



STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT

Iguazu National Park

(1984, Ref. 303)

ARGENTINA

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Iguazu National Park - ARGENTINA

A. State of Conservation Report (English)

**SUBMISSION OF
STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS
BY THE STATES PARTIES**

Iguazu National Park (Argentina) (N 303)

1. Executive Summary of the report

The Iguazú National Park Management Plan was formally approved and adopted (see www.plandegestionpni.blogspot.com.ar). Its programs were already included in annual operational plans. An internal organigram is being reviewed; the staff is being trained and its adequacy to its functions reviewed. Relations with national and international public and private organizations and institutions have improved and strengthened. The National Park's Emergency and contingency plan was finished. Control and inspection plan was updated and its implementation being developed.

During 2018, the Public Use Plan was elaborated and its final document is still in process to be authorized. Strengthening tourism sustainability inside the National Park are being applied. Carrying capacity and its administration using visitor flow will be established when Public Use plan is approved (currently, being analyzed by central national authorities). During 2020, a Bird Observatory is going to be built nearby the lowlands at the National Route 101. The Iguazú National Park was introduced as World Heritage Site in any official presentation, class or meeting, including its implications. An information diffusion plan is being developed. The environmental education activities are continuously performed at Puerto Iguazú (west limit), Caburé-í and Andresito (east limit). Progresses in diminishing paper use in brochures had been made (QR version is nowadays available). Research priorities were established. Big felines and other especial value vertebrate's species monitory continue at the national park using diverse sources (reliable web sites, different local witnesses, etc.). Some survey, research and monitory of key aspects dealing with conservation values and its management needs have been developed. A recent land donation has strengthened the ecological connection between the Argentinian and the Brazilian protected areas at Peninsula Andresito. Neighboring areas surveys and analysis are continuing in order to determine the park buffer zone in detail, and thus, then develop further activities. Sustainable practices are being applied at the park. Training on applying and developing sustainable techniques and habits addressed to all staffs working at the national park is being defined. Inventory of the national park and its surroundings' material cultural heritage and oral history is being organized. Handcraft and children's choir activities of local Guarani communities are continuing.

Along the past years, cooperative activities with neighboring Parque Nacional do Iguaçu, Brazil, have successfully continued, but no further formalities have been achieved. Those activities include: joint activities supporting local Jaguar's population research and monitory (this population is shared by both parks), control and surveillance joint actions, collaboration in information diffusion tasks, etc. Local jaguar population number have increased, showing good results of joint control activities in both side of the international frontier. Nowadays, there are not actual projects or any plan that could endanger any feature that make National Route 101 being considered a Conservation Value. The construction of special gates is foreseen at the main National Park's routes entrances that are intended to sensitize visitors and passers-by about the Park special features and functions. Work meetings with National Routes authorities were carried out in order to coordinate conservation initiatives to be applied regarding traffic control and other problems sources. Baixo Iguaçu dam has already been concluded and no advances in any kind of joint management of the water were achieved. We do point out that collaboration in control and surveillance activities on the river in both sides successfully continues. A long term monitory and research project dealing with Iguazú river has started from the Argentinian side.

In general aspects, Iguazú National Park conservation status can be referred to the one described in the 2017/2023 Management Plan, including the following remarks: Regarding running animals over, advances have been verified: wildlife aerial-crossing construction, vehicles surveillance radars installed, road control enhanced. The Beware animal! campaign (“¡Cuidado Animal!”) continues. Regarding poaching and illegal fishing activities, control and surveillance operations continue to be carried out. Considering problematic animals, problems caused by accustomed wildlife is in continuous assessment: were assessed: fences, enclosures, scare-off activities, etc. The “Your food kills me” campaign (“Tu comida me mata”) continues. Illegal palm heart harvesting has diminished, with no serious events having occurred during the last years. Works with exotic vegetation inside the park are continuing, particularly controlling material income for constructions. New constructions intended within the property are related to visitors’ flow management, full accessibility, sanitary and services reconditioning. All this in order to adapt to visitation that passed from originally previewed 400.000 persons a year to nowadays more than 1.5 million.

