



سلطة منطقة العقبة الاقتصادية الخاصة

AQABA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY

Ref

الرقم ٢٠١٩/١١/٢٨

Date

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Dated

الموافق



Mrs. Mechtild Rossler
Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Center
7 place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France

Subject: Wadi Rum Protected Area

Dear Mrs. Rossler,

In reference to the World Heritage Committee decision no. 42COM 7B.67- 2018, please find enclosed two hard copies and two CDs of the State of Conservation Report of Wadi Rum Protected Area.

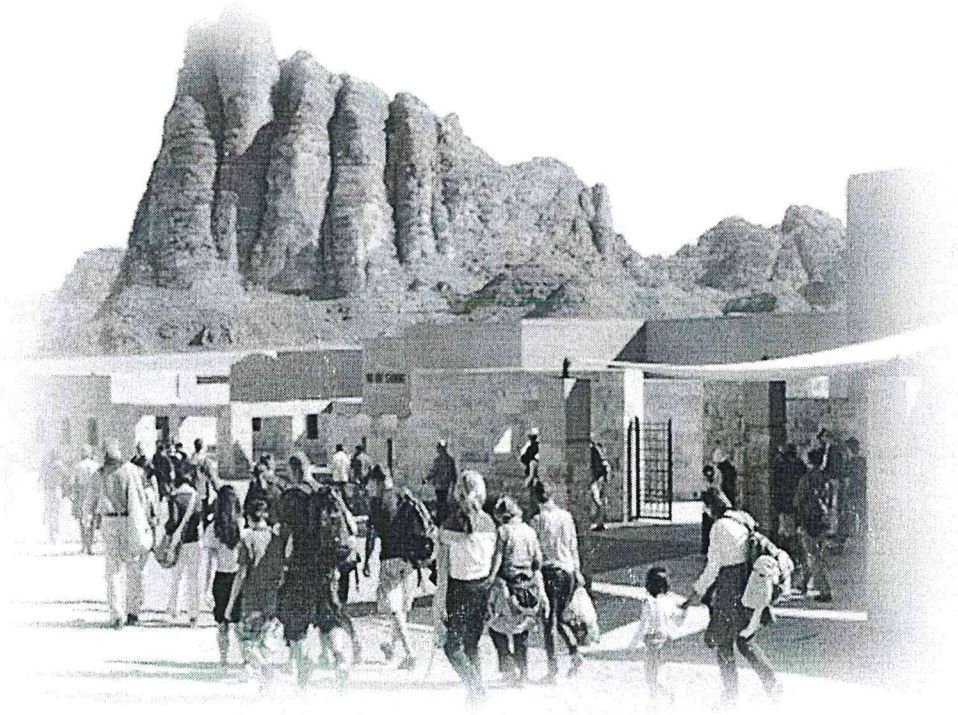
May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continuous cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Eng. Nayef Ahmad Bakheet

Chief Commissioner

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan - Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
Wadi Rum Protected Area State of Conservation Report



December 2019

Executive Summary

Jordan is still striving to recover from the effects and consequences of the extended period of regional instability and conflict with its implications on the national economy and tourism sector. Despite the political and socioeconomic hardships, the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority continued the allocation and deployment of all possible resources and efforts to sustain and strengthen the management of the Wadi Rum Protected Area in consideration of its global status as Jordan's first and only mixed World Heritage Property.

To date, there are numerous challenges facing the conservation of the WRPA as a World Heritage Property including those related to regulating and controlling tourism activities in and around the Property. Nevertheless, ASEZA was able and will continue to ensure that the values and attributes of the Property are not adversely impacted by the ongoing challenges motivated by a strong political and institutional will and supported by national and international partners and cooperation agencies.

Since 2018, significant and important achievements were made on addressing conservation issues raised by the World Heritage Committee for WRPA and its Buffer Zone. This includes the finalization and approval of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP), the finalization and approval of the reconfiguration of the Property's Buffer Zone with its supporting legal instruments, the development and launch of new conservation and management initiatives for WRPA in partnership with national, regional and international partners and cooperation organizations, the development and approval of the tourism development strategy for the Property and its Buffer Zone, and the development of an interim response strategy for 2020 including the allocation of financial and human resources needed to ensure the effective management of the Property and maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value.

Key challenges are still facing the property's effective management against the global standards required for its World Heritage status. These include the increasing socioeconomic challenges and pressures related to local communities leading to difficulties in enforcing regulations on the ground, limited financial resources needed to provide solutions and alternatives for faced challenges, lack of awareness and will of local law enforcement entities to take necessary measures to meet the required level of rule of law, limited support from national and local organizations due to governance arrangements difficulties, financial and human resource limitations due to the weak fiscal allocations, political sensitivities of the tourism activities managed by local cooperatives with regard to ensuring visitors safety, and socioeconomic pressures associated with the tourism sector as a whole and the attempts by local and national service providers and tourism operators to recover from the long period of tourism related recession.

The Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority takes the issues raised by the World Heritage Committee on the State of Conservation of Wadi Rum Protected Area very seriously and reiterates its full commitment to address them both strategically and operationally in a timely and effective manner including allocating needed capacities and resources starting from 2020.