

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref. GB/TA/1700_Add.Inf

Charenton-le-Pont, 28 February 2022

H. E. Mr Mohammed Saleh Ahmed Jumei
Ambassador, Permanent Delegate
Permanent Delegation of Yemen to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO
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75732 PARIS Cedex 15

World Heritage List 2022 – Additional Information Landmarks of the Ancient Kingdom of Sheba in Marib Governorate (Yemen)

Dear Ambassador,

Following the transmission by the World Heritage Centre to ICOMOS of your request for the nomination of 'Landmarks of the Ancient Kingdom of Saba in Marib Governorate' to be evaluated under emergency procedure, as set out in paragraph 161 and 162 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and in order to facilitate our evaluation processes, we would like to request supplementary information on the following points:

Nature of emergency

The submission of the nomination on an emergency basis is justified by the State Party, on the basis of damage already inflicted as a result of the ongoing conflict in Yemen, the threat of further damage, and developmental pressures related to the enormous population growth in the area since 2014 (partly as a result of the war), as well as environmental factors.

The submitted Conservation and Management Guidelines reveal that the 'cultural heritage of Ma'rib is, since the beginning of the war and in particular in the last months, subject to significant threats and risks of collateral or deliberate damage' that is related to the strategic geopolitical position of the governorate of Ma'rib as the stronghold of the national government. ICOMOS notes the cases of destruction to several elements of the nominated property, and in particular in the ancient city of Ma'rib and the Ma'rib Dam in 2015, and the destruction of parts of the ancient city of Sirwah in 2018, as well as vandalism and looting experienced at other of the nominated component sites. ICOMOS further acknowledges the information on the high risk of imminent new attacks that may result in further loss of the cultural heritage in the area.

The nomination dossier with its annexes suggest that the World Heritage status is sought by the State Party to strengthen the 'international protection' of the nominated property and seek financial assistance to fund maintenance and protection of the sites. It is also recognized that the 'damage to World Heritage sites due to conflicts captures international media attention'.

ICOMOS notes that the boundaries of the component sites in the nominated property are currently rather tight and that the buffer zones hardly cover the immediate setting of the property and certainly not the wider setting that is being impacted by development and environmental degradation.

If the aim of inscription on the World Heritage list is to provide the opportunity to mitigate some of the diverse impacts that the property is suffering, it is difficult to understand how effective measures to manage the developmental and environmental pressures could be achieved within the proposed boundaries.



Republic of Yemen
Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism

LANDMARKS OF THE ANCIENT KINGDOM OF SABA IN MARIB GOVERNORATE

Nomination for inscription to the World Heritage List
(to be processed on an emergency basis)

Additional information

28 March 2022



TABLE OF CONTENT

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION 3

Introduction 3

Nature of emergency 3

Proposal of new boundaries..... 8

Management..... 10

Name and contact information of official local institution 11

ANNEXES 12

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Introduction

This document has been prepared in response to the letter of request for additional information (Annex 2) concerning the nomination file “*Landmark of the Ancient Kingdom of Saba in Marib Governorate*” that the State Party received by the ICOMOS Evaluation Unit after the submission of the file in February 2022. Basically, ICOMOS’ letter focuses on two points: 1. the nature of emergency in relation to the boundaries proposed for the nominated property and the buffer zones; and, 2. the actual involvement of the tribal communities in the management of the nominated property. These issues are dealt with below in three sections: Nature of emergency, Proposal of new boundaries, Management.

Nature of emergency

“ICOMOS notes that the boundaries of the component sites in the nominated property are currently rather tight and that the buffer zones hardly cover the immediate setting of the property and certainly not the wider setting that is being impacted by development and environmental degradation. If the aim of inscription on the World Heritage list is to provide the opportunity to mitigate some of the diverse impacts that the property is suffering, it is difficult to understand how effective measures to manage the developmental and environmental pressures could be achieved within the proposed boundaries.

In these circumstances, ICOMOS would be grateful if the State Party could provide information on the rationale for the delineation of the boundaries of the nominated component sites and the mechanisms used to delimit the buffer zones, and on why more generous areas have not been defined for the property, such as to bring together the three dam sites with other remaining sluices, or to include the alabaster quarries near the city of Sirwah, the irrigation system of Sirwah, and watchtowers set along the mountains controlled by the city of Sirwah, Dar al-Nasir, (fig. 14 in the dossier), or why the buffer zones have not enclosed the wider setting of the property when the importance of the wider archaeological landscape is acknowledged as is its vulnerability to intense pressure from development.” (from ICOMOS’ letter)

The nomination file was prepared in a very short time, due to the urgency to submit it on time to be processed on an emergency basis, with justifications provided in the file and annexed documentation. This did not allow for a continuous expert exchange and teamwork, in order to identify the best boundaries. Moreover, difficult access to the area (in particular to Sirwah, occupied by the militia), due to the war, does not facilitate site visits.

The State Party acknowledges the pertinence of ICOMOS’ questions and comments on the fact that the very tight boundaries that were proposed are not reflecting the importance and value of the wider archaeological landscape on the one hand and are inadequate to mitigate the effects of development pressure on the other hand. Hence, the State Party has decided to take advantage of these comments and recommendations to reconsider the boundaries that were initially proposed.

The identification of the new boundaries – in particular those of the buffer zones – takes into account the historical and physical nature of archaeological sites, setting and wider landscape as well as the impact of development pressure. Therefore, the presentation of the new boundaries and of the rationale which has guided their delimitation is preceded by an analysis of recent expansion trends on Google Earth and of future development according to the Master Plan of Ma’rib, a document which was available only at very low resolution at the time of the submission of the nomination file.

