

Report on the State of Conservation
Cultural Landscape and Archaeological remains of the Bamiyan Valley
(2003, in Danger)

ID Number: Ref: C208rev

1. Response from Afghanistan to the World Heritage Committee's Decision 43 COM 7A.
 - a) **Corrective measures taken by Afghanistan in reply to the World Heritage Committee's Decision(s)**

Management Plan:

UNESCO and the Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC) organized a three-day' workshop to discuss the development of a Management Plan for the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley World Heritage property.

This initiative, organized under a Japanese Funds-in-Trust project, took place in Kabul at the Green Village compound on October 1-3, 2018.

The Bamiyan World Heritage property was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2003 and simultaneously placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. With a financial support from the Government of Japan, a four-phase project was undertaken from 2003 to 2015 focusing on emergency interventions to preserve the fragile archaeological and geological context of the property.

The need for the establishment of a management plan was identified by the World Heritage Committee in 2007 as one of the benchmarks to achieve a desired state of conservation for the property and eventually remove Bamiyan from the List of World Heritage in Danger. In an attempt to contribute to this specific benchmark, UNESCO and the MoIC conveyed a workshop to discuss the requirements of and ways to develop a Management Plan for the Bamiyan World Heritage property. In addition to other joint-initiatives that UNESCO is currently assisting the Government of Afghanistan in ensuring the protection of the values of the Bamiyan World Heritage site, this workshop aimed at bringing together key-government stakeholders that are responsible for managing different areas of development within Bamiyan. In order to

harmonize a Bamiyan Management Plan with other existing plans, the Bamiyan Cultural Master Plan and the Strategic Master Plan were introduced by the MoIC and the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing (MUDH) as well as the University of Florence, in Italy.

For three days, representatives from the Chief Executive Office, MoIC, MUDH, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, and the Bamiyan Local Government (represented by H.E. the Deputy-Governor), came together to discuss their respective roles and ways to develop the relevant processes and mechanisms to manage specific aspects that will guarantee an adequate management and safeguard of the Bamiyan World Heritage property.

The discussion was enriched with the participation of representatives from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation and the University of Florence. To follow the workshop, a draft action plan for the establishment of a Management Plan is currently under preparation by the Afghan authorities. It is expected that further initiatives will take place as UNESCO remains committed to supporting the Government of Afghanistan in protecting Bamiyan's unique cultural heritage, of local, national and world significance.

The outcome of the workshop:

- The workshop considered a range of key issues related to the overall process for developing the management plan.
- The workshop noted the likely approval process would occur after agreement with relevant stakeholders, and be given by the Minister for Information and Culture. Possible Committees the possibility was raised that several committees would be established related to the development of the management plan.
- The workshop noted that the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing had a lead role regarding historic cities and that it was involved in developing key documents, especially the Bamiyan strategic master plan. While given the current World Heritage boundaries, MOIC is the appropriate lead agency for the Bamiyan

- management plan, should the boundaries change as a result of a proposed review, MUDH may have a greater role to play.
- The workshop considered a structured approach to planning the development of the management plan.
 - The workshop considered the main challenges for the management plan of Bamiyan.
 - The workshop was briefed on the development of the strategic master plan for Bamiyan, which includes the World Heritage property. This work is being undertaken by the University of Florence for MUDH.
 - The workshop highlighted the great potential to enhance the capacity of a range of stakeholders in their understanding of World Heritage and related management planning.

International Technical Meeting on the future of the Bamiyan World Heritage Property:

The international Technical meeting on the future of the Bamiyan World Heritage property was held in Salalah Oman from 3st to 5nd December 2018. It was organized by the Ministry of Information and Culture of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, GUTech University of Technology in Muscat, UNESCO and RIO – Research Centre Indian Ocean, with the office of the Adviser for Cultural Affairs to His Majesty the Sultan and ICOMOS Oman. The Deputy Minister of Cultural Affairs Ministry of Information and Culture of Afghanistan, assistant of Governor of Bamiyan Province, Director of the Dept. of Historical Monuments. Director of Dept. of Archaeology, Director of Dept. of National Museum from the Government of Afghanistan attended to the meeting. Some participants joined the meeting along with international experts from Germany, Italy, Japan, as well as UNESCO. The meeting was convened to present the latest activities implemented in Bamiyan in 2017 - 2018, and provided another opportunity to enhance and increase national and international cooperation for the benefit of cultural heritage and sustainable development in Bamiyan. A set of recommendations was unanimously adopted by the participants, which set priorities for future activities from 2018 onwards;

Session 1- Current status of the Bamiyan World Heritage property:

1.1 Suggest that all the technical information produced by expert, agencies and UNESCO be centralized and shared as a single system by the Government of Afghanistan, notably the Ministry of Information and Culture, and encourage coordination with relevant Ministries and the local Bamiyan government in this regard.

