

Le Ministre

Dr. Mechtild Rossler
Directrice
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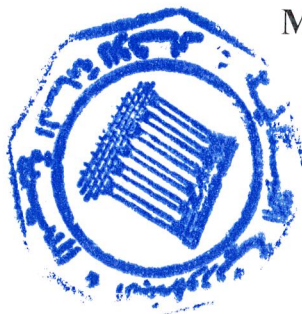
Réf. 382
Beyrouth : 4-3-2021

Sujet : Rapport sur l'état de conservation de la vallée de la Qadisha

Madame la directrice

Conformément aux décisions de la 43ème session du comité du patrimoine mondial tenu à Baku, concernant les deux sites de Byblos et de Tyr, et en se référant aux recommandations des sessions successives du comité, la direction générale des antiquités vous soumet les rapports sur l'état de conservation des deux sites.

En vous remerciant de votre soutien, veuillez, chère Madame, recevoir mes salutations distinguées.



Ministre de la Culture 

Abbas Mortada

**BYBLOS
LEBANON
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IN RESPONSE TO THE DECISION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

The Directorate General of Antiquities confirms that since April 20, 2017, all the construction works in the Diplomatic Club project adjacent to the archaeological site of Byblos have been totally stopped. Since that time, the project has been suspended as well as the archaeological investigations by the promoters.

CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES

The on-site conservation issues are mostly related to the preservation of the archaeological features and structures at risk. Therefore, the work is currently focused on safeguarding the archaeology through the consolidation of selected loose structures and the control of harmful vegetation. An eco-friendly treatment of the *Ephedra Procera* shrub for example, is particularly crucial in order to prevent archaeological structures from being damaged. In consequence, a vegetation management plan is being developed in collaboration with the Nature Conservation Center of the American University of Beirut. This plan targets on finding the best methods to control species that are detrimental to archaeology as well as preserving the endemic ones, such as the *Matthiolla Crassifolia*. Additionally, photogrammetric and topographic surveys are being undertaken, as well as three-dimensional documentation of selected buildings of the site through laser scan.

MAJOR RESTORATIONS WORKS

On-site restoration works

Since the beginning of 2020, all major interventions in the archaeological site of Byblos have been stopped due to the covid 19 pandemic and the economic inflation.

These interventions focused mainly on:

- The emblematic 19th century house that was supposed to be transformed into a museum on the history of the excavations. The project has been interrupted and the only current interventions are limited to reinforcement works towards the southern outer part of the building.
- The Ottoman L shaped building that was supposed to be restored to host the Directorate General of Antiquities regional offices, a gift shop and a cafeteria. The works have been interrupted as well. The ones accomplished so far include the removal of the internal cement plaster and joints and their replacement with lime-based mortars and plaster, as well as the replacement of the damaged wooden windows and doors with similar new joinery.

Old Historical Town

The Center for Research and Conservation of Lebanese Cultural Heritage (CRCPL) is actually fully equipped and many training programs and workshops are being held in this location.



State of conservation of Tyre world heritage site.

With reference to decision 43 com 7b.50, please find here our comments on the mentioned issues regarding Tyre World Heritage Site.

Management plan

- We are working on developing the management plan frame to a fully operated management plan taking in consideration UNESCO monitoring mission recommendations, and some updates on the assessment of the previous actions.
- Several activities will take place to in 2021 to finalize the situation of the management plan including a workshop with the UNESCO regional office in Beirut to revise the frame work and to improve the contents to reach level of fully operated management plan.

Boundary of the property

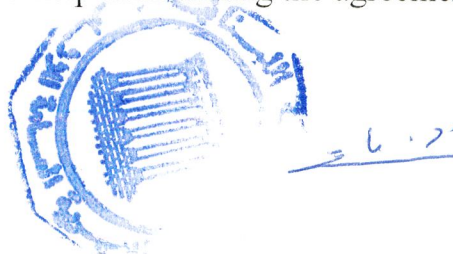
We already defined the major boundary of the site, and organize what we can call it as a buffer zone. We had issued since the year 2002, a governmental decree for the urban plan of the city of Tyre. Part of that decree, had been dedicated to the organization of the of the boundaries and the limits of the sites of the city of Tyre.

In 2012-2022 we are going to finish the definition of the site boundaries and preparing all the necessary regulation for the buffer zone.

Municipal parking

The municipal parking project had been postponed for some time due to the economic situation in the country; meanwhile we are negotiating with the municipality of Tyre city the headlines for an agreement to manage the parking taking in consideration the protection of the potential and the arrangement of the landscape of the area.

We already concluded some of the conditions and methods on both technical and legal level that could help in finalizing the agreement with municipality of Tyre city.



Comprehensive conservation strategy

Since the year 2000, we had already adapted a conservation strategy that included several actions. The majority of the actions had been executed. The implementation of the actions had been revised by UNESCO monitoring missions, before the implantation, during the implementation and after finishing the works. All the documents regarding the conservation works had been delivered to the monitoring missions and the notes of the missions had been taken in consideration.

Our priority at the moment is to raise the skills of our team to meet the challenges. We are improving the skills of our teams by more training through cooperation with international agencies as ICCROM, GETTY and MOSAIKON. We already conducted some workshops and training program and we hope to continue in order to have a full control about the situation.

Maritime protection zone

We are still working on defining the limits of the maritime protection zone. We tried to conduct a physical survey for the surrounding of the city of Tyre in order to determine the limit of the archaeological features in the sea and then the limit of the protection that we would like to apply. Unfortunately, and due to the COVID 19 pandemic, we were not able to conduct the geophysical survey and we postponed the project to 2021. As soon as we finish the survey, we shall have a clear limit for the area that we should protect by the law. We already have a project with a budget to conduct the survey.

Traffic and mobility

At the moment, there are no new plans for traffic and mobility situation in the city of Tyre, we had already supply the world heritage center with the existing plan, and we shall update you with any new changes.

