

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



ቁጥር Ref.No. 1.1/14-1/020
ቀን Date 28 NOV 2019



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

Subject: - Submitting State of Conservation Report for the Lower Omo Valley
World Heritage property

Dear Dr. Mechtild,

I would like to recall the World Heritage Committee Decision 42 COM 7B.44 at its 42nd regular session in 2018 where the State Party is required to submit a State of Conservation (SoC) Report for the Lower Valley of the Omo world heritage property on the selected issues of the property.

The Committee raised the status of the EU funded project with regards to the management plan and boundary delineation of the property. The Committee further requests the State Party to submit a report on the KSDP and its EIA study and to continue to give priority for other outstanding issues.

Therefore the State Party would like to submit this State of Conservation Report for the world heritage property, enclosed to this letter for consideration by the world heritage committee. Taking this opportunity the State Party would like to thank the World Heritage Center for its continued cooperation in the efforts of the State Party to preserve world heritage properties for posterity.

With best regards,

Ababaw Ayana
Deputy Director



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STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS OF THE LOWER VALLEY OMO (In compliance with Paragraph 169 of the Operational Guidelines



GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA



Name of World Heritage property (State(s) Party (ies)) (Identification number)
LOWER VALLEY OMO (Ethiopia)
Property ID (C17)

Date of Inscription: 1980

Criteria (iii) and (iv)

1. Executive Summary of the report

This State of Conservation report is submitted in response to the World Heritage Committee **Decision** (42 COM 7B.44) in its 42nd regular session (Manama, 2018). The report is therefore to update the committee on the undergoing activities in the Lower Valley of the Omo world heritage property. The report has also considers the letter from the World Heritage Centre (Ref.:CLT/HERWHC/196) dated on 27 July 2018, which refers the significance of previous decisions acknowledged by the World Heritage Committee.

Therefore this State of Conservation Report contains the summery of topics related to the details of the Kuraz Sugar Development Project and its Environmental Impact Assessment and related Heritage Impact Assessment. It also includes the status of the boundary delineation of the Lower Valley Omo world heritage property and management and conservation situation of the world heritage property.

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

With regards to the Lower Omo world heritage property, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party of Ethiopia to explain the status of ongoing activities related to the property. The activities include the site management plan, boundary delineation and regulation and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the property. Furthermore, the Committee raised the status of the EU funded project with regards to the management plan and boundary delineation activities of the Lower Omo Valley world heritage property. The Committee has also requested the State Party to submit a State of Conservation Report on the ongoing activities related to the property.

2.1 Paragraph 4.

The State Party has been requested to provide details on the ancillary development activities near the property linked to the main project, such as feeder roads, supplementary settlements or areas of extraction for construction materials;

The Lower Valley of Omo World Heritage Site (WHS) is located on the Nyangatom Woreda of the South Omo Zone. From the adjusted project area of the Kuraz Sugar Development Project (KSDP) i.e. 100 000 ha of land only 78,000 of the total area is found in South Omo Zone from which only 42, 000 ha of the Project area is located in Nyangaotom Woreda.

The project command area consists of farms, factories, irrigation canals, roads, residences, and other related infrastructures. The Formations of Kibish, Shingura and Usno are respectively located 12, 31, and 35 KM away from the project command area in Nyangatom Woreda. The Government of Ethiopia had submitted the map of the project area, with its State of Conservation report, that clearly shows the buffer area located between the property and the development activities in the area. The buffer area is free from such activities that might possibly affect the integrity of the Property.

The farm size of KSDP and the number of the associated factories are reduced from the original plan. In this regard, the ancillary projects, including the road networks have been decreased. Therefore, only 300 ha of land are designated for the construction of factories and camps. So far, only 1076 houses are built and 2610 Kilometer access roads will be constructed. As it is indicated in Project map, submitted along with the project description as part of the State of Conservation Report of the State Party, these constructions are at a sufficient distance from the Lower Valley of Omo world heritage property.