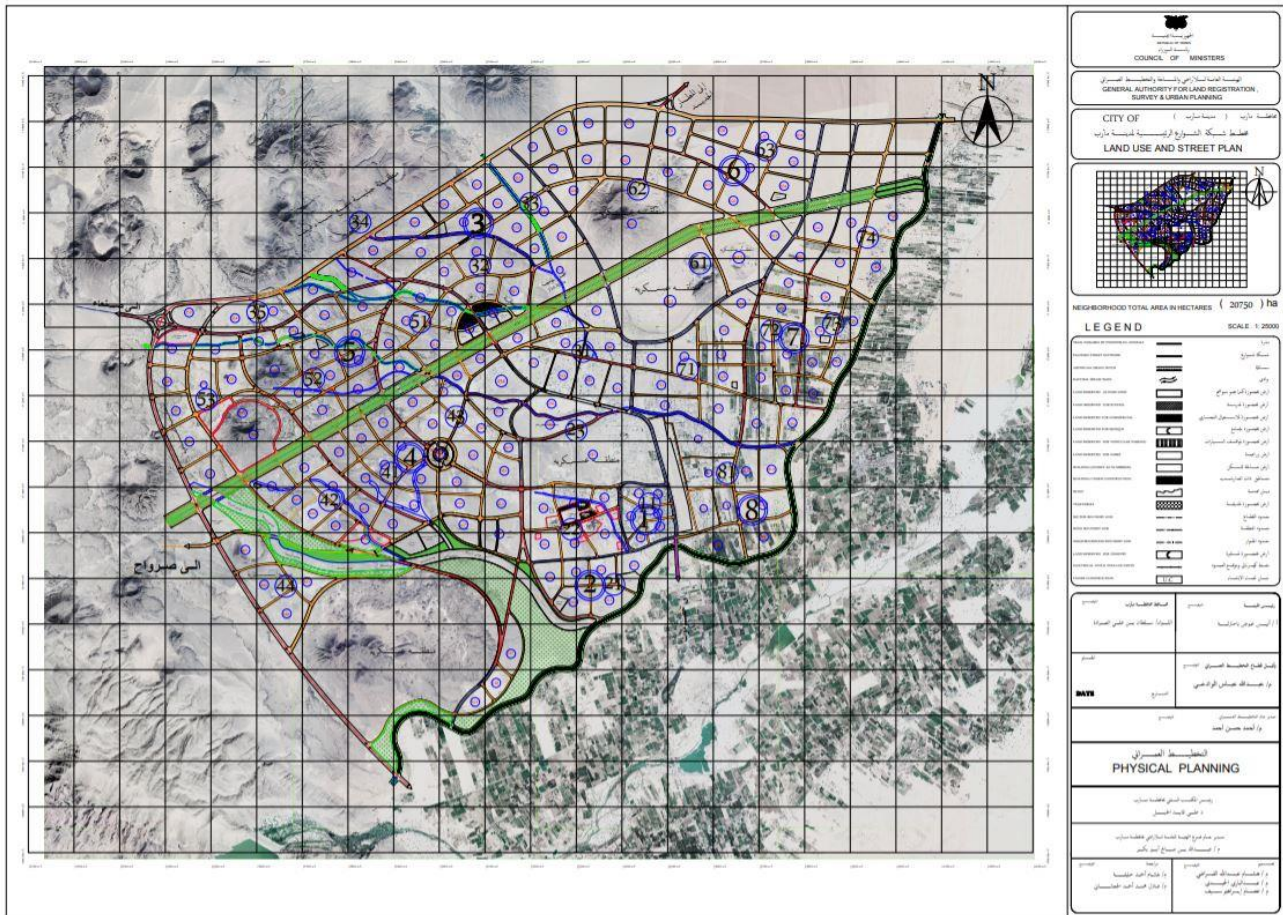


Figure 1. Land Use and Street Plan, Master Plan 2018 (courtesy of the Governorate of Ma'rib)

This Master Plan was prepared by the General Administration for Land, Survey and Urban Planning (GALSUP) to address urban growth in the next 30 years; it was ratified in 2018 by the Governor of Ma'rib and the Prime Minister (UN-Habitat, Marib Urban Profile. March 2021). The comparison of the Land Use and Streets Plan (figure 1-3) with Google Earth images shows that the urbanised surface is planned to cover over four times the extension of the existing urban area, with a network of new roads. However, it is noted that the Master Plan development area concerns only the lands situated to the north and northwest of the ancient oasis, beyond the wadi which runs from southwest to northeast. Along the south-eastern edge, which separates modern Ma'rib from the ancient oasis where archaeological sites are located in the agricultural landscape, a large sinuous road is planned on the wadi bed.

The “*Conservation and Management Guidelines*” annexed to the Nomination File have highlighted the fact that archaeological sites in Ma'rib ancient oasis are threatened in particular by war and development pressure, as a consequence of demographic growth and oil industry expansion. Although the Master Plan is meant to regulate these phenomena, the urbanization of large portions of land will inevitably cause an increased pressure on the ancient oasis, in the absence of protection measures: increased traffic on the two national roads running across the southern and the eastern part of the oasis, extension of sprawl, increased risk of natural disasters due to the effects of land use change and climate change, pollution and noise, vulnerability to vandalism and looting, loss of visual integrity and authenticity, etc.

In this situation, there is a strong and urgent need to ‘match’ the Master Plan with protection and management measures for the whole ancient oasis to the south, in order to safeguard and enhance its archaeological and agricultural landscape.

Hence, two levels of buffer zone are proposed for Ma'rib (see figure 9 and A4 map 4 in annex 1). The inscription on the World Heritage List could offer the opportunity to support local authorities to develop these measures with international assistance and to learn how to integrate cultural heritage conservation and management into the urban planning.

The layout of the Land Use and Street Plan indicates the existence of potential conflicts between the future development of Ma'rib and the protection of archaeological and agricultural heritage and landscape. Considering the fast pace of population growth and development dynamics in Ma'rib, it is urgent to start as soon as possible the process of harmonization of this plan with heritage protection requirements.



Figure 2. The Land Use and Street Plan of the Master Plan overlapped to the Google Earth map of Ma'rib, showing the location (and new boundaries) of four component parts of the nominated property.

Some elements below illustrate some concrete examples of the potential negative impact of this planned development on component parts of the nominated property and, consequently, the nature of emergency.

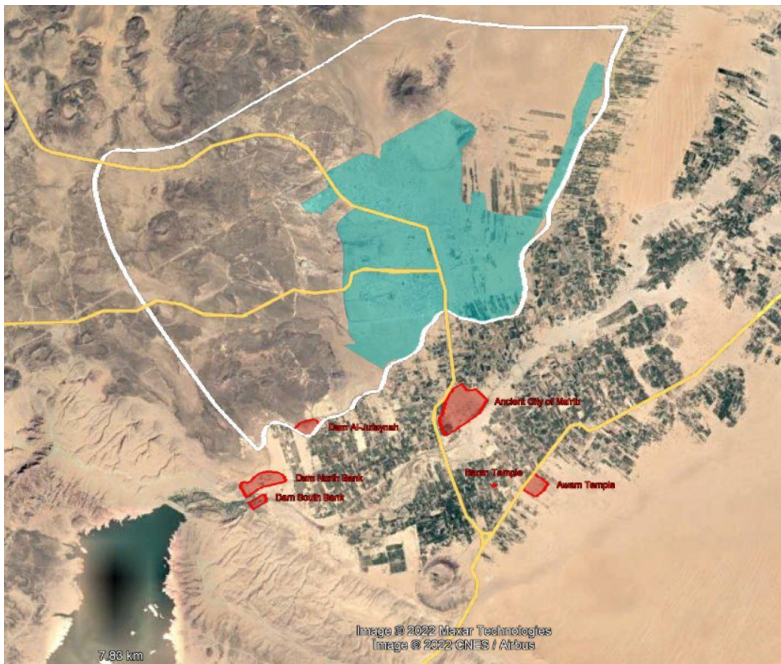


Figure 3. The map shows the extension of the future city of Ma'rib according to the Master Plan 2018 (white boundary) and the extension of the city today (in light blue, although some peripheral areas bordered by roads are still rather empty). To the south and east is the ancient oasis of Ma'rib, where four component parts of the nominated property are located. The map also shows that the ancient oasis is crossed by two national roads: the section R574 of the north-south roads N5-N17 (which also connects the centre of Ma'rib and the airport), and the N5 road towards the East of Yemen. Large roads are known to have an impact on the connectivity of the ecosystem and to be the vector of urban sprawl.

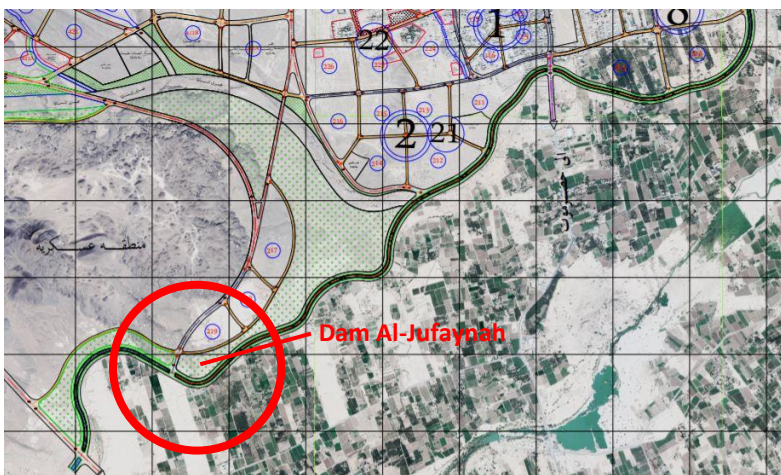


Figure 4. The above-mentioned new road (planned by the Master Plan), running along the wadi, would pass in front of the Dam Al-Jufaynah (sub-component part of the nominated property) along the nominated boundary from west to east. The new linear infrastructure would strongly impact this element of the Dam, which is therefore at high risk of loss of value. Moreover, the lands to the north and to the west of the Dam Al Jufaynah seem to be reserved as military zone and for other functions (see also figure 2).