2. Response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee

The response to the Decision of the World Heritage Committee (Draft Decision: 42 COM 7B.83) is as follows, according to each remarked point:

“3. Welcomes the finalization and submission of the updated Management Plan for the property and requests the State Party to ensure its formal adoption and begin its implementation as soon as possible;”

The Iguazú National Park Management Plan (in Spanish, *Plan de Gestión del Parque Nacional Iguazú, PGPNI-2017/2023*), was formally approved and adopted through the official decision RESFC-2018-76-APN-D#APNAC, on February 14th, 2018.

Its main implementation advances are:

1. OPERATIONAL Program (11 projects)

1.1. ADMINISTRATIVE Subprogram

1.1.1. Management Plan Implementation and updating.

Programs were included in the 2020 Annual Operational plan.

1.1.2. Iguazú National Park institutional strengthening

Internal organigram is being reviewed in regards to the new Park’s superintendent policies. Recently, park ranger Sergio F. Acosta assumed this position.

1.1.3. Iguazú National Park staff’s adequacy

In revision.

1.1.4. Iguazú National Park staff’s training.

The Iguazú National Park staff is trained through courses from the INAP (Public Administration National Institute) and by training courses organized by the park itself. In 2019, a series of classes dealing with vector-transmitted diseases in the park’s region, was carried out by local professionals, in collaboration with a health caring NGO (Fundación Mundo Sano).

1.1.5. Relationship with international organizations and institutions

This, in special regards to the relationship with neighboring Parque Nacional do Iguaçu, Brazil, include: joint activities supporting local Jaguar’s population research and monitoring (this population is shared by both parks), control and surveillance joint actions, collaboration in information dissemination tasks, etc. Iguazú National Park actively participates in the COMPARNI (the Brazilian park advisory commission).

1.1.6. Relationship with public and private organizations and institutions.

A collaboration agreement with the *INMeT (Instituto Nacional de Medicina Tropical, Tropical Medicine National Institute)* was signed. Another similar agreement is being developed with the health caring NGO Fundación Mundo Sano. The Park’s Conservation and Environmental Department has already collaborated with this NGO in several education activities, specially by adding environmental sanitarian aspects to the conservational educative program.

1.1.7. Regularization of private or uncertain property lands measuring inside the protected area

Not started process.

1.1.8. Maximization of properties, equipment and infrastructures use and profit (material worth).

Inventories, electronics recycling, equipment reconditioning processes, etc. have already successfully started.

1.2.1. Emergency and contingency plan updating and implementation

During 2019, the National Park's Emergency and contingency plan was finished. It was carried out by de Park Rangers Corp, and nowadays, this plan is up to be approved by central authorities of the National Park Administration.

1.2.2. Existing infrastructure and equipment routine maintenance

Being developed.

1.2.3. Control and inspection plan updating and implementation

Plan updated and implementation being developed.

2. PUBLIC USE Program (10 projects)

2.1. RECREATIONAL AND TOURISM Subprogram

2.1.1. Public Use plan updating and implementation

During 2018, in order to elaborate the Public Use Plan, several internal and public workshops were performed. The plan's final document is still in process to be authorized by central national authorities.

This plan analyzes important factors for the Public Use at the National Park, as well as for bringing solution to diverse problems generated as consequence of high visitation (especially in the Waterfalls' Area), such as carrying capacity or establishing priorities in solving associated problems.

2.1.2. Strengthening tourism sustainability inside the National Park

Being applied.

2.1.3. Carrying capacity implementation

Carrying capacity and its administration using visitor flow will be established when Public Use plan is approved (currently, being analyzed by central national authorities).

2.1.4. Recreational and touristic areas appreciation

During the next four months, a Bird Observatory is going to be built nearby the lowlands at the National Route 101. It will be used in Birdwatching activities, and it will be a part of the Iguazú Birds' Route ("Ruta de las Aves del Iguazú"), an Eco touristic initiative organized by Aves Argentina (local Birds International partner) and Andresito's municipality.

