

**Updated Report on the State of Conservation of the UNESCO
World Natural Heritage site
Western Caucasus (*Russian Federation*) (№ 900) in 2018**

1. Response of the Russian Federation in accordance with the Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7B.80.

One of the key tools for the implementation of state policy for the conservation of biological and landscape diversity in Russia is the development of a network of specially protected natural territories.

According to the Federal Law of August 3, 2018 №321-FZ “On Amendments to the Federal Law “On Specially Protected Natural Territories” and Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation”, the construction of permanent sport facilities as well as related objects of engineering and transport infrastructure are strictly prohibited on the territory of national parks.

Also, in accordance with the Federal Law of August 3, 2018 No. 321-FZ, Article 17 of the Federal Law of March 14, 1995 No. 33-Φ3 “On Specially Protected Natural Territories” was supplemented with the clause that citizens and organizations that are provided with leased land plots for recreational activities on the territories of national parks, are required to carry out regular activities to ensure the prevention of negative environmental impact compliant with the regime of the national park.

The powers of state inspectors are expanded: are allowed to keep and use civilian self-defense weapons and hunting firearms as official ones on duty they. Today, inspectors by no means all territories are equipped with service weapons. This measure will allow you to more effectively deal with violators.

2. Information on other current issues related to the preservation of the heritage site

The characteristics of the natural conditions remain unchanged and identical to the conditions stated in the reports on the preservation of a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site Western Caucasus during the period 2008 - 2017.

Preservation characteristics of the natural complexes in the Western Reserve

The Caucasus State Nature Biosphere Reserve (hereafter – Reserve) is a federal natural area of preferential protection. It was founded on 12th May 2018 in order to protect the native Caucasus bison. Subsequently the objectives of the Reserve changed and got more complex. Nowadays the Reserve is the largest mountain-forest landscape reserve in the Caucasus region. It occupies 278 thousand hectares on the territory of three subjects of the Russian Federation (Krasnodar region, the Republic of Adygea, and the Karachay-Cherkess Republic). The overwhelming majority of the landscape types, at least 70% of the species variety of the Western Caucasus, with 25% of endemic rate. All the landscapes of

the Reserve are natural with a high rate of preservation. The central areas of the Reserve preserve their initial wild state. The species and coenotic variety of the Reserve is maintained at a highest level.

As of 12th November 2018 compared with the data of December 2017 and 1999, the condition of the natural complexes and their components do not demonstrate any negative dynamics.

1. Preservation of the main types of landscapes:

- mountain-forest landscape - the preservation is complete, economic activity has never been held and is not being conducted. The exception is the natural forest plantations with the inclusion of the Colchis boxwood. In 2014-2017 the entire natural Colchis boxwood in the Western Caucasus was damaged by an insect pest – box tree moth - and died. As a result of the exclusion of the boxwood from the forest, there began a spontaneous transformation of the former boxwood forest on an area of at least 0.5 thousand hectares.

- mountain-meadow landscape - the preservation is complete, economic activity has never been held and is not being conducted;

- mountain-meadow landscape of the biosphere polygon of the Caucasus Reserve on the Lagonaki plateau - the condition of the meadows demonstrates positive dynamics; the restoration of the plant communities of the Lagonaki plateau continues after excessive pasture loads of the 1980s and 1990s;

- Alpine landscape - the preservation is complete, economic activity has never been held and is not being conducted;

- water objects (rivers, lakes) - the preservation is complete, not used in economic activities.

2. Preservation of species on the territory:

The preservation of all groups of living organisms is complete, with the exception of Colchis boxwood. Since 2015, Colchis boxwood has been artificially preserved as the flora of the Caucasus Reserve.

- there is no reduction in species richness on the Reserve area (note the artificial preservation of the Colchis boxwood as the flora of the Caucasus Reserve);

- the disappearance of rare protected species of plants (lower, vascular) and lichens \ fungi on the territory of the Reserve does not occur (note the artificial preservation of Colchis boxwood as the flora of the Caucasus Reserve);

- there continues a positive dynamics in the number of main protected species of mammals - the most sensitive to anthropogenic impact.

The number of the main protected animals reaches:

Type of animal	1999 г.	2017 г.
Bison bonasus	190	1100

Red deer	892	1864
Capra caucasica	2421	3177
Chamois	1095	1157
Brown Bear	260	450
Persian Leopard	0	3
Wolf	60	70

3. Management of the Caucasian Reserve:

Directly carried out by a legal entity - the Federal State Budgetary Organization "Caucasus State Nature Biosphere Reserve named after H.G. Shaposhnikov", administered by the Department of State Policy and Regulation in the field of environmental protection of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology of the Russian Federation.

Main directions of management:

- ensuring the preservation of the territory of the Reserve and its natural-and-territorial complexes;
- survey and monitoring of the conditions of the natural-and-territorial complexes of the Reserve and their individual elements;
- formation of positive attitude of the population to the Reserve and the Reserve phenomenon through environmental awareness programs and development of educational tourism.

4. Immediate measures to ensure the regime of the Caucasus Reserve:

The Caucasus reserve is protected by a staff of state inspectors, comprising of 76 state inspectors.

During 2018 the state inspectorate of the Caucasus Reserve identified 141 violations of the protection regime of the Caucasus Reserve, including:

- Illegal presence on the territory - 101;
- illegal hunting and fishing - 7;
- violation of fire safety rules - 2,
- other violations - 31.

There have been seized 99,4 kg of illegally obtained derivatives – horns of the red deer.

The management of the Caucasus Reserve is executed on the basis of a plan approved by the authorized body of the Russian Federation, supervising the Caucasus Reserve. Relevant planning documentation is drafted, accepted, approved, agreed, executed and stored in the manner prescribed by the current rules and regulations.

3. Significant changes within the World Heritage site are not expected.

