



# National Commission for Museums and Monuments

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DATE: 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2019

The Director,  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre,  
Paris

## STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT FOR SUKUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE - 2019

Kindly find attached the State of Conservation report for Sukur Cultural Landscape, World Heritage Site, Adamawa State Nigeria for 2019 reporting period.

Please accept the assurances of the high esteem of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments.



Aliyu Abdu Lass

Director,  
Department of Monuments, Heritage and Sites  
NCMM

**NAME OF PROPERTY:** Sukur Cultural Landscape  
**IDENTIFICATION NUMBER:** 938  
**STATE PARTY:** Nigeria

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a report by the State party to the World Heritage Centre in 2015 with regard to current conservation status of the property at the time and consequent upon the insurgent attack by Boko Haram in December 2014; the World Heritage Committee at its 40th Session in Istanbul, Turkey examined the report and took decisions regarding the property.

In line with the decision to ensure that attributes of the site that contribute to its outstanding universal values are properly maintained and further protect its authenticity and integrity, the state party was encouraged to make a request under UNESCO International Assistance Funds for specified conservation works at the property.

The World Heritage Committee on 21st March, 2017 granted International Assistance Fund of the sum of **\$19,867 USD** to the state party for restoration works at Sukur World Heritage Site, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) received the first payment of **\$15,894 USD** being 80% of the total approved funds on 7th December 2018.

In response to insurgent attack on the site, the review of the Conservation Management Plan for the next period (2017 - 2021) addressed the need to incorporate a Risk Preparedness Plan as well as the deployment of strategies for effective restoration of structures and features affected by the attack.

## 2. RESPONSE TO THE DECISION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The World Heritage Committee at its 40th Session in Istanbul, Turkey via decisions **40 COM 7B.17** and **42 COM 7B.48** invited the State Party to request for emergency support to restore the tangible and intangible cultural values of the site under its International Assistance funds.

The execution of the International Assistance contract for conservation works on the property is the highlight of the reporting period. In line with the details of the

contract, specified conservation/restoration actions were carried out in 2018 and 2019 to restore structures destroyed or damaged by the insurgent attacks. Structures restored include the following;

- 12 huts in the Hidi's palace and palace square as well as some sections of the stone enclosure wall around the Hidi palace which is a major feature of the cultural landscape contributing to its Outstanding Universal Value;
- Initiation room (buk);
- 2 stone wall enclosed pit toilets in the palace square;
- the Primary Health Care Centre;
- block of primary school classrooms.

During the period under review, the Sukur community received the sum of three hundred and eighty five thousand Naira (**N385,000:00** – about **\$1075 USD**) from **Legartt Trust England** and **Professor Nicholas David** as assistance towards the rehabilitation of the primary school. The funds was utilized to commence the restoration works on the primary school block but was only able to procure and setup some wood rafters for the roof frame. The NCMM then contributed to the completion of the building restoration from the international assistance funds and also procured and installed classroom furniture for the pupils to make the classroom immediately functional at the end of the project.

There was a Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in April 2018. The team to assess the property was headed by designated UNESCO Consultant in Nigeria, Mr Oluremi Funsho Adedayo and the Director Monuments, Heritage and Sites NCMM, Mr Aliyu Abdu Lass accompanied by the Site Manager, Mr Anthony Sham. A formal presentation of the details of the condition of the property was made to national and international experts of UNESCO and ICOMOS in Abuja at a meeting to report on the mission, which was held at UNESCO office Abuja in May 2018.

The meeting which involved representatives from UNESCO World Heritage Centre Paris, ICOMOS representative from Zimbabwe and the staff of National Commission for Museums and Monuments evaluated the report with a view to provide feedback to the World Heritage Centre and the World Heritage Committee.

### **3. OTHER CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE PARTY WHICH MAY HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE PROPERTY'S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE**

The gradual erosion of the paved walkway from the foot of the hill to the hilltop due to weather conditions and continuous usage is noticed. It may require more than the



periodic communal work that is carried out to restore the stone pathways. The community has agreed to undertake a tree planting exercise on the landscape to reduce the impact of erosion.