2.1.5. Old Cataratas Hotel's put in value.

Being developed.

2.2. INTERPRETATION, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION Subprogram

2.2.1. Iguazú National Park's put in value as World Heritage Site

The Iguazú National Park was introduced as World Heritage Site in any official presentation, class or meeting, including its implications. Besides, a particular presentation dealing with World Heritage Site's objectives (in the context of UNESCO's development) was elaborated and performed.

2.2.2. Information diffusion plan.

Being developed.

2.2.3. Educational and Environmental Interpretation Plan

The Educational and Environmental Interpretation plan is being elaborated. Nevertheless, environmental education activities are continuously performed by members of the Conservation and Environmental Education Department inside and outside the national park, in formal and informal context. All this, in Puerto Iguazú (west limit), Caburé-í and Andresito (last two, east limit).

2.2.4. Visitors' Center Modernization.

2.2.5. Signage and brochures.

Progresses in diminishing paper use in brochures had been made (QR version is nowadays available)

Signage must still be updated, refreshed and expanded.

3. NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE Program (14 projects)

3.1. RESEARCH AND MONITORY Subprogram

3.1.1. Research strengthening at the Iguazú National Park and its Buffer zone

Research priorities were established by performing internal workshops, under the Management Plan directives (objectives, conservation values, conservation problems). Security protocols for researchers acting at the forest are applied. Research results and advances are communicated to the park's staff.

3.1.2. Especial value Vertebrate's Species monitory (in Spanish, *Especies de Vertebrados de Valor Especial - EVVEs*).

Big felines and other especial value vertebrate's species monitory continue at the national park using diverse sources (reliable web sites, different local witnesses, etc.). It is particularly performed at Cataratas Area, after having a threatening experience with a puma during 2016 and 2017. Since then, a formally established monitory program was established, based on camera traps methods.

3.1.3. Survey, research and monitoring of key aspects dealing with conservation values and its management needs

Some important punctual aspects have been developed: exotic invasive species in the park and its buffer zone (i.e. bull frog).

3.2. PROTECTION Y RECOVERY Subprogram

3.2.1. Restoration and recovery of degraded natural heritage.

Project still not applied.

3.2.2. Exotic species control, elimination and monitoring at the national park and its buffer zone.

Works with exotic vegetation inside the park are continuing, particularly controlling material income for constructions. Bull frog presence at the east limit was confirmed but further research is needed.

3.2.3. Problematic animals (“animales problema”) management at the Cataratas Area

Problems caused by accustomed wildlife is in continuous assessment, particularly those produced by Capuchin monkeys and coatis. During the last two years, enclosure structures were installed in visitation areas and food courts where most problems occur. Possible solutions were assessed: fences, enclosures, scare-off activities, etc. Possible new problems regarding new construction proposals were analyzed. The “Your food kills me” campaign (“Tu comida me mata”) continues, displaying signage (in public trails and food courts and restaurants), brochures and radio spots.

3.2.4. Wildlife affectation at routes and roads in the national parks and its surroundings.

Advances have been verified: wildlife aerial-crossing construction, vehicles surveillance radars installed, road control enhanced. One radar is already full working (it is needed federal homologation in order to fees be properly applied), discouraging high speeds in its surroundings. The Beware animal! campaign (“¡Cuidado Animal!”) continues, displaying signage (in public roads and buses), brochures and radio spots.

3.2.5. National Route 101 soil sector inside the park and its related biodiversity management and appreciation.

Work meetings with National Routes authorities were carried out in order to coordinate conservation initiatives to be applied on Route 101 and other public roads regarding traffic control and other problems sources. In the case of National Route 101, no further paving initiatives or other actions. Nevertheless, there are no detailed advances on its cooperative management with other national authorities.

