

LATIN AMERICA / CARIBBEAN

**CERRADO PROTECTED AREAS: CHAPADA DOS VEADEIROS AND EMAS
NATIONAL PARKS**

BRAZIL

WORLD HERITAGE MINOR BOUNDARY MODIFICATION PROPOSAL – IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

CERRADO PROTECTED AREAS: CHAPADA DOS VEADEIROS AND EMAS NATIONAL PARKS (BRAZIL) – ID No. 1035 Bis

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada Dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001. At this time, following recommendations of the IUCN evaluation and a decision of the Bureau, the area of the Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park was expanded by a Federal decree to 235,970 ha. Subsequently, the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List, including the whole of this area.

In 2010, information was received by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN that the Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park had been reduced to its original 65,515 ha following a ruling that the Federal decree was void, as the process in 2001 did not meet necessary public consultation standards. This left a large remaining area of the national park within the World Heritage property without a legal protection status. The Committee considered these matters at its 35th Session in 2011, and subsequently at the 36th, 37th, 39th, 40th and 41st Sessions also. The World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to reinstate the appropriate legal protection regime over the entire World Heritage property. There has also been past consideration of possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, due to the loss of protection status.

As a result of the concerns raised, the State Party has been progressing the formalisation of legal protection of the property, and this has also involved some reconsideration of the boundaries of the national parks that provide for the protection of the property. A reactive monitoring mission by IUCN in 2013, and subsequent advisory mission by IUCN in February 2016 have been part of this process. The IUCN Advisory mission visited the property to evaluate the results of the new public consultation process on the expansion of Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park and examine the possible need and related procedures of a major boundary modification and renomination, including the potential design of a revised boundary. The mission concluded that the consultation process now met the national legal requirements for expansion and creation of conservation units, and that concerns expressed by the affected stakeholders had been taken into account in the design of the new expanded boundaries of Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park. The proposal reviewed by the mission included expansion of the national park to 248,301 ha, largely following the expanded boundaries from 2001 and further adding areas important for conservation of some species, while excluding some areas along the borders which had been degraded. The mission also confirmed that other recently created protected areas overlapping with the current boundaries

of the property, particularly the Chapada de Nova Roma Ecological Station (IUCN Protected Area category Ia), were proposed to be included in the new boundaries in addition to the expanded national park.

In its Decision 41COM 7B.10 the Committee requested the State Party *“to prepare and submit, as soon as possible, a proposal for a boundary modification of the property, in conformity with Chapter III.1 of the Operational Guidelines, in order to align the boundaries of the Chapada dos Veadeiros component with the new boundaries approved for Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park, including the State proposed Nova Roma ecological station”*.

The relevant documentation is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1035/documents/>

2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BOUNDARY MODIFICATION

The proposal made by the State Party follows the above process, and presents a confirmed boundary of the property. The proposal would expand the overall area of the property by 14,074 ha (3,67% increase), and the area of the Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park is confirmed to be 240,611 ha, following its re-expansion in 2017. Full details with associated maps are provided in the documentation that has been submitted. In addition to the expansion of the national park, an ecological station, Chapada de Nova Roma, was created within the territory of the World Heritage property. Furthermore, part of the area is covered by private reserves and therefore the legal protection regime represents a mosaic of protected areas, with the national park covering the majority of the territory within the proposed new boundaries. Overall the new proposed boundaries largely follow the current boundaries of the property (i.e. the “old” expanded boundaries of the national park), with some areas excluded and some areas added along the border, as well as around the Macacos River cluster to the south of the main area. The proposal also largely follows the one that was discussed with the 2016 IUCN Advisory mission.

3. IMPACT ON OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

IUCN notes that the present proposal represents a resolution of the situation that has caused concern regarding this property, and that it results from a consultative process in which the Committee and IUCN have participated directly. Whilst ideally such a proposal would be made via the process for significant

modification of boundaries, IUCN notes the Committee left open both options in its most recent decision, and that the advisory mission has been able to provide a reasonable level of scrutiny of the proposal on the ground. IUCN has been able to consult the expert from that mission on the present proposal in providing its advice to the World Heritage Committee.

IUCN concludes that overall the proposal retains the OUV of the property as inscribed, and can mostly be accepted as meeting the relevant integrity requirements. The proposal is also beneficial for the property in order to confirm its protection status, and to align its management with the new nationally approved boundaries of the national parks.

IUCN notes one exception to this advice, which is that the Chapada dos Veadeiros National Park component of the property was clearly inscribed as a coherent area, but the proposal includes one area near the centre of the component that is proposed for excision, creating a “hole” within the component. The status of this area requires clarification with the State Party, and this is not possible in the minor boundary modification process. It appears that this area remains in private land tenure and thus likely could not be included in the boundary of the national park; however, this information could not be fully verified by IUCN and therefore it remains unclear what is located within this area and whether it represents any current or potential threat to the OUV of the property. IUCN considers that it would be problematic from a management perspective to excise this area from the World Heritage Site, and therefore recommends that this area not be removed from the property via the minor boundary modification process under consideration.