On the whole there are no other adverse conditions or situations affecting the outstanding universal value of the property.

**4. IN CONFORMITY WITH OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES, POTENTIAL MAJOR RESTORATIONS AND CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE CORE AREA OR BUFFER ZONE THAT MAY LIKELY AFFECT THE PROPERTY'S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE INCLUDING AUTHENTICITY AND INTEGRITY**

All conservation works carried out were in conformity with the operational guidelines with regard to sustaining the attributes that pertain to the outstanding universal value of the property within the core zone.

It is hoped that when the region has fully returned to normalcy and the security situation is considerably improved with the anticipated end of the insurgency, other support facilities in the buffer zone such as access roads, visitor lodges and recreation centre downhill will be eventually restored.

While Sukur Cultural Landscape is not itself under threat, the surrounding communities have still witnessed sporadic insurgent's attacks.

**5. PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT**

The State Party has no objection to public access to the state of conservation report.

**6. SIGNATURE OF THE AUTHORITY**

**Name:** Aliyu Abdu Lass

**Designation:** Director, Department of Monuments Heritage and Sites

**Organization:** National Commission for Museums and Monuments

Signature: .....

Date: 17-09-19.....



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16TH MARCH, 2020

TF 128/ C.131/Vol. T/559

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UNESCO World Heritage Centre,  
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ATTENTION: DAVID STEHL

## UPDATED REPORT ON SUKUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE WORLD HERITAGE SITE, ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

### **1) JUSTIFICATION FOR THE EXTENSION OF SUKUR TO BE KNOWN AS “SUKUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AND THE ASSOCIATED DGB TRANSBOUNDARY SERIAL SITES”**

Following the formal letter from the Minister of Arts and Culture of Cameroon requesting for Nigeria's consent for joint World Heritage nomination on Cross River-Korup-Takamanda (CRIKOT) National Parks and for the extension of the **Dig-Gid-Biy (DGB)** in Cameroon with Sukur Cultural Landscape, Nigeria's Minister for Information and Culture replied with a consent for the joint trans-boundary nomination request. Following this correspondences, Cameroon invited Nigeria's focal person on a mission to Cameroon (11th – 19th December, 2019) to visit the DGB sites and assess the possibility of extension of Sukur as a trans-boundary site that incorporates the DGB. I hereby reproduce an extract on my report on the mission.

**Sukur Cultural landscape was enlisted in to the world heritage list in 1999 under the following criteria:-**

**Criterion (iii): Sukur is an exceptional landscape that graphically illustrates a form of land-use that marks a critical stage in human settlement and its relationship with its environment.**

**Criterion (v): The cultural landscape of Sukur has survived unchanged for many centuries, and continues to do so at a period when this form of traditional human settlement is under threat in many parts of the world.**

**Criterion (vi): The cultural landscape of Sukur is eloquent testimony to a strong and continuing spiritual and cultural tradition that has endured for many centuries.**

While the designated area of Sukur cultural landscape contain all the attributes that demonstrate the OUVs listed in the 3 criteria, it is easy to see the continuum of these attributes extending far into the settlement areas of the DGBs within the Cameroonian territories. As a living site with active practice in social and cultural traditions, extant Sukur communities could serve as the living expressions that interpret and give meanings to the DGB sites in Cameroon whose cultural and social



functions are lost to the people of its immediate environment. Technically, it is easier to demonstrate and justify the extension of Sukur into the DGB in accord with the territorial integrity and the authenticity of its monumentality. In the face of dynamic adaptation to challenges of a difficult regional terrain, characterization of the DGBs within the Cameroonian landscape may likely have future interpretation and meaning either along some obliterated cultural routes towards Sukur or within the landscape of the Sukur area itself. There are ample examples of extensions of World Heritage Sites which were affected in recognition of their symmetric compatibility such as the “Strasbourg – Grande Ile” (France) and “The Bauhaus and its Sites in Weimar and Dessau”] (Germany)

