

Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines



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Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Ministry of Culture & Tourism
Authority of Research & Conservation of Cultural Heritage



#TC Ref.No. 1.1/14-1/021
#ን Date 28 NOV 2019



Dr. Mechtild Rössler
Director World Heritage Center
7, Place de Fontevry
75352 Paris 07SP
France

Subject: - State of Conservation Report for the Aksum World Heritage property

Dear Dr. Mechtild,

I would like to recall the World Heritage Committee Decision 42 COM 7B.43 at its 42nd regular session in 2018 where the State Party of Ethiopia is required to submit a State of Conservation (SoC) Report on the selected issues of the property.

With regards to the Aksum world heritage property, the committee requires a report related to the revised management plan of the property and on the relationship of the management plan with the Thematic Master Plan (2010) of Aksum and to submit both documents to World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Therefore the State Party would like to submit the attached State of Conservation Report for the Aksum world heritage property, enclosed to this letter for consideration by the world heritage committee. Taking this opportunity the State Party would like to express its gratitude to the World Heritage Center for its continued collaboration in the efforts of the State Party in the implementation of the world heritage convention (1972).

With best regards,

Handwritten signature of Abayaw Ayalew

Deputy Director General



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Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines



FORMAT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS BY THE STATES PARTIES (In compliance with Paragraph 169 of the Operational Guidelines)



GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA

Name of World Heritage property (State(s) Party (ies)) (Identification number)

AKSUM (Ethiopia)

Property ID C 15

Date of Inscription: 1980

Criteria (i) and (iv)

1. Executive Summary of the report

This report is submitted in response to the World Heritage Committee **Decision (42 COM 7B.43)** in its 42nd regular session (Manama, 2018), which requests the State Party to submit a State of Conservation Report to the World Heritage Committee to review the Status of the Aksum world heritage property. The report has also considered the letter from the World Heritage Centre (Ref. CLT/HER^VHC/196) dated on 27 July 2018, which reminds the State Party on the decisions approved by the World Heritage Committee.

Therefore this report contains the summary of outstanding topics related the management and conservation of the Aksum world heritage property. The report is submitted for considerations by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th Session to be held in 2020. The progress report further contains updates on the Consolidation project of Stelae III and other subterranean monuments and on the revised management plan..

Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines

2. Response of the State Party to the World Heritage Committee

With regards to the Aksum world heritage property, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party to submit a State of Conservation Report by 1st December 2019 on particular topics. The topics include the submission of the revised Management Plan, submitting the Thematic Master Plan (2010) and Structural Plan of (2016) of Aksum to World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. Furthermore the Committee requests the State Party to show the relationship between the management plan and the Thematic Master Plan of Aksum.

2.1 Paragraph 5

Management system of the property

The management plan of the Aksum world heritage property was developed in close consultation with relevant stakeholders, importantly with the Aksum University and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church. The plan was finalized after the validation workshop organized in June 2016. The management plan was then submitted to the World Heritage Centre in 2017 for technical evaluation. Accordingly, the State Party has received the results of detailed technical review from ICOMOS in June 2018. Based on the comments, the management plan has critically been revised to incorporate all concerns raised in the Technical Review of ICOMOS. The revision process was also undertaken to clearly show the plan's relationship with the Thematic Master Plan (2010) of Aksum.

The Thematic Master Plan has identified tourist products in Aksum and its environs and proposed as to how the identified products could be developed in the future. Therefore the management plan considers the visitor management and site interpretation activities, which were already included in the Thematic Master Plan of Aksum, to implement them during the life time of the plan. In compliance with the technical review results, the management plan was revised to accommodate all issues mentioned by ICOMOS and some missing elements along with international and national laws required for the effective management and protection of the Aksum world heritage property. The plan was then re-submitted to the world heritage center for approval with the progress report submitted 1 February 2019.

2.2 Paragraph 6

Boundary Delineation

The Regulation (No 346/2015) has also established the state cadastre of the nominated area and its buffer zone, which contains a set of GPS coordinate points marking the boundary of the property. Accordingly the State Party is working towards the creation of the cadastre system concerning the cadaster maps of the property and its implementation. The implementation work on the preparation of cadastre system is connected with the preservation of the monumental, architectural, archaeological and spiritual elements of the property.

Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines

The government institution, in charge of the cadaster registration, the Ethiopian Geo-special and Information Agency, has been engaged to finalize the cadaster and digital maps of the property in 2019.

2.3 Paragraph 8

Stele III Consolidation Project Initiative

With regards to the Consolidation of Stele III Project, the local contractor MH Engineering and the Italian company Studio Croci & Associati have already developed and submitted the revised working documents of the project. The revised working documents were submitted to the State Party and ARCCH has transmitted all the revised working documents to the World Heritage Centre in June 2018 for review by the advisory bodies. In response, the State Party has received the results of ICOMOS technical review on the submitted working documents on 24 January 2019. Consequently, the State Party has despatched the results of the technical review of ICOMOS to the contractors for considerations in the implementation phase of the project. Further on the operation of the project, an Italian company has been identified to be commissioned for its implementation.

2.4 Paragraph 9

A training proposal

Based on the inspiration of the World Heritage Committee forwarded in its Decision 42 COM 7B.43, the State Party has submitted a training proposal on "Capacity building of relevant personnel on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (1972), Operational Guideline, management plan of the property and Heritage Urban Landscape Recommendation" on 26 October 2018 and looking forward for the positive considerations of the Committee.

3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies).

No other conservation issues are identified in the area.

4. Public access to the state of conservation report.

The State Party of Ethiopia is most willing if this State of Conservation Report is open for public access.

5. Signature of the Authority

Name _____

Signature _____

Date 28/Nov. 2019

Abebaw Ayalew
Deputy Director

