

**Report on the State of Conservation of
the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty
(No. 1319)**

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Cultural Heritage Administration

Republic of Korea

1. Executive summary of the report

The State Party would like to provide the World Heritage Centre with information on the state of conservation of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty. Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2009, the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty is a serial property comprising 40 royal tombs found in 18 clusters. Through its letter dated November 3, 2021, the World Heritage Centre requested that the State Party verify information that the centre received from third parties regarding housing development at the Jangneung Cluster (W6). As part of its addressing of conservation issues, this report intends to respond to the matters brought up in the November 3 letter from the World Heritage Centre.

The State Party wishes to confirm through this report that by the end of 2010 the government of the Republic of Korea had implemented all the recommendations put forward by the World Heritage Committee (Decision 33COM 8B.15) at the time of inscription. Guidelines for allowable development are in place at each of the 18 clusters in the form of a set of standards prescribing the extent of development permitted in the areas surrounding a royal tomb cluster. Sustainable tourism management is outlined in the Plan for the Conservation, Management, and Utilization of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty. These development standards and the management plan are updated on an ongoing basis. This report will elaborate on this matter while submitting the respective development standards drawn up for each cluster as an annex.

Regarding the issue of the construction at Jangneung (W6), the State Party would like to make it clear that this is a rare case with few precedents within the systematic framework of protection ensured by the Cultural Heritage Protection Act. As of April 2022, a lawsuit is in progress between the Cultural Heritage Administration and the construction companies responsible for erecting apartment buildings in the vicinity of the Jangneung Cluster. The future of the buildings overlapping the buffer zone of the Jangneung Cluster will be decided by the court's final ruling.

In this report, the State Party would also like to address other conservation issues that have been under consultation with the World Heritage Centre since 2019. They include development projects around the Seoreung (W1; specifically, Changneung Royal Tomb) and Taereung (M3) Clusters. Regarding the housing developments at the Taereung and Changneung Clusters mentioned above, the State Party would like to summarize the progress of communication with the World Heritage Centre and offer up-to-date information on future plans. One other issue to address concerns the potential retention of facilities at

the Taereung Sports Center that was reported to the World Heritage Centre in September 2020. At present, a full response has not been provided by the centre. The State Party wishes to request that the World Heritage Centre offer its feedback on this matter.

On behalf of the people of South Korea and based on their support, the government of the Republic of Korea is working hard to improve the appreciation, conservation, and dissemination of the significance of the Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty as an important component of the heritage of humanity as a whole. As explained above, there have been recent tensions between urban development and heritage conservation in the vicinity of some of the Joseon royal tombs in and around Seoul. These issues, the focus of great public attention, are likely to serve as a milestone in the domestic discourse and regulation on the conservation of heritage sites. The State Party is fully committed to the resolution of these issues in close consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS.