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52, avenue Victor Hugo  
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20 December 2018

**IUCN Evaluation of Vatnajökull National Park - dynamic nature of fire and ice – 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 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. They also examined the supplementary information received via email on 29 November 2018.

The Panel greatly appreciated the efforts that have been made in relation to this nomination, and will be discussing the nomination again at the second meeting of the IUCN World Heritage Panel, to be held in March 2019. At this stage, the Panel noted a number of additional points where supplementary information is required, and we would be grateful for the State Party's response on the following points:

- 1) The State Party informed IUCN, in its response of 29 November 2018, that the private landowners along the Jökulsá á Fjöllum River have not been approached or consulted in relation to the nomination process, but that the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources intended to address this point and consult with the landowners. Please therefore clarify the status, plans and timeline for this consultation and define the actions which will be taken upon completion of this consultation;
- 2) Also in its response of 29 November 2018, the State Party confirms that the Jökulsá á Fjöllum River is only partly protected by law, and that the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources will officially confirm the protection of the whole river from hydro power development after a public consultation. Please provide an update on the status and progress on this issue to ensure that the entire nominated property is legally protected;

- 3) Please specify how the State Party plans to address increases in tourism numbers and access demands and furthermore how the protection of geological values will be ensured, in the event of possible inscription on the World Heritage List.
- 4) IUCN has noted that there are two small quarries for road construction active within the nominated area which will be restored after use. Another quarry exists which predates the park. Please elaborate on plans and timeframes for the closure and restoration of these quarry sites.

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**.

**Supplementary information should also 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](mailto:a.balsamo@unesco.org)) and IUCN Headquarters ([christelle.perruchoud@iucn.org](mailto: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](mailto:christelle.perruchoud@iucn.org)) if you 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. We look forward to your kind cooperation in furnishing responses to the abovementioned points.

Yours sincerely,



Tim Badman  
Director - World Heritage Programme

cc. Icelandic National Commission for UNESCO, Ms Áslaug Dóra Eyjólfsdóttir, Secretary-General  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Mrs Isabelle Anatole-Gabriel and Mr Alessandro Balsamo  
IUCN European Regional Office, Mr Luc Bas, Director