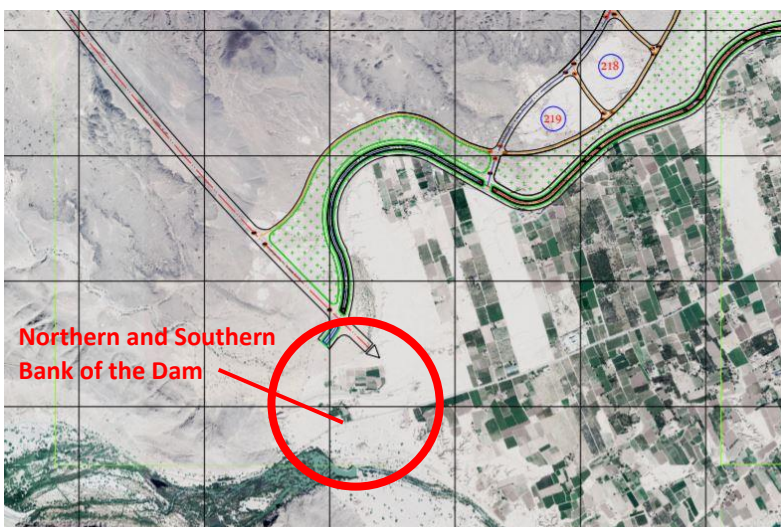


Figure 5. The Master Plan indicates that a new perimetral road planned along the western edge of Ma'rib development would continue towards southeast, passing across the area of the Northern Bank of the Dam, with a consequent loss of value of the whole area of the Dam (component part of the nominated property), which is a witness to the ancient irrigation system. This road would negatively affect the ecosystem and historical value of the landscape of the ancient oasis, especially considering that the western part is still relatively well preserved, without important roads (see also figure 2).



Figure 6. The above-mentioned road R574, which cuts the oasis from north to south, passes very near (at west) the fortification layout and vestiges of the Ancient City of Ma'rib (orange area), a component part of the nominated property. All the areas along the northern section of this road are already subject to urban sprawl (in light blue), also due to their proximity to the centre of modern Ma'rib and the airport. It is a common phenomenon that urban sprawl starts along important roads. Therefore, this area is already rather encroached by modern buildings and there is a high risk of further deterioration as a consequence of increased traffic in the coming years, due to development and population growth in Ma'rib.

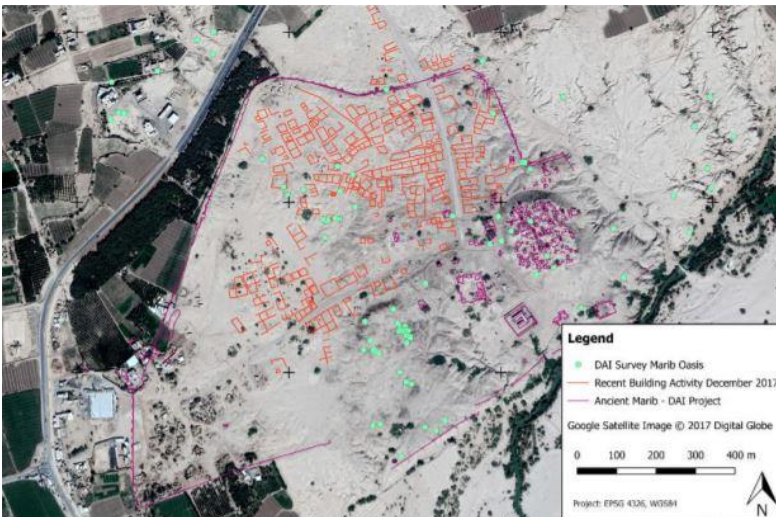


Figure 7. An attempt to build even on unexcavated archaeological lands inside the ancient fortification of Ma'rib (in the immediate surroundings of the still inhabited Ancient City) was discovered – and halted by local authorities – in 2017, thanks to monitoring by remote. The marks of plots pattern and roads are still visible today on Google Earth. (image: Schoeneberg J. (DAI) Documentation - Observation - Evaluation. Ancient Yemen Digital Atlas (AYDA). A WebGIS Based Monument Information System. CHNT 23, 2018).

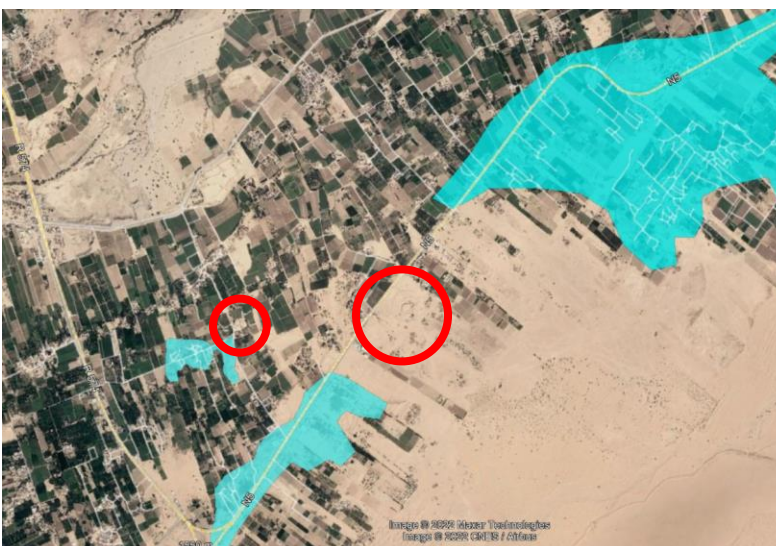


Figure 8. The connectivity of the ecosystem and the unity of landscape of the eastern part of the ancient oasis are affected by the presence of the national road N5 leading to the East of Yemen, passing across the Awām Temple area. Comparison of satellite images of past years and recent ones show that surrounding areas along this road are subject to increasing development (light blue), which is approaching the temple. The same phenomenon takes place also in the immediate surrounding of the Bar'ān Temple, towards west and south, affecting the integrity of the important west-east/east-west visual axis.

Proposal of new boundaries

Based on the analysis and interpretation of these elements, larger boundaries are proposed for both the component parts of the nominated property and their buffer zones (A4 maps in Annex 1):



Figure 9. Ancient Oasis of Marib

In addition to buffer zones A to protect the setting of the component parts of the nominated property in Ma'rib, the larger oasis area needs some complementary safeguarding measures. Its landscape is a memory of the ancient civilization of Saba, its configuration in two 'gardens' (South and North Oasis) – created by the Dhana Wadi and the irrigation system – is mentioned in the Qur'An. Hence, a larger buffer zone B is proposed for Ma'rib Oasis, as archaeological and agricultural park (see map 4).

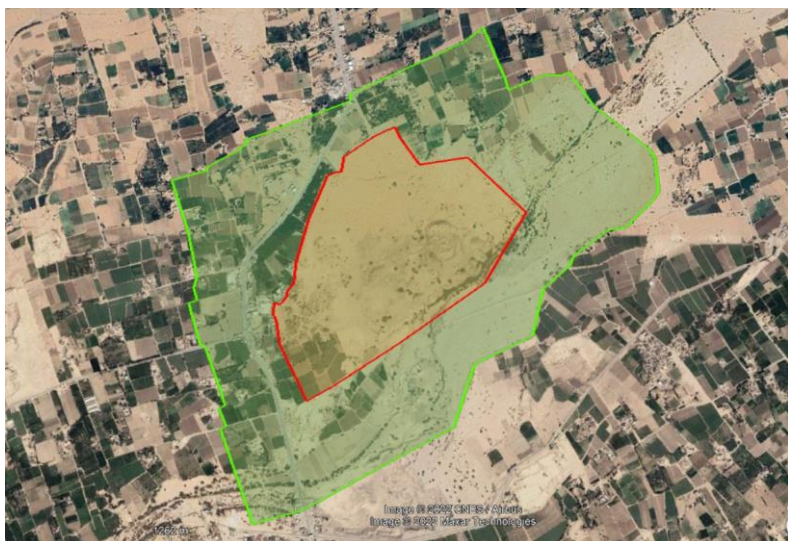


Figure 10. Ancient City of Ma'rib (CP1)

The new area of this component part includes the whole perimeter of the ancient fortification, some vestiges of which are still visible. The new boundary is also meant to protect unexcavated areas within the ancient fortification and outside, towards north and east. The buffer zone comprises parts of the Dhana Wadi to south and east and agricultural lands to the north. To the west, it encompasses the road R574 and a portion of adjacent lands, to have the possibility to control future development along this road and to implement mitigation measures of its negative impact (see map 5).