3.2.6. Mata Atlántica corridor (“Corredor Mata Atlántica”).

Iguazú national park has receipt an ancient farm as donation and established the “Altos del Iguazú” reserve in it. It is located in a very sensitive area in the Andresito peninsula. This donation was made by the local WWF partner, Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina, and these lands strengthen the ecological connection between the Argentinian and the Brazilian protected areas.

3.3. SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS Subprogram

3.3.1. Buffer zone implementation

Neighboring areas surveys and analysis are continuing in order to determine the park buffer zone in detail, and thus, then develop further activities.

3.3.2. Sustainable practices plan: renewable energy saving and use, material recovery, reuse and recycling, etc.

Garbage separation is being applied at the park. Advances in replacing non-recyclable packaging and recipients in park’s restaurant, food and souvenirs shops.

3.3.3. Training on applying and developing sustainable techniques and habits addressed to all staffs working at the national park.

Project’s activities are being defined.

3.3.4. Inventory of the national park and its surroundings’ material cultural heritage and oral history

Information and materials surveys are being organized.

3.3.5. Native Peoples activities at the Cataratas Area

Handcraft and children’s choir activities of local Guarani communities are continuing.

“4. Takes note that the Management Plan defines a buffer zone for the property, and encourages the State Party to develop and submit a Minor Boundary Modification, as per Paragraphs 163 and 164 of the Operational Guidelines, to the World Centre for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies and adoption by the World Heritage Committee, in order to officially establish a buffer zone for the property as considered appropriate;”

Even when the management plan defines the parks’ buffer zone general aspects, particularly in the eastern limit, this has not been officially established. So, in that eastern limit, main properties in the nearby proposed buffer zone by the management plan were identified, and first maps and main land uses were broadly described. Nevertheless, they are not completed nor a more detailed description of the area neither the priorities analysis according to the management plan proposal, in order to properly establish the buffer zone limits. Projects included

and determined by the management plan will continued: 3. NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE Program; 3.1. RESEARCH AND MONITORY Subprogram; 3.1.1. Research strengthening at the Iguazú National Park and its Buffer zone.

“5. Also welcomes the increased collaboration between the States Parties of Argentina and Brazil in the management of the adjacent properties Iguazú National Park and Iguazu National Park, and also requests both States Parties to continue these efforts and to clarify whether additional actions are planned in order to further formalize transboundary cooperation, following the signing of a letter of intent between the Administración de Parques Nacionales de Argentina, Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMbio), the Iguazú National Park in Argentina and the Iguazu National Park in Brazil in 2016;”

Along the past years, cooperative activities with neighboring Parque Nacional do Iguaçu, Brazil, have successfully continued, but no further formalities have been achieved. Those activities include: joint activities supporting local Jaguar’s population research and monitory (this population is shared by both parks), control and surveillance joint actions, collaboration in information diffusion tasks, etc. On last November 29th, last local jaguar population number (obtained by researchers) have increased, showing good results of joint control activities in both side of the international frontier. It also showed that several individuals can cross those limits, inhabiting both Argentina and Brazil.

Iguazú National Park actively participates in the COMPARNI (the Brazilian park advisory commission).

“6. Also takes note of the information provided by the State Party regarding National Route 101 (RN101) and the confirmation that no plans exist for paving or modifying the stretch of the road within the property, and further requests the State Party to clarify whether any plans exist for extension or further paving of the road outside the property, which might potentially affect its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);”

Nowadays, there are not actual projects or any plan including paving National Route 101 neither other kind of action that could endanger any feature that make that road being considered a Conservation Value by the national park managers. Route 101 is not paved from the beginning of the entrance road to the local airport up to the eastern Park’s limits, covering around 30 unpaved kilometers. The construction of special gates is foreseen at the main National Park’s routes entrances, including the Yacuy access, at the eastern limit. These gates are intended to sensitize visitors and passers-by about the Park special features, the Route 101 in particular.

