

Management Plan

The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and “Köç Yolu” Transhumance Route





STATE TOURISM AGENCY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN



RESERVES
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Image 1 A shepherd and the herd on Köç Yolu

Foreword

In a world where modernization, globalization, and climate change increasingly threaten traditional societies, the value of an ancient living tradition is indisputable. Its recognition stipulates that respective institutions, national authorities, and international organizations work together to safeguard this heritage and ensure its transmission to future generations.

The nominated property – the Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and Köç Yolu Transhumance Route is a living heritage of transhumance practice of at least ten centuries old between highland meadows of Shahdag mountains and plains of Shirvan lowlands. The nominated area includes the historic village of Khinalig, the summer pastures – yaylaqs and winter pastures – qishlaqs, and the route of seasonal movement between the two regions known as *Köç Yolu* – the path of movement. Throughout this time, the semi-nomadic people of these places have managed to find ways of adapting their traditional way of life to the changing orders imposed by historical, political, and climatic processes, and today, transhumance continues to be practiced here. Moreover, this lifestyle constitutes a brilliant example of sustainability, respect for nature, and genius use of scarce resources.

The motivation to nominate the Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and Köç Yolu transhumance route is to recognize the outstanding cultural significance of these lands and celebrate the living heritage of these people on an international level.

Inscription of the Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and Köç Yolu transhumance route on the World Heritage List would be an important contribution to the national authorities' sustainable development initiatives. Moreover, this living example could serve as a rich ground for more in-depth research and analysis of the ethno-culture and history of the entire Caucasus region.

This inscription will equip and empower the state party to raise awareness about the value of this living heritage both on a local and international level, present the peculiarities of transhumance practice in the Caucasus region to the world, and improve the socio-economic wellbeing of the semi-nomadic Khinalig people, contributing to the continuity of this lifestyle. As the representative of the state party authorities, the State Tourism Agency fully acknowledges the commitment to follow the recommendations of UNESCO, relevant international treaties, and conventions.

CHAPTER 1 Introduction



Image 2 A herd on the Köç Yolu

1.1 Azerbaijan's Cultural Heritage and World Heritage List

According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Heritage List represents the best and the most significant examples of cultural and natural aspects of the global community. The places that become World Heritage Sites must demonstrate that they fulfill their obligations regarding UNESCO's requirements in implementing the World Heritage Convention.

There are over 1000 World Heritage Sites globally, and Azerbaijan is represented with three sites in this list. The Walled City of Baku, with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower (2000), Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape (2007), and the Historic Centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace (2019) are added to the World Heritage List. The latter is under the management of the State Tourism Agency.

1.2 The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and “Köç Yolu” transhumance route

The medieval village of Khinalig was accepted to the Tentative list of UNESCO in 2020 as the highest inhabited mountain village in Azerbaijan. This inscription further fueled research and development of the property to bring forward interesting finds and discoveries particularly related to the transhumance way of life, which is the main lifestyle and economic activity of the Khinalig people.

The nominated property has since been expanded to include the high Caucasian mountain village of Khinalig and the qışlaq and yaylaq areas with the historical 200-km Köç Yolu connecting them. The village of Khinalig is home to a unique ethnic group, who name themselves Kettish (Kətiş) and their village Katsh (Kətş) and only ethnic group that speaks Khinalig language in the world. Khinalig people are semi-nomadic and spend four months (May – September) in the high summer pastures at subalpine and alpine meadows of the Greater Caucasus mountains. In autumn, they move their herds to the winter pastures in the central Shirvan plains, following the 200 km route. In qışlaqs, they spend the colder part of the year where they live in small subterranean huts – qazma in groups of 4-6 families to distribute the labor. These people have developed a complex cultural and socio-economic system based on their fully adapted life both on the very highland and lowland territories, its climate, and the natural resources of several zones. The identity, lifestyle, social-economic activities, and cultural traditions of the Khinalig community are firmly associated with their village and their areas of seasonal migration.