Figure 11. Awām Temple (CP2)

The boundary of this component part of the nominated property has been extended, to include unexcavated archaeological areas around the sacred precinct especially to south and southeast. Also the buffer zone is larger, encompassing a portion of the national road N5 (to protect against the advancement of urban sprawl) and some areas beyond it to the north, to protect the visual axis towards the Ancient City and the memory of the ancient Processional Road (see map 6).

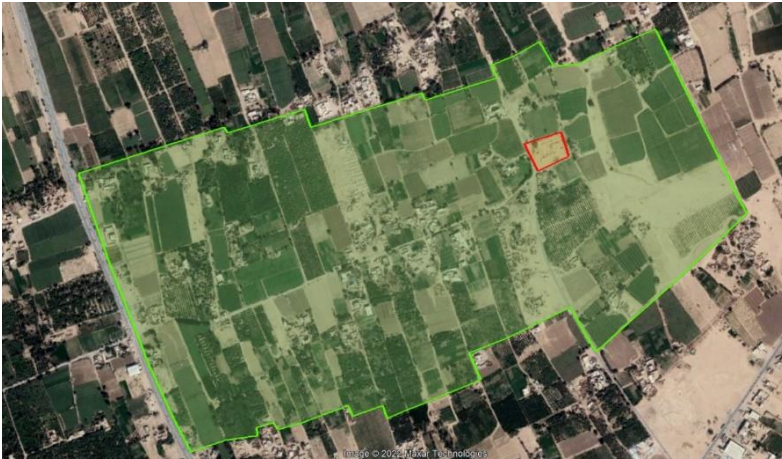


Figure 12. Bar'ān Temple (CP3)

The area of this component part of the nominated property has been extended, encompassing the whole trapezoidal land on which stands the temple. The buffer zone in particular is much larger than before especially towards west, where it reaches the R574 road, on account of the need to protect the important west-east/east-west visual axis, which is threatened by the urban sprawl (see map 7).

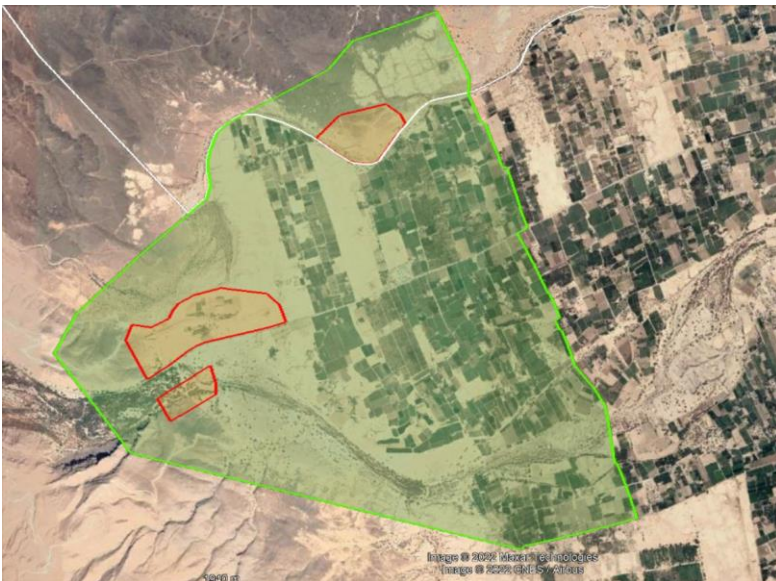


Figure 13. Ancient Dam of Ma'rib (CP4)

As explained above, the area of the Ancient Dam is the most threatened by development. Therefore, a much larger buffer zone has been created, bringing together the three sub-component parts of the Dam, in order to protect the unity of the irrigation landscape and the visual axis towards the Ancient City and the two temples. Moreover, the protection of the Dam Al-Jufaynah (the area of which entirely overlaps with the Master Plan, as explained in figure 4) needs be discussed with the Governorate of Marib, to study a revision or deviation of the road project (see maps 8-9-10).

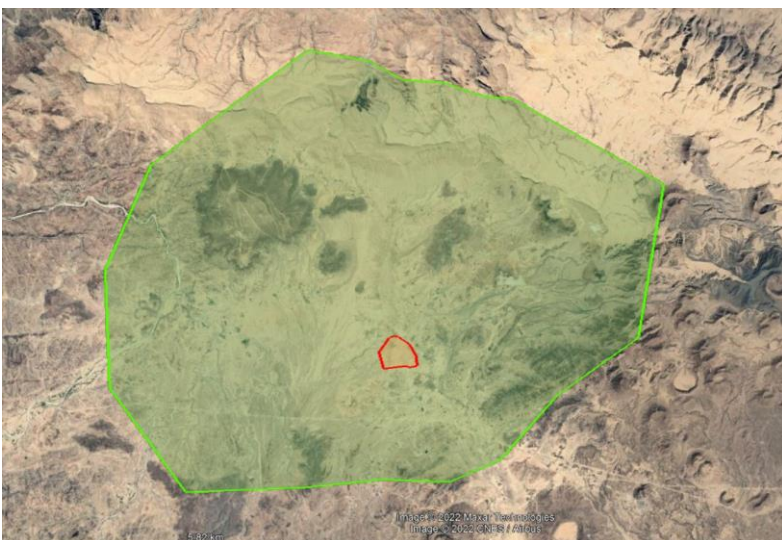


Figure 14. Ancient City of Sirwah (CP5)

The Ancient City of Sirwah is not subject to the same development pressure of Ma'rib. However, the boundaries have been revised and extended, in line with ICOMOS' recommendations, to provide a more generous area for this component part of the nominated property and to include other important elements of the historic landscape in the buffer zone (alabaster quarry, animals traps...). However, the emergency is justified in this case by the occupation of the area by the militia (see maps 11-12).