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2.2 Paragraph 5

The State Party of Ethiopia was requested to augment the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) including the full details of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the project and its ancillary activities. In connection with the Lower Valley of the Omo, the World Heritage Committee requested the State Party of Ethiopia to submit the EIA over the KSDP and HIA over the Lower Valley of the Omo. Accordingly, the State Party submitted to the WHC the updated HIA on the Lower Valley of the Omo in 2017. The Heritage Impact Assessment, on the world heritage property, was conducted taking the property as a point of reference. The Study covers all possible activities that might have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Property. However the HIA will further be augmented and updated in due course using the outcome of the on-going Review Study of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the of the Kuraz Sugar Development Project (KSDP).

2.3 Paragraph 7

The State Party of Ethiopia was required to submit an updated report with regards to the analysis of indirect impacts on cultural aspects by 1 December 2019 for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020 and examine all potential impacts of the project on Lower Valley of the Omo and its setting.

As a result, the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Kuraz Sugar Development Project (KSDP) was revised due to the significant changes in the size of the project (from 175,000 ha to 100,000 ha) and the number of factories (from five to four). After examining the scoping study of the reviewed EIA, the World Heritage Committee had requested the Government of Ethiopia at its 42nd session to review the scoping study report.

Whereas the previous EIA was in the midst of revision, recently the Government of Ethiopia decided to transfer sugar development projects to the private sectors as part of its overall economic reform and privatization program. Prior to the transmission to the private sector, the Government commissioned a comprehensive Environment and Social Impact Assessment tasks to be carried out by an independent consultant. The Assessment Study will provide the Government of Ethiopia and its development partners with relevant high-level information for developing a sound basis and roadmap for reform and privatization of the sugar sector.

At the time of the provision of this report, the consultant is nominated and carrying out the assessment task. The study will review all previous works and collect additional data to assess the impact of the KSDP on the

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Environment. The consultant is expected to submit its Primary Report on 31 January 2020. The Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Authority for Research and Conservation of the Cultural Heritage in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia will oversee the Study.

Commissioning of the new Study verifies the continued commitment of the Government of Ethiopia for the preservation of the Environment and the protection of cultural heritages in the area. The Study will also assist to promote conservation efforts and the regulatory role of the Government over the Project. While waiting for the finalization of the Study and the transfer of the project to the private sector, no additional development works will be undergoing and the status of the Project will be elucidated. The result of the Study will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee up on its completion. Therefore, the Government of Ethiopia requests the Committee to consider the unique circumstances of the case and extend the timeline for the submission of the EIA over KSDP.

2.4 Paragraph 8

The State Party has been requested to complete the Eu-Funded boundary delineation work by the Ethiopian Mapping Agency and submit the draft boundary to underpin the HIA, and the Management Plan of the property;

2.4.1 Boundary delineation The EU Funded project has financed the boundary delineation and legal framework of the Lower Omo Valley world heritage property. The site boundary delineation and legal framework documents were also presented in the validation workshop and valuable comments were received. The draft map of the Lower Omo Valley world was produced by the Ethiopian Geospatial and Information Agency engaged by the UNESCO Addis Ababa Liaison Office and submitted the draft for review by the State Party in 2018.

However the State Party is still working to establish 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 digital maps of the property and its implementation.

2.4.2 Management system of the property

It would be relevant to recall the report of the Reactive Monitory Mission of UNESCO-ICOMOS took place in 13-19 April 2015. The report of the mission had provided the State Party relevant comments that should be considered in the on-going management and conservation activities of the Lower Omo Valley world heritage property.

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The management plan of the Lower Omo Valley world heritage property was being developed under the European Union Project, by the implementing agency, UNESCO Addis Ababa Liaison Office. This management plan has considered every one of the comments and recommendations raised in the UNESCO-ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission report.

The management plan was established in close consultation with relevant stakeholders, importantly with the Ethiopian Sugar Corporation. The result of the plan was also acknowledged during the validation workshop, organized from 8-10 November 2018, in Adama. Therefore the final management plan document has been submitted to the Authority in 2019, which was also transferred to the World Heritage Centre for technical evaluation by the Advisory Bodies of the World Heritage Committee. The State Party has in return received valuable feedbacks from the Centre in November 2019.

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

No other development activities identified by the State Party in the area.

4. Public access to the state of conservation report.

The State Party is most willing to allow public access to this State of Conservation Report.

5. Signature of the Authority

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

