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H. E. Mr Yang Shen
Ambassador, Permanent Delegate
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20 December 2018

IUCN Evaluation of the Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai, Gulf of China (Phase I) – Nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List

Progress report on IUCN evaluation and request for supplementary information

Dear Ambassador,

Further to the above nomination to the World Heritage List, I am writing with information on progress with the IUCN evaluation. As noted in previous correspondence, IUCN seeks to develop and maintain a dialogue with States Parties during the evaluation process of all nominations. As per the Operational Guidelines (paragraph 149 and Annex 6 - *Evaluation procedures of the Advisory Bodies for nomination*), this letter also provides the short interim report outlining the status and any issues relevant to evaluations, which is requested to be sent by IUCN before 31 January 2019.

The IUCN World Heritage technical evaluation mission to the Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai, Gulf of China was undertaken by Mrs Sonali Ghosh and Mr Tilman Jaeger from 14 to 19 October 2018. The evaluators greatly appreciated the excellent support and co-operation provided by your colleagues in the preparation and implementation of the mission, and the warm welcome of the State Party throughout the mission. Please convey our sincere thanks to all of the officials, scientists and contributors that assisted the mission.

The IUCN World Heritage Panel is in the course of examining World Heritage nominations for natural and mixed properties, and cultural landscapes. This process will conclude in March/April 2019, following which the IUCN evaluation report will be issued to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. At its first meeting held in the week of 3 December 2018, the IUCN Panel examined in detail each nomination dossier, reports and desktop reviews of field evaluators and external reviewers, as well as other references regarding the nominated properties.

The Panel greatly appreciated the efforts that have been made in relation to this nomination, and will be discussing the nomination again at its second meeting, to be held in March 2019. The Panel will be compiling further information from IUCN's networks on the values of the nominated property, and the wider approaches to wetland conservation within the flyway.

At this stage, the Panel noted a number of points where additional information is required, and we would be grateful for the State Party's response on the following questions:

- 1) Please could the State Party clearly detail its assessment of the relative significance of the values represented in the nominated property, in relation to the value of the 14 components remaining to be nominated in the future, according to the present plans for the nomination? IUCN wishes to better understand, in particular, the relative value and importance of the nomination that is being proposed, as Phase I of a more ambitious serial nomination, compared to the values of the series as a whole. Please indicate, as part of the response, which values of the nominated property are dependent on protecting the conservation status of other sites in the Yellow Sea (for instance which other sites are used by the different migratory bird populations that visit the nominated property);

- 2) Please could the State Party clarify the status, plans and timelines which are anticipated for nominating the remaining 14 components of the series including firm dates when further phases of the series would be nominated, and which sites would be included in the next phase. Please further confirm that effective measures are in place to ensure that there will be no loss of conservation status of any of the other proposed component parts of the eventual series between now and the date of any further nominations;
- 3) Please could the State Party share formally the documents and information that were shared during the field mission regarding the Tiaozini area, which is contiguous with the YS-1 component? IUCN wishes to understand in particular:
 - a. the commitment of the State Party to including Tiaozini as part of this Phase I nomination;
 - b. the detailed area of Tiaozini that it would propose to include in the nomination, with a map;
 - c. confirmation on how and when it would propose to add this area to the nomination;
 - d. the confirmation that all development and reclamation plans for Tiaozini have been abandoned;
 - e. the practicalities of protecting and managing this component part, including the completion of the relevant management plan.

We would appreciate your response to the above points as soon as possible, in order to facilitate the evaluation process, but **no later than the 28 February 2019**, as per paragraph 148 of the Operational Guidelines. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by IUCN in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while IUCN will carefully consider any supplementary information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. So we request to keep your response concise and respond only to the above requests.

Supplementary information should be submitted officially in two copies to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in order for it to be registered as part of the nomination. An electronic copy of any supplementary information to both the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (a.balsamo@unesco.org) and IUCN Headquarters (christelle.perruchoud@iucn.org) would also be helpful.

Taking into account your response, IUCN will formulate its final recommendation to the World Heritage Committee which will meet from 30 June to 10 July 2019 in Azerbaijan.

In the interest of ensuring full transparency and dialogue regarding the IUCN evaluation process, we are happy to respond to any questions you may wish to raise regarding IUCN's work on the World Heritage Convention, including the above points. We would be pleased to organise a meeting via Skype or conference call as an alternative. I would also emphasise that both you or your representatives are also most welcome to visit IUCN's headquarters in Switzerland to meet in person if you wish, on this nomination or on any other matter of interest.

Please also note that from 1 January 2019 there will be a change in World Heritage arrangements in IUCN. Peter Shadie will be taking over the role of Director, World Heritage Programme for 2019-20, and I will be moving to manage a new assignment in IUCN. Peter Shadie will be available for any discussions required on this letter, or any other matters regarding IUCN's evaluation of the nomination.

Please do not hesitate to contact Ms Christelle Perruchoud, World Heritage Evaluations and Operations Officer (Tel: +41 22 999 0358; Fax: +41 22 999 0002; email: christelle.perruchoud@iucn.org) have any questions regarding this request, or if you would wish to arrange a meeting or phone call to discuss this request.

Please allow me to reiterate our thanks for your support of the World Heritage Convention and for the conduct of IUCN's recent mission. We look forward to your kind cooperation in furnishing responses to the abovementioned points.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Badman
Director - World Heritage Programme

cc. National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO, Mr Qin Changwei, Secretary-General UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Mr Feng Jing and Mr Alessandro Balsamo
IUCN Asia Regional Office, Ms Aban Marker Kabraji, Regional Director