New areas of the nominated property and buffer zones

| Id N. | Name of the component part | Governorate and District | Coordinates of the central point | Area of nominated component part (ha) | Area of buffer zone A (ha) | Area of buffer zone B (ha) | Map N. |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Ancient City of Ma'rib | Marib, Marib City District | 15°25'36.76"N 45°20'6.82"E | 152 | 389 | 8,933 | 5 |
| 2 | Awām Temple | Marib, Marib City District | 15°24'15.91"N 45°21'21.04"E | 36.2 | 239.8 | | 6 |
| 3 | Bar'ān Temple | Marib, Marib City District | 15°24'11.56"N 45°20'35.24"E | 0.79 | 129.21 | | 7 |
| 4 | Ancient Dam of Ma'rib | 4a Northern Bank | Marib, Marib City District | 15°24'16.19"N 45°16'11.19"E | 60.4 | | 8-9 |
| | | 4b Southern Bank | Marib, Marib City District | 15°23'51.24"N 45°16'7.51"E | 14 | | 8-9 |
| | | 4c Dam of Al-Jufaynah | Marib, Marib City District | 15°25'11.96"N 45°17'1.29"E | 29.5 | | 8-10 |
| 5 | Ancient City of Sirwah | Marib, Sirwah District | 15°27'6.40"N 45°1'5.22"E | 82.4 | 17,034.6 | N.A. | 11-12 |
| TOTAL AREA (in hectares) | | | | 375.29 | 19,291.71 | 8,933 | |

Management

“The dossier mentions that local communities (tribes) have been actively caring for the archaeological sites of the nominated property. The dossier states that ‘tribes contribute to the conservation and management of the sites’, and that local tribes ‘have a strong sense of ownership for the heritage sites located in the areas on which they and their ancestors have lived since long time ago. They participate formally and informally in the management of the sites, because their members are employed by local authorities and GOAM in site protection and maintenance’. Despite this ‘sense of ownership’, the sites are owned and governed by the State. ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could clarify what kind of formal agreement, if any, exists between the tribesmen/traditional leaders and the State/GOAM based on which the cooperation is taking place currently. Furthermore, the stakeholder’s analysis provided by the State Party describes local community groups as ‘stakeholders with potential interest but limited influence and decision capacity; some groups can play an important role of cultural heritage “custodians” if they are involved as beneficiaries and supporters’. In preliminary considerations on potential involvement in the future, this group does not seem to be included in the management and protection of the sites, even though as ‘traditional custodians’, they have been involved in both formally and informally for long. ICOMOS notes that the ‘traditional tribal system supports the legal-institutional framework to manage the sites’ but also acknowledges that this ‘system is fragile considering the conflict situation’ and potential tribal conflicts may occur in the future, according to the dossier. Given the above, ICOMOS would be pleased if the State Party could explain how it is envisaged that local tribes will be included in the future management of the property if it is inscribed on the World Heritage List.” (from ICOMOS’ letter)

As a tribal governorate, the local authority of Ma'rib tries to involve tribesmen in different aspects related to safeguarding and protection of the archaeological sites in the governorate. Tribesmen participate in different meetings with local officials. There are some formal agreements to regulate their involvement, but it was not possible to get them within the delay of this document. They will be provided to ICOMOS as soon as possible.

There are tribal traditions which function according to the tribe’s rules that regulate different aspects of local social life. Different archaeological sites are protected by different tribes, depending on the lands on which they are located. The tribes are committed by their traditions to protect ‘their’ lands, and to protect any site located on these lands, which are considered as protected areas.

The key tribes' Sheikhs (Leaders) are part of the local authority. For example, GOAM office in Marib was managed by a tribesman who is highly interested in archaeological studies and has been a researcher in this discipline. Therefore, GOAM local office has always been in direct contact with the tribes in different issues related to the sites. The governor of Marib is one of the key tribal Sheikhs in the governorate and in the civil service acts, he is responsible for all local departments in the governorate, among them is GOAM office.

In addition, there are some civil society organisations and NGOs that have been interested in and committed to participating in management and protection, and they hold meetings with the local authorities. All the security men who are responsible for the sites are from the tribesmen who have been recruited to safeguard and participate in protection. Moreover, the guards have also been responsible for the safety and security of the archaeological missions to the sites.

The local community could be supported by organising workshops and training sessions to raise awareness and to enable local stakeholders to get more involved in management and protection and to develop their capacities on a site management approach respecting local traditions but also integrating modern approaches and tools. Members of the local community need to be trained to have the necessary skills required for site management, safeguarding and protection. More awareness sessions about the importance of the sites for their own national identity and for their governorate interests in terms of tourism and other economic aspects.

Moreover, get the local community involved in training and studying programme to give them technical skills on maintenance and conservation of archaeological sites would contribute to reinforce their sense of ownership and to develop their own sources of income.

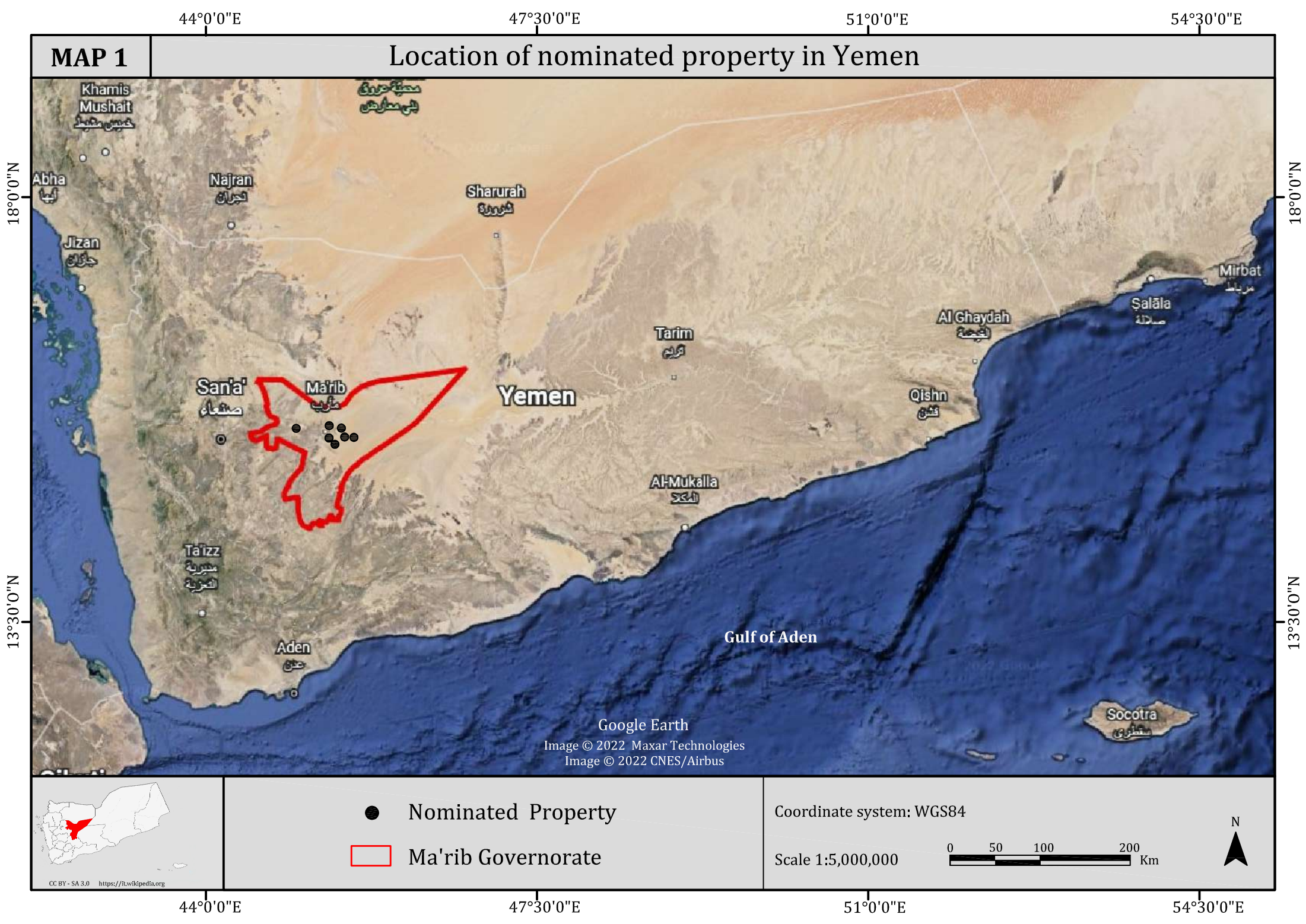
It is envisaged to establish a multistakeholder committee at the Governorate of Marib, for information, consultation, capacity building and awareness raising on different management issues related to the nominated property, once inscribed.

