, except the Upper Geomunoreum Lava Tube System, where the components are within the existing buffer zone of the existing property. The new Geomunoreum components lie between the existing inscribed components of the property. The new Upper Geomunoreum components include three caves – Utsanjeongul and Bukoreumgul in one component, and Daerimgul in the second. The total area of new buffer zones proposed is stated as being over 1,200 ha. The nomination does not state the separate areas of these two components, but does include a clear map showing their location and boundaries.

The situation with Suwolbong and Chagwido is complicated as, although the nomination cites these as separate components, the maps provided appear to show that the buffer zones of these areas are overlapping.

### 3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

The proposed boundary modification would significantly amend the currently recognised Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the existing property. Suwolbong Tuff ring and the associated Chagwido Tuff Cone complex offer an unusually well exposed set of outcrops which show in three dimensions the variability of magmatic and phreato-magmatic eruptive deposit types and related processes which can be produced in what we refer to as “Surtseyan” style eruptions. The Suwolbong Tuff ring is a “geosite” for the Jeju Island UNESCO Global Geopark. Access to both lava tubes of the Upper Geomunoreum Lava Tube system and the Socheongul Lava Tube is restricted and carefully controlled. Both lava tubes were only recently (post-2007) discovered and are in “pristine” condition from a cave visitor perspective and both contain the rare and unusual carbonate speleothems which were one of the key elements / values highlighted in the 2007 inscription. Each of the components has relatively narrow values, but which may in combination contribute to OUV through the serial approach to listing proposed.

In terms of OUV, whilst the potential contributions to criterion (viii) are documented, the potential contributions to criterion (vii) are much less clear. These aesthetic values are not able to be assessed from the documentation provided, although the aesthetic values of the lava tube components appear to be congruent with those of the already inscribed Geomunoreum component.

In principle, IUCN considers that it is problematic to add completely new components to a serial World Heritage Site, which are not immediately linked to areas already included in the inscribed property. Although located on the same island and overall volcanic system as the inscribed property, IUCN notes that only the potential inclusion of the Upper Geomunoreum component is directly linked with the existing component parts of the nominated property, via a shared buffer zone. The other component parts are completely separate units, and have not been visited by any recent evaluation or monitoring mission. It is also not possible to fully verify the integrity, nor the protection and management requirements in place for these new components. Furthermore, questions of the overall selection of these components in relation to other geosites available on Jeju is not able to be assessed in the proposal made.

For these reasons IUCN considers that only the Upper Geomunoreum component parts can be accepted as representing a minor boundary modification, and even this is a fine judgement given the lack of separate area measurements for the two components. However, given the clear map showing boundaries, and the fact that these components are within the existing property's buffer zone and lie between the existing Geomunoreum component parts, IUCN considers that, on balance, acceptance of these components can be recommended. It is however essential that the State Party provides a new map of the whole of the Geomunoreum system, including the buffer zone, and the clarifications of the area measurements of the component parts (and buffer zone).

The other proposed component parts (Suwolbong, Chagwido and Socheongul) may eventually be considered as additions, but would require assessment through an evaluation mission to consider all aspects of OUV, and thus should be resubmitted as a proposed extension to the property in the correct format. These proposed component parts are not suitable for acceptance as minor boundary modifications.

#### 4. OTHER COMMENTS

None.

#### 5. RECOMMENDATION

IUCN recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopts the following draft decision:

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined documents WHC/18/42.COM/8B.ADD and WHC/18/42.COM/INF.8B2.ADD;
2. Recalling decision 31 COM 8B.12;
3. Approves the minor boundary modification request for the new Upper Geomunoreum Lava Tube System component parts to be added to the **Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes (Republic of Korea)**, and requests the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2018**, a new large scale map of the whole of the revised Geomunoreum component, including all of the relevant component parts, and the buffer zone, and also to provide separate measurements for the area of each of the component parts, as well as the buffer zone.
4. Does not approve the addition of the other three proposed new component parts to the **Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes (Republic of Korea)**, namely Suwolbong Tuff Ring, Chagwido Tuff Cone Complex and Socheongul Lava Tube, and recommends the State Party to resubmit these three component parts in the format of a new nomination for an extension of the property, with revisions to clarify the boundaries of the nominated components and their buffer zones, in order that a full evaluation of these proposals can be undertaken by IUCN.

**Map 1:** World Heritage Site and proposed Minor Boundary Modification