IUCN notes that the property is being considered by the Committee under the State of Conservation process (Item 7B) at its present session, and it is anticipated that there will be a further SOC report on the property considered by the Committee in 2021. IUCN recommends that the SOC process is used to further review the implementation of protection and

management in relation to the property with its revised boundary, including the effectiveness of coordinated management of different protected areas included in the new boundaries, and to also clarify the status of the area in the centre of the property, noted in the above paragraph including options for how this area could be retained within the property, despite its location outside the present boundaries of the national park.

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/19/43.COM/8B.ADD and WHC/19/43.COM/INF.8B2.ADD;
2. Recalling Decisions 37 COM 7B.29, 39 COM 7B.27, 40 COM 7B.71 and 41 COM 7B.10;
3. Approves the minor boundary modification request for Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks (Brazil), however, does not approve the excision of the area at the centre of the Chapada dos Veadeiros component of the property;
4. Takes note of the ongoing consideration of the State of Conservation of the property by the Committee, and recommends that the next report on the property includes consideration of the effectiveness of the implementation of the protection and management requirements of the property in relation to its revised boundary.

Map 1: World Heritage property and proposed minor boundary modification

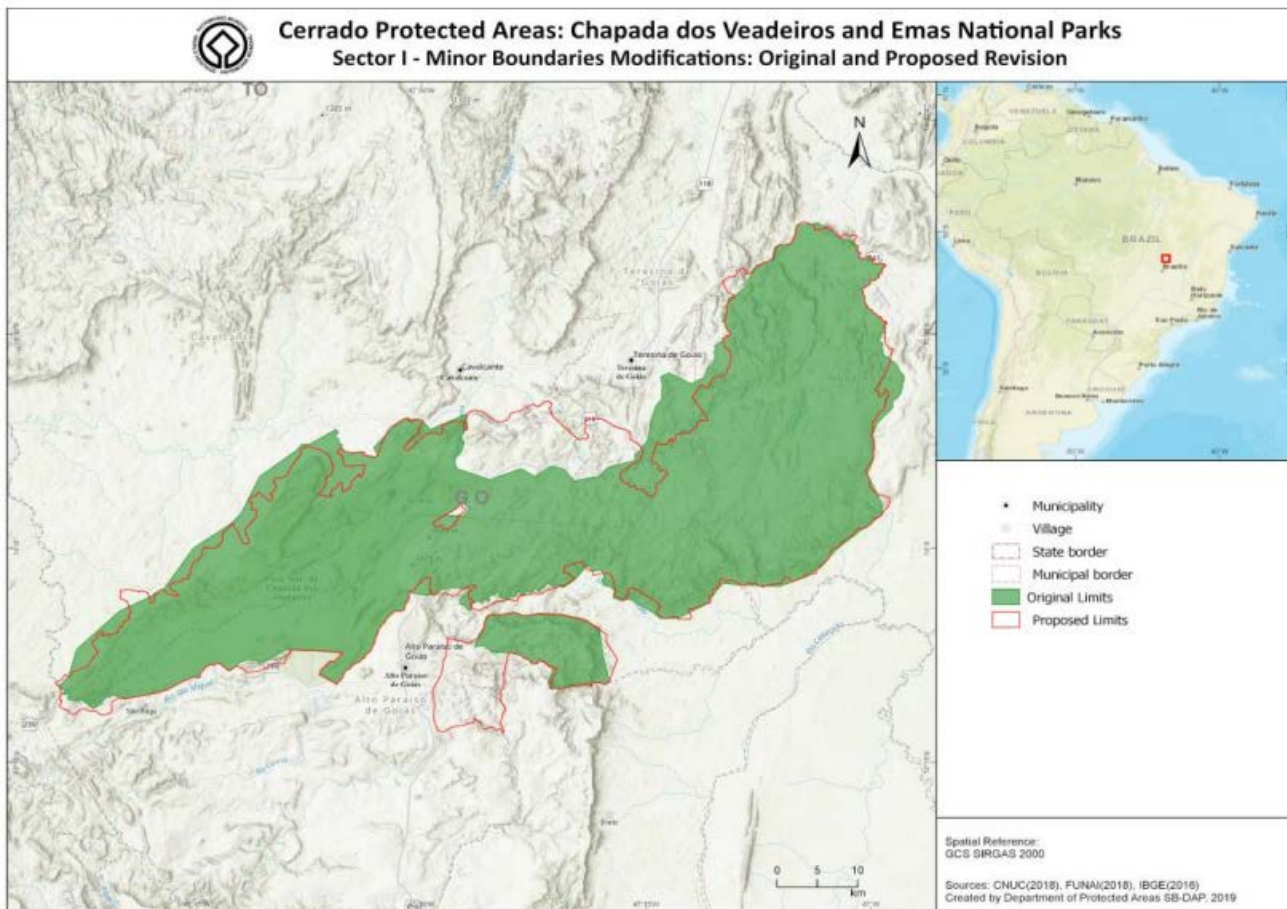


Figure 2: Proposed new limits (red line) for the World Heritage Site Cerrado Protected Areas Sector I, compared with the original (green).