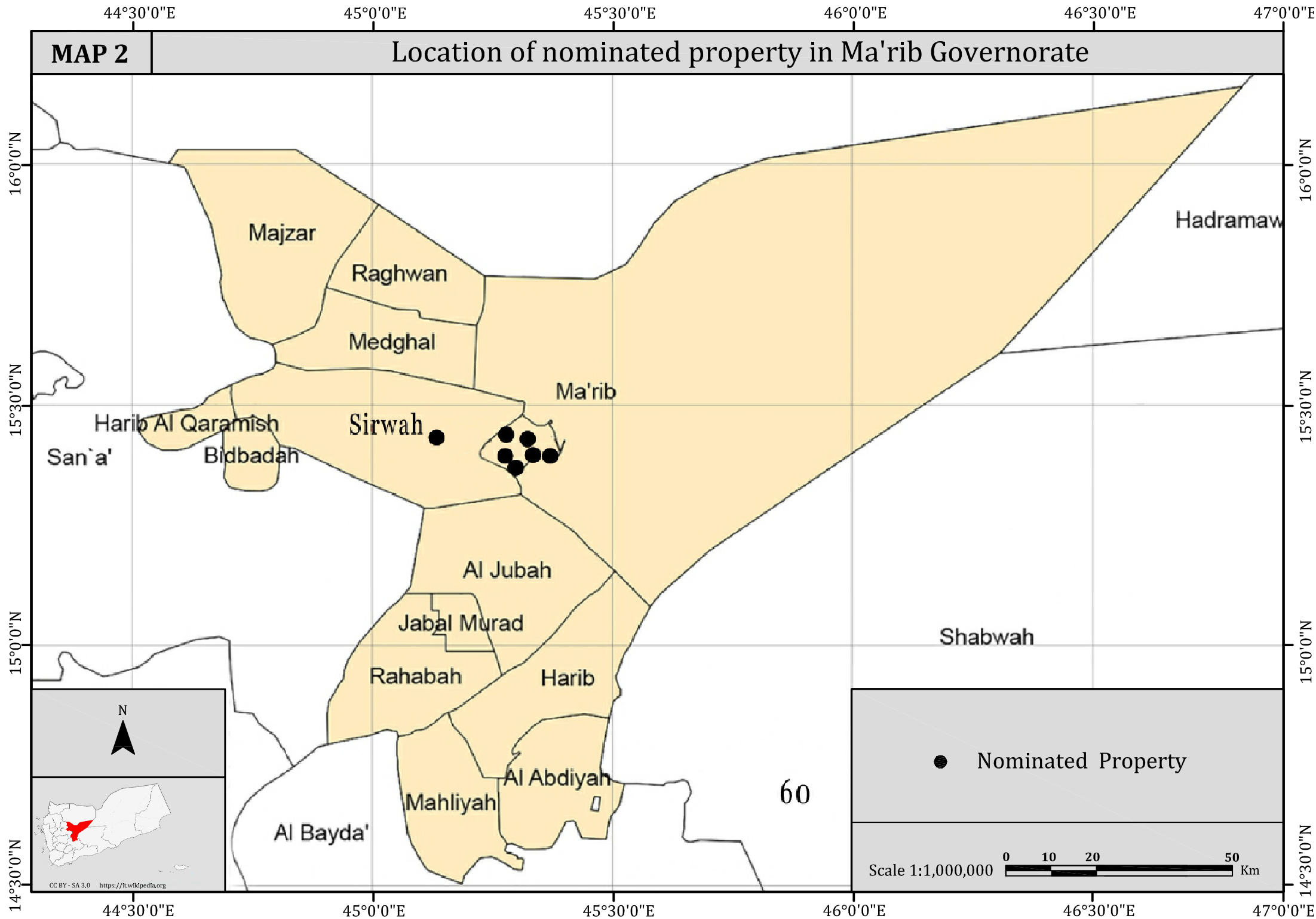
Name and contact information of official local institution

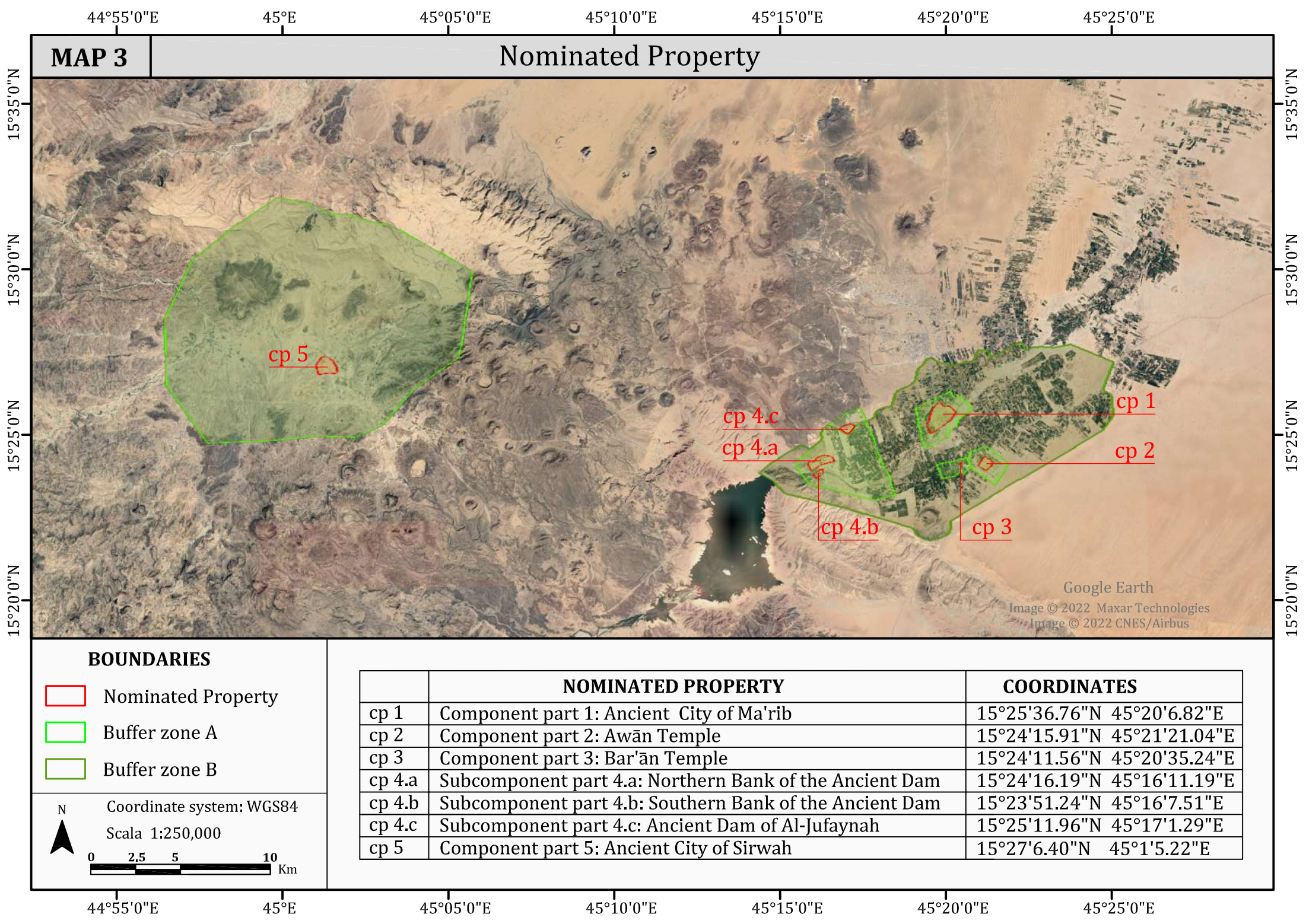
General Organization of Antiquities and Museums, Marib Branch
Sadiq Saeed Othman Al-Silwi, Director
Tel/Mob: +967 733637995
Email: asselwisadeq@gmail.com

