



AMENDMENT

Item of the Agenda	<u>Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela (Ethiopia) (C 18)</u>
Amended Draft Decision	44 COM 7B.118
Amendment submitted by the Delegation of....	Uganda
Date of submission	12/07/2021

TEXT

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.118

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 43 COM 7B.105, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Acknowledges the information provided on the restoration projects implemented at the Bete Gabriel-Rafael and Beta Golgotha/Mikael churches, particularly the ~~successfully~~ applied minimal intervention approach for roof conservation on these churches not covered by shelters;
4. Welcomes the overall aims of the Sustainable Lalibela Project being developed as part of a bilateral Ethiopian-French project, particularly the focus on capacity building and formal scientific education in conservation-restoration and archaeological research;
5. Also welcomes the development of a dismantling methodology for the existing shelters, notes that the existing shelters ~~have successfully protected the churches from further damages but~~ do not meet the new engineering norms and need considerable strengthening of counterweights; and urges the State Party to apply modifications to the existing protective shelters to comply with the revised national construction norms, keeping the temporary character of these shelters until their subsequent dismantling;
6. Also notes that the ~~rock pathology researches undertaken in the framework of the feasibility study of the~~ bilateral Ethiopian-French project is recommending, on the basis of ~~the scoriaceous basaltic composition studies of the mineral structure~~ of the rock into which the churches are carved and its susceptibility to water penetration, the complete external protection of all churches and their immediate surroundings by permanent shelter constructions; and that such shelters would either need to be bound to the ground by massive counter weights or anchored into the rock;

7. Further notes that three anchor based options for the design of shelters ~~were~~are being explored and that ~~that based on the recommendations of the scientific committee and the local community to implement the canopy option which would allow to cover all three groups of churches and a long-term conservation and preservation of the site while restoring the damaged parts~~ the Steering Committee has adopted the canopy option and requested UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to support in principle the use of rock anchors for new shelters;

8. ~~Welcomes the results of the feasibility study including the involvement of the local community in the various studies and selection of a solution that puts them at the center. Considers that on the basis of current knowledge, not enough data exists to support the shelter option or rule out other options; and that a long-term conservation plan, based on adequate analysis of all potential options, needs to be agreed before decisions are taken on shelters;~~

9. Requests the State Party, in order to allow final validation of the solution to provide:

- (a) the Final Preliminary Design of the canopy option and the detailed restorations planned;
- b) the results of the environmental and social impact study including the Heritage impact assessments;
- c) the reports of the additional studies recommended by the scientific committee (geotechnical, hydrological and other studies deemed necessary)

~~adequate comparisons of all potential options as a basis for developing a conservation plan, to:~~

- ~~a) Explore the efficacy of alternative, less invasive protection approaches to preventing water penetration and its protective contribution to weathering effects before generally ruling out such treatment strategies;~~
- ~~b) Undertake a detailed analysis of traditional practices that were in place some fifty years ago for sheltering the roofs of the churches in the rainy season;~~
- ~~c) Analyze the negative impacts of drier conditions under shelters;~~
- ~~d) Provide detailed comparisons of weathering between sheltered and unsheltered churches;~~

10. Further welcomes the dialogue that has developed between the State Party, the French authorities and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies on the emerging bilateral project, and encourages the State Party to continue this dialogue to support the development of a conservation plan;

11. Also requests the State Party to present a people-centered approach to preserving the property, including participatory management in the church structures' conservation restoration, and acknowledging the active role the churches have as a living heritage for the local communities;

12. ~~Takes note of the Further requests the State Party to submit all relevant data on the mitigation measures and modifications applied to the existing temporary shelters submitted by the State Party, including thea comprehensive study for the conservation of the Group II area that allows for removing the current shelter at Bete Lebanos;~~

13. Also urges the State Party to ensure the operationalization of the Local Advisory Committee, according to the Reserved Area regulation, to revise the 2014 Management Plan, and to submit it to the World Heritage Centre, along with the cadaster maps ~~and with a request for Minor Boundary Modification~~, including all management and planning provisions for the property;

14. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, a Vision Statement on growth and development, in line with the 2015 Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention, that reflects and respects the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and serves as a guiding principle for the revised Structure Plan of Lalibela and a Local Development Plan for the property and its buffer zone, issued by the national and regional authorities, which should both be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

15. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, 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 45th session in 2022.