Extension of Sukur to incorporate the DGB sites will enhance the much needed international co-operation between Nigeria and Cameroon through trans-boundary initiatives. Already, the Nigerian authority has given expressed permission to Cameroon to embark on all beneficial trans-boundary initiatives in both cultural and natural sectors. Since the border communities have not been divided on the account of national boundaries, socio-cultural and economic transactions between the communities have continued to perpetuate the continuation of historical relationships and cross-cultural interactions that have been going on over the centuries giving credence to the extended cultural landscape across national boundaries. Because Sukur has enjoyed tremendous social and cultural activities which was boosted by its enlistment into the world heritage list, it will be advantageous to reinvigorate or introduce cross border cultural events between the communities living on the landscape.

Peace Park concept initiated by researchers who have worked with the Mandara mountain communities is very important initiative that has the potential to bind the living communities of the Mandara Mountains in cultural, social and economic endeavors which can promote peaceful coexistence and beneficial collaborations across borders. The extension of Sukur with the DGBs will surely be the best process towards building a viable peace park construct.

## **2) SECURITY SITUATION**

At present there is still a significant degree of fear and apprehension in the region due to sporadic attacks from Boko Haram insurgents along the access route to Sukur and especially on other prominent towns in the same Local Government Area such as *Michika*.

*Michika* was recently in the news for the insurgent attack where a leading Christian Cleric was abducted amongst others and eventually beheaded. This has made the World Heritage Site a lot more difficult to access but it has not experienced any further attacks itself. Within the region, Sukur itself continues to enjoy relative safety as indicated by the robust economic activities during the Tuesday market days at *Mildu* and the number of people relocating uphill since the beginning of the insurgency.

## **3) RAINFALL AND THATCHING**

The obvious impact of climate change has led to changing weather patterns which has consequently affected the availability of grass for thatch. The result is that new construction as well as renovation of homesteads on the hilltop is often done with corrugated zinc sheets rather than thatch. However, the core zone of the site including the Hidi Palace and the Palace Square are unaffected by this especially with restoration work carried out using thatch under international assistance funding.

#### 4) WORKSHOP ON THE THIRD CYCLE OF PERIODIC REPORTING HELD AT NAIROBI, KENYA

The site manager, **Anthony Sham** attended this capacity building workshop from 19<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> February 2020 and had the opportunity to interact with other heritage professionals and gain valuable insights into site management and to achieve the following objectives and outputs.

The key objectives of the periodic reporting are as follows:

1. To ascertain the rate at which each state party fulfils the implementation of the 1972 conventions.
2. To rate the synergy between the tiers of government and the communities.
3. To understand aspect of strength, weakness and improvement in the management of each World Heritage Site.

The Outputs are:

1. The questionnaire on Sukur Cultural Landscape had been filled and certified 100%
2. Upon arrival from Nairobi, Heritage Officers in the station namely; Simon Waida, Joseph Stephen Gwary, Lawu Joseph Zira and Mohammed Shuaibu evaluated the report at Yola between 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
3. A report on the workshop was concluded and produced on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2020.
4. The Questionnaire for the third cycle is ready and will be submitted on the 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2020.

#### 5) OUTSTANDING ISSUES RELATING TO INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS FOR SUKUR

It is pertinent to note that having completed the projects outlined under the International Assistance Fund for Sukur Contract NO. 4500376750, the outstanding sum of **\$3, 973 USD** (20% of the approved funds) **has not been paid** This has been pending for more than 6 months now despite having submitted the required project narrative, certified financial report and invoice of second payment.

Furthermore, the extended/ renewed contract for the Hungarian Funds-in-Trust for Sukur is yet to be sent to NCMM.



**Architect Ayeni O.**

*For Director, Overseeing the Office of the Director-General*