ANNEXES

Annex 1: A4 Maps







45°15'0"E 45°17'0"E 45°19'0"E 45°21'0"E 45°23'0"E 45°25'0"E 45°27'0"E

MAP 4

Nominated Property - Component parts of Ma'rib Oasis

15°27'0"N

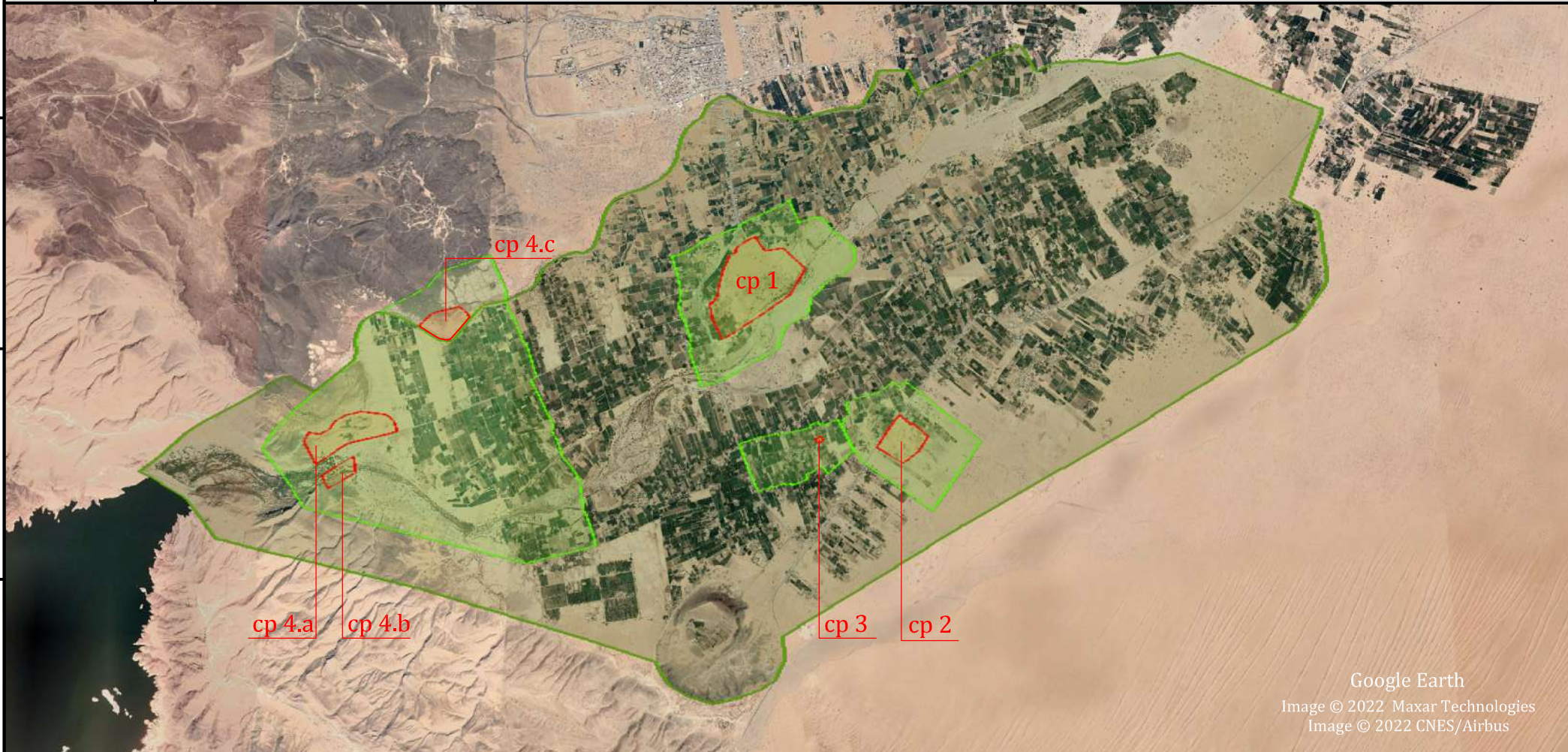
15°25'0"N

15°23'0"N

15°27'0"N




15°25'0"N

15°23'0"N



Google Earth
Image © 2022 Maxar Technologies
Image © 2022 CNES/Airbus

BOUNDARIES

-  Component parts
-  Buffer zone A
-  Buffer zone B

NOMINATED PROPERTY

| cp 1 | Component part 1: Ancient City of Ma'rib |
|--------|---|
| cp 2 | Component part 2: Awān Temple |
| cp 3 | Component part 3: Bar'ān Temple |
| cp 4.a | Subcomponent part 4.a: Northern Bank of the Ancient Dam |
| cp 4.b | Subcomponent part 4.b: Southern Bank of the Ancient Dam |
| cp 4.c | Subcomponent part 4.c: Ancient Dam of Al-Jufaynah |