1.2 Recommend that the inventory and documentation of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in Bamiyan be conducted and integrated into a database of the national and local government.

1.3 Recommend that all issues regarding illegal construction and land acquisition within the World Heritage property and buffer zones be coordinated between the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry of Urban Development and the Land, the Ministry of Finance and the local government in Bamiyan, to ensure protection of the property.

1.4 Recommend that a Management plan be established, and within it a relevant governance system.

Session 2 – Favouring the sustainable development of the Bamiyan Valley:

2.1 Take note that the Bamiyan Strategic Master plan has been approved by the President of Afghanistan and recommend that the Plan be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review of its advisory body.

2.2 Take note that the Strategic Master Plan includes a traffic plan component and bypass road, and that this requires further technical, geological and economic feasibility studies, including Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments in accordance with the national rules and regulations.

Remind that in 2018, the Afghan authorities received the evaluation on the stone-paved

2.3 road project by ICOMOS through UNESCO, and recommend to examine the project in due time against the concept of the future Bamiyan Archaeological Park, and further recommend that prior to the implementation of any construction activities these recommendations be taken into account.

2.4 Recommend the use of accurate GIS-based cultural mapping information, such as the one prepared for the Cultural Master Plan, for future development plan in Bamiyan (and

not that from the 2003 map used for the nomination dossier of the World Heritage List, which is outdated).

Session 3 – Potential Rehabilitation of the Eastern Buddha Statue:

3.1 Welcome the authorities' decision and the detailed Action Plan (Annex 2) prepared by the national technical working committee, which resulted from the international meeting on “The Future of the Bamiyan Buddha Statues: Technical Considerations and Potential Effects on Authenticity and Outstanding Universal Value”, held in Tokyo in September 2017; and support the authorities' plan in further investigating the four technical proposals presented at the same 2017 Tokyo meeting.

3.2 Underline, in the meantime, the importance of a proper preservation of the Buddha statue fragments.

Session 4 – Management of the Bamiyan World Heritage site – opportunities and challenges:

4.1 Acknowledge the current Government's efforts to revise the 2004 National Law for the Protection of Cultural and Historical Properties, which should respect the provisions of the international cultural conventions, and recommend accelerating the adoption of the revised law and adopting further regulations and guidelines for the protection and promotion of the Bamiyan World Heritage property.

4.2 Acknowledge that the Government of Afghanistan, through the Ministry of Information and Culture and other relevant national and local institutions, is securing national budget to manage the Bamiyan World Heritage property and recommend further efforts to ensure proper financial and human resources to address future challenges.

4.3 Encourage the Government of Afghanistan to promote outreach activities for an enhanced interpretation of the World Heritage property, in order to provide information on tangible, moveable and intangible heritage related to the property, notably by using the Bamiyan Cultural Centre.

4.4 Acknowledge the need for a museum in Bamiyan and for an archaeological park for the interpretation and presentation of the World Heritage property.

4.5 Suggest that the results of workshops relating to the Bamiyan World Heritage property be included in the state of conservation report, so that they can be evaluated by UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies.

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Session 5 – Roundtable on donor initiatives in Bamiyan

5.1 Appreciate past and ongoing generous financial support to the Bamiyan World Heritage property by international donors, and strongly encourages that such financial support continues into the future.

5.2 Note the Government of Afghanistan's sincere appreciation to the Government of Italy through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation concerning the project for the Preservation and Promotion of the Bamiyan Valley through Culture-Oriented Sustainable Development, and to the Government of Japan for considering the possibility to continue providing financial support to safeguard the Bamiyan World Heritage property.

Cultural Master Plan:

The Bamiyan Cultural Master Plan was developed by the Ministry of Information and Culture and Ministry of Urban Development and Housing in consultation with UNESCO and implementing partners in 2007, the strategic Master plan of the Bamiyan was recently endorsed by the President of Afghanistan, and has continued to provide strong guidance for urban development planning and protection of the Bamiyan World Heritage site. The Cultural Master Plan has already created a strong mandate for controlling urban growth in and around the cultural properties that comprise the serial sites.

