

## WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION – IUCN COMMENTS TO ICOMOS

### CHANKILLO SOLAR OBSERVATORY AND CEREMONIAL CENTER (PERU)

IUCN provides the following comments to ICOMOS based on a review of the nomination dossier by the IUCN World Heritage Panel and one (1) external desk reviewer.

As stated in the nomination dossier, in this cultural landscape, the “astronomical observations at Chankillo are still possible today because the valley maintains its pristine conditions. Its exceptional features preserve ancient ecosystems such as fog-oases and carob (*Prosopis sp.*) forests that are of special importance in view of present-day climate change, and also help preserve the prehistoric site. Thus, the shape and physiognomy of the natural landscape facilitate the astronomical function of Chankillo, today, just as they did more than two millennia ago”.

The property is nominated under criteria (i) and (v), and covers a total of 48,470 ha (4,480 ha property / 43,990 ha buffer zone). It overlaps with the territory of one municipal protected area (Cerro Mucho Malo), which includes very fragile ecosystems (fog-oases, desert, and dry forest ecosystems). Law 29763 and its regulation protects the dry forest. Although the nomination dossier states the enactment of city ordinances recognize the ecological importance, monitoring and awareness actions for their conservation of the surrounding natural landscape, monitor changes of fog-oases (lomas) and dry forests cover, and all the natural elements associated, IUCN considers there is a need to better understand tourism impacts on ecosystems and their management by developing additional indicators. Even though the area does not overlap with any globally important protected areas or Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA), the conservation of biodiversity elements (including unique species assemblages of *myxomycetes*) is important as an integral element of the cultural landscape.

The participation of the local population in governance and decision making regarding the conservation of the natural landscape appears limited. To increase awareness, connection to the natural and cultural landscape, and sharing of benefits and responsibilities of local inhabitants in the effective management and conservation of the nominated property, it is essential to consider approaches that may increase their meaningful involvement in the current coordination body. Also, whilst expertise on cultural techniques and management exists for the site, it seems essential to include expertise regarding the nominated property’s natural elements. These are matters that ICOMOS should consider in more detail with the State Party.

According to the nomination dossier, the main risks to this landscape are from the expansion of cultivated areas; mining industry; human settlement expansion; infrastructure developments that generate impacts in the landscape and dry forests (animal herding within and cutting trees), and the “legitimate expectation of the local population for tourist development in the area”. IUCN welcomes the specific management activity included in the nominated property with regards to controlling visitation to the dry forest aimed at reducing the impact on the associated plant and wildlife communities.

IUCN notes the ongoing illegal and mining claims located within the nominated property (e.g., quarry for construction materials in the lower slopes of Cerro Mucho Malo and the adjacent mining claims in the buffer zone including the polymetallic illegal mine). Consistent with the World Heritage Committee’s clear position on the incompatibility of mining and World Heritage status, IUCN recommends this matter should be specifically addressed by ICOMOS in its evaluation.