Coordinate system: WGS84



Scale 1:90,000





45°15'0"E 45°17'0"E 45°19'0"E 45°21'0"E 45°23'0"E 45°25'0"E 45°27'0"E

MAP 5

Nominated Property - Component part 1: Ancient City of Ma'rib

Ancient city of Ma'rib

BOUNDARIES

-  Nominated property
-  Buffer zone

Component part 1: ha 152

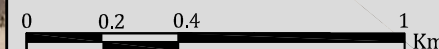
Buffer zone : ha 389

Total: ha 541

Coordinate system: WGS84

N

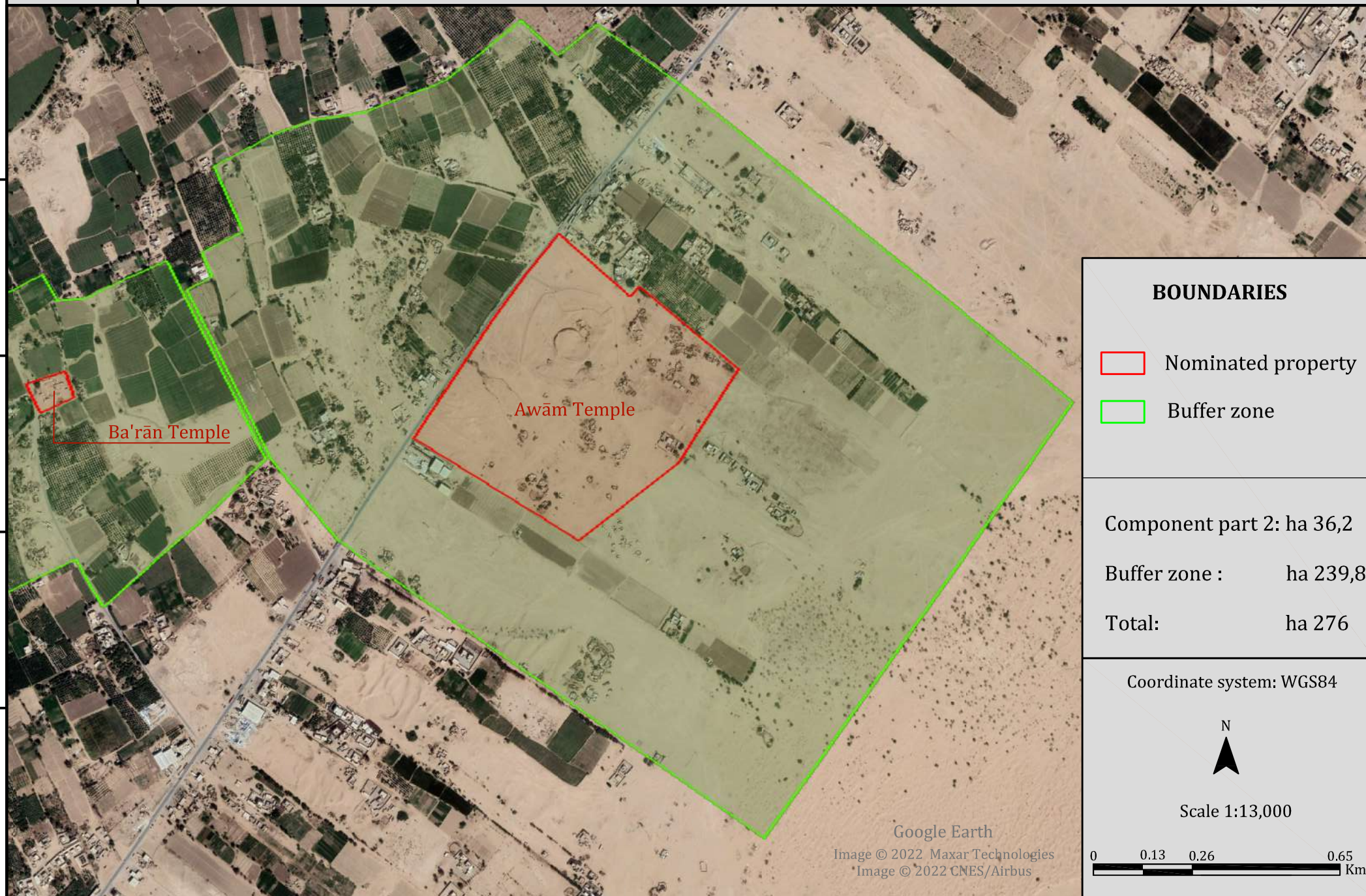
Scale 1:20,000



Google Earth
Image © 2022 Maxar Technologies
Image © 2022 CNES/Airbus

MAP 6

Nominated Property - Component part 2 : Awām Temple



45°20'0"E

45°20'15"E

45°20'30"E

45°20'45"E

45°21'0"E

MAP 7

Nominated Property - Component part 3: Ba'rān Temple

15°24'30"N

15°24'15"N

15°24'0"N

15°23'45"N



15°24'30"N

15°24'15"N

15°24'0"N

15°23'45"N

BOUNDARIES

-  Nominated property
-  Buffer zone

Component part 3: ha 0.79

Buffer zone : ha 129.21

Total: ha 130

Coordinate system: WGS84



Scale 1:10,000



Google Earth

Image © 2022 Maxar Technologies
Image © 2022 CNES/Airbus

45°20'0"E

45°20'15"E

45°20'30"E

45°20'45"E

45°21'0"E

MAP 8

Nominated Property - Component part 4: Ancient Dam of Ma'rib

45°16'0"E

45°17'0"E

45°18'0"E

45°19'0"E

15°25'0"N

15°25'0"N

15°24'0"N



15°24'0"N

Dam Al-Jufaynah

Dam North Bank

Dam South Bank

BOUNDARIES

-  Nominated property
-  Buffer zone

Dam North Bank: ha 60.4
(sbc. 4a)

Dam South Bank: ha 14
(sbc. 4b)

Dam Al-Jufaynah: ha 29.5
(sbc. 4c)

Buffer zone : ha 1,499.1

Total: ha 1,603

Coordinate system: WGS84

N

Scale 1:30,000

0 0.3 0.6 1.5 Km

Google Earth

Image © 2022 Maxar Technologies
Image © 2022 CNES/Airbus

45°16'0"E

45°17'0"E

45°18'0"E

45°19'0"E

MAP 9

Nominated Property - Subcomponents part 4a and 4b: Northern and Southern Banks of the Ancient Dam

Dam North Bank

Dam South Bank

BOUNDARIES

 Nominated property

Dam North Bank: ha 60.4
(sbc. 4a)

Dam South Bank: ha 14
(sbc. 4b)

Coordinate system: WGS84

N

Scale 1:8,000

0 0.8 1.6 4 Km

Google Earth

Image © 2022 Maxar Technologies
Image © 2022 CNES/Airbus

MAP 10

Nominated Property - Subcomponent part 4c: Ancient Dam of Al-Jufaynah

45°17'0"E

45°17'15"E

45°17'30"E

15°25'15"N

15°25'15"N

15°25'0"N

15°25'0"N

Dam Al-Jufaynah

BOUNDARIES

 Nominated property

Dam Al-Jufaynah: ha 29.5
(sbc. 4c)

Coordinate system: WGS84

N

Scale 1:5,000

0 0.05 0.1 0.25 Km

Google Earth

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45°17'0"E

45°17'15"E

45°17'30"E

44°57'0"E

45°01'0"E

45°05'0"E

45°08'0"E

15°30'0"N

15°26'0"N

Ancient City of Sirwah

BOUNDARIES

- Nominated property
- Buffer zone

Ancient City of Sirwah: ha 82.4

Buffer Zone: ha 17,034.6

Total: ha 17,117

Coordinate system: WGS84



Scale 1:100,000



Google Earth

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44°57'0"E

45°01'0"E

45°05'0"E

45°08'0"E

MAP 12

Nominated Property - Component part 5: Ancient City of Sirwah (to a larger scale)

45°00'45"E

45°01'15"E

45°01'45"E

15°27'15"N


15°27'15"N

15°26'45"N

15°26'45"N

Ancient City of Sirwah

BOUNDARIES

 Nominated property

Ancient City of Sirwah: ha 82.4

Coordinate system: WGS84

N

Scale 1:8,000

0 0.8 1.6 4 Km

Google Earth

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45°00'45"E

45°01'15"E

45°01'45"E



Annex 2: ICOMOS' letter

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

Our Ref. GB/TA/1700_Add.Inf

Charenton-le-Pont, 28 February 2022

H. E. Mr Mohammed Saleh Ahmed Jumei
Ambassador, Permanent Delegate
Permanent Delegation of Yemen to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO
1, rue Miollis
75732 PARIS Cedex 15

World Heritage List 2022 – Additional Information Landmarks of the Ancient Kingdom of Sheba in Marib Governorate (Yemen)

Dear Ambassador,

Following the transmission by the World Heritage Centre to ICOMOS of your request for the nomination of 'Landmarks of the Ancient Kingdom of Saba in Marib Governorate' to be evaluated under emergency procedure, as set out in paragraph 161 and 162 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and in order to facilitate our evaluation processes, we would like to request supplementary information on the following points:

Nature of emergency

The submission of the nomination on an emergency basis is justified by the State Party, on the basis of damage already inflicted as a result of the ongoing conflict in Yemen, the threat of further damage, and developmental pressures related to the enormous population growth in the area since 2014 (partly as a result of the war), as well as environmental factors.

The submitted Conservation and Management Guidelines reveal that the 'cultural heritage of Ma'rib is, since the beginning of the war and in particular in the last months, subject to significant threats and risks of collateral or deliberate damage' that is related to the strategic geopolitical position of the governorate of Ma'rib as the stronghold of the national government. ICOMOS notes the cases of destruction to several elements of the nominated property, and in particular in the ancient city of Ma'rib and the Ma'rib Dam in 2015, and the destruction of parts of the ancient city of Sirwah in 2018, as well as vandalism and looting experienced at other of the nominated component sites. ICOMOS further acknowledges the information on the high risk of imminent new attacks that may result in further loss of the cultural heritage in the area.

The nomination dossier with its annexes suggest that the World Heritage status is sought by the State Party to strengthen the 'international protection' of the nominated property and seek financial assistance to fund maintenance and protection of the sites. It is also recognized that the 'damage to World Heritage sites due to conflicts captures international media attention'.

ICOMOS notes that the boundaries of the component sites in the nominated property are currently rather tight and that the buffer zones hardly cover the immediate setting of the property and certainly not the wider setting that is being impacted by development and environmental degradation.

If the aim of inscription on the World Heritage list is to provide the opportunity to mitigate some of the diverse impacts that the property is suffering, it is difficult to understand how effective measures to manage the developmental and environmental pressures could be achieved within the proposed boundaries.