Site Guards:

Receiving a contribution from the Government of Italy UNESCO office have deployed several guards at Share – e Gholghola

The Government of Afghanistan continued to employ on-site guards in each of the properties within the serial nominated sites this was aimed to control illegal or

unauthorized access to the sites but still any national budget is not allocated to deploy guards to the sites.

The Ministry of Interior Affairs employed a team of 20 people police officers from the specialized unit (012) for the protection of cultural properties to monitor and safeguard the World Heritage properties within the Bamiyan Valley.

Education and Public Awareness:

The Government of Afghanistan have organized a workshop of community based inventory Intangible Cultural Heritage elements in Bamiyan, in 2018, The participated authorities are the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Governor of Bamiyan and UNESCO. The aforementioned workshop in Bamiyan provided local communities with an opportunity to publicly engage with Government representatives about heritage management. Several meetings and discussions were organized throughout 2018 with local stakeholders of Bamiyan, and national experts concerning proper management for the Bamiyan site.

Western Buddha Niche:

Funded by the Government of Afghanistan a preliminary consolidation work of the upper part and in front of the Western Buddha Niche (qhol ghoza) implemented by the Ministry of Information and Culture, in 2018.

Implemented conservation:

Consolidation of other 8 sites such as shrine, towers, Minaret, walls and domical chambers in Yakawlang district, Foladee valley and center of Bamiyan was planned with the cooperation of Department of Historical Monuments and financial support of MoIC, in 2018 but due to changing of climate in Bamiyan implementation of the conservation postponed to the next coming year in 2019.

Shari Gholgholah:

Archeological excavation was implemented in 2018 with the cooperation, DAFA and national expert form Department of Archeology MoIC at some part of Shahr-i-Gholghola as will after archeological investigation, conservation treatment carried out at the same parts with cooperation, Department of Historical Monuments, DAFA and Dept. of Archeology of MoIC.

Ministry of Information and Culture hopes for the continuation of the consolidation in the year 2019 onwards with support from the UNESCO and other international community.

A conservation treatment plan was developed to address the problems of erosion in the site and to carry out necessary conservation on some of the more important mud brick buildings that cover the site and which are collapsing year by year. The project will also increase safe access to the site by stabilizing the walking paths and provide some information points for the public to better understand the importance of the site. If this project can continue from 2016 to 2017 to conserve many more buildings, it will hopefully meet the conditions to remove the site from immediate danger.

Bamiyan Cultural Centre:

Initiated in June 2016 and funded by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the construction of the Bamiyan Cultural Centre is on-going in 2017. This Centre is aimed to establish a model to be a cultural creative hub in Bamiyan, in order for the local stakeholders to identify and learn Bamiyan's rich cultural backgrounds. In December 2016, the Government of the Republic of Korea committed a further \$1.9m for Phase II of the Bamiyan Cultural Centre project, which is a critical financial assistance to continue building operations until 2018.

b) Difficulties in implementing corrective measures.

The Government of Afghanistan does not have enough financial resources to implement conservation activities on each of the historic sites simultaneously and requires the continued assistance from UNESCO and the international community to address these issues.

Many parts of the site within and outside the boundaries face increasing urban pressures from the re-settlement of people within the valley. In particular, private land claims are being made at the foot of the Buddha cliff, which has caused protracted delays on site planning.

Much of the vernacular architecture, traditional land use, canal and irrigation systems that make up the contemporary cultural landscape lie outside the present boundaries of the site and is under increasing pressure for development and urban growth.

There is also the potential for mining in the nearby mountains of Bamiyan Province which could catalyse further population growth and urbanism in the valley. Large scale development within the boundaries, adjacent or in nearby villages has the potential to negatively impact the OUV of the site. At the moment, this development is being curbed and controlled through the implementation of the Cultural Master plan, but it still remains as one of the greatest challenges to the conservation of the site in the long term.

It requires modification of the boundary inscribed on the World Heritage List to include values of cultural landscapes. Hence re-examination of heritage value at Bamiyan will be needed. Modification of the country's legal management system and control mechanisms are also necessary to ensure the permanent protection of the Bamiyan WH site value.

Best Regards,

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