“7. Further takes note that the State Party foresees to develop, in consultation with the National Roads Department, a long-term Management Plan for RN101, and requests furthermore the State Party to ensure that conservation of the property’s OUV is fully taken into account in the development of such a plan;”

Work meetings with National Routes authorities were carried out in order to coordinate conservation initiatives to be applied on Route 101 and other public roads regarding traffic control and other problems sources. In the case of National Route 101, no further paving initiatives or other actions. Nevertheless, there are no detailed advances on its cooperative management with other national authorities.

“8. Takes note furthermore that the construction of the Baixo hydroelectric dam project in the vicinity of the neighbouring property of Iguazu National Park in Brazil is currently underway, and therefore requests moreover the State Party of Argentina to cooperate with the State Party of Brazil on the development of a comprehensive overall monitoring system both for aquatic fauna and water flow, which would allow oversight of the implementation of requirements and action plans developed for the hydropower project, and assess their effectiveness with regards to mitigation of possible negative impacts on the OUV of the two properties;”

Baixo Iguaçu dam has already been concluded and no advances in any kind of joint management of the water were achieved. We do point out that collaboration in control and surveillance activities on the river in both sides successfully continues, including each country national security forces, and Argentinian national and Misiones province park rangers. A long term monitory and research project dealing with Iguazú river has started from the Argentinian side: during 12 years, this river ecosystems, fish communities and water quality are going to be studied.

“9. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2019, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.*”

In general aspects, Iguazú National Park conservation status can be referred to the one described in the 2017/2023 Management Plan, including the following remarks:

- Regarding running animals over, as said above, advances have been verified: wildlife aerial-crossing construction, vehicles surveillance radars installed, road control enhanced. One radar is already full working (it is needed federal homologation in order to fees be properly applied), discouraging high speeds in its surroundings. The Beware animal! campaign (“¡Cuidado Animal!”) continues, displaying signage (in public roads and buses), brochures and radio spots.
 - Regarding poaching and illegal fishing activities, control and surveillance operations continue to be carried out.
 - Considering problematic animals, problems caused by accustomed wildlife is in continuous assessment, particularly those produced by Capuchin monkeys and coatis. During the last two years, enclosure structures were installed in visitation areas and food courts where most problems occur. Possible solutions were assessed: fences, enclosures, scare-off activities, etc. Possible new problems regarding new construction proposals were analyzed. The “Your food kills me” campaign (“Tu comida me mata”) continues, displaying signage (in public trails and food courts and restaurants), brochures and radio spots.
 - Illegal palm heart harvesting has diminished, with no serious events having occurred during the last years.
 - Works with exotic vegetation inside the park are continuing, particularly controlling material income for constructions. Bull frog presence at the east limit was confirmed but further research is needed. A particular activity was carried out by a private hotel inside the Cataratas Area, which has eliminated invasive exotic vegetation, by the request of Iguazú National Park. That hotel is considered the original irradiation focus for many of the exotic species.
3. Other current conservation issues identified by the State(s) Party(ies) which may have an impact on the property’s Outstanding Universal Value

All current conservation issues were described in point 2.

4. In conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, describe any potential major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) intended within the property, the buffer zone(s) and/or corridors or other areas, where such developments may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including authenticity and integrity.

All infrastructure functioning today, was built between 1997 and 2000, when the foreseen visitation aroused around 400.000 persons a year. Nowadays that is up to be multiplied by 4. So, all new intended constructions within the property have the purpose of solving problems related to visitor flow and services quality. On this regard, remarkable points are the Garganta del Diablo balcony enlargement and a new path for disabled people in the lower trail (this will make Cataratas accessible for all visitors). New constructions also include sanitary and general services reconditioning and enlargement (new toilettes, water services, electricity, internet). All the projected constructions are being reviewed by the National Park System authorities.

5. Public access to the state of conservation report

[Note: this report will be uploaded for public access on the World Heritage Centre’s State of Conservation Information System (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc>). Should your State Party request that the full report should not be uploaded, only the 1-page executive summary provided in point (1.) above will be uploaded for public access].

6. Signature of the Authority