The culture of Khinalig and surrounding high Caucasian mountain people includes elements related to adaptation to life at a high altitude and a lifestyle based on the avoidance strategy of extreme weather conditions of the mountains and plains for keeping the herds in optimal temperature conditions throughout the year. The main occupation of the people is animal husbandry, which has also stipulated the development of wool processing and weaving, production of dairy products, and established trade relations with the sedentary people. This lifestyle has also shaped the village architecture and urban fabric and is deeply embedded in the language belief system and indigenous knowledge of these people. The people of Khinalig have developed genius land use skills both in the village by utilizing the scarce land resources and qışlaqs and yaylaqs by grouping the land plots as per their fodder, seasonal, proximity, and other characteristics. While steep mountain slopes feature a network of gravity-fed irrigation ditches, the scarce rainwater in the qışlaq region is collected in *nohurs*. Along the Köç Yolu, the historical watering stations are used and maintained by the transhumant people.

The culture of Khinalig and other surrounding high Caucasian mountain people is respectful towards nature, in which taking and giving back is balanced in a way that allows sustainability. Taboos about hunting specific species and cutting trees, which are rare in that altitude, are interesting phenomena developed throughout centuries to protect nature through beliefs. The traditional mechanisms for sharing rare natural resources (for example, the white clay as a construction material) are developed as unwritten norms, allowing the sustainable use of it.

For a long time, Khinalig and other surrounding high Caucasian mountain ethnic groups have been engaged in agropastoral lifestyle in highlands by cultivating the terraces they prepared

during the centuries on the mountain slopes and planting grain, barley etc. However, the Soviet rule radically interrupted the normal way of life here, and the effects of these alterations can be observed throughout the nomadic culture in post-Soviet space. Thus, it focused only on animal husbandry and eliminated the millenary tradition of planting mountain slopes in Khinalig and other mountain villages in Azerbaijan. The locals have not cultivated the slopes since inexpensive products are readily available. Besides, these terraces are everywhere around Khinalig village, and it is protected and used actively to keep the beehives and as grazing plots for the cattle and weak animals that can't graze well in the slopes of pasture.

The protection of the village of Khinalig and the entire cultural landscape, including the winter and summer pastures and the transhumance route, is essential for safeguarding this small ethnic group, which is representative of a more extensive high-Caucasian transhumance culture.

1.3 Site Management Plan

The Management Plan is a key planning tool for the development, conservation, use, and preservation of the cultural heritage site. The main aim of the Management Plan is to describe the vision and mission for the conservation management of the nominated property for the future and determine key targets and strategies, projects, action plans, and application tools for its preservation and sustainable development. The Management Plan also aims at identifying partners (stakeholders), responsible structures and institutions, as well as relevant sources for the implementation of the management process. The main objective of the Management Plan is to manage the heritage site in line with the requirements encompassing the history and paving the way for future opportunities while preserving the irreplaceable cultural heritage resource.

The Management Plan is a tool for the management employees and community members to carry out activities for conservation, planning, and management of the territory of nominated property in both the present and future. From this perspective, the Management Plan is also a strategic plan that ensures cooperation and coordination of activities and projects between the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (STA) and the relevant government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and all other stakeholders.

As a nominated property includes various administrative districts and as the management of seasonal migration depends on the close cooperation among various public and semi-public institutions and state organizations, the elaboration of the proper management plan for it needs to take into consideration the current legislation in Azerbaijan, the responsible state organizations' role and legal functions.

1.4 Management Plan and its Structure

The Management Plan for the Cultural Landscape of Khinalig and “Köç Yolu” historic transhumance route, prepared by the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan and its subordinate institution Reserve Management Center (RMC) in 2022, has been added to the nomination file as an Appendix.

The Management Plan covers a large area of the heritage site, including the village of Khinalig, the migration route (“Köç Yolu”), and associated summer and winter pastures, including their buffer zone. At present, the cultural heritage of Khinalig village is managed by Khinalig Historical-Architectural and Ethnographic Reserve and the reserve operates under the auspices of the State Tourism Agency. However, to protect and manage the property area proposed for the world heritage nomination, it is planned to establish a new state-protected reserve covering the whole nominated area.

In terms of content, the plan mostly focuses on the protection, conservation, and transmission of attributes presented by OUVs of the Site. However, there are other significant values and heritage elements within the nominated property, directly and indirectly, related to OUVs and are of great national and local importance. Therefore, the plan will take a holistic approach to provide a broader management framework.

The management plan contains the vision, the main objectives and strategies, the proposed activities, and projects for future development. The management plan also contains an action plan, identifying the relevant tasks to be undertaken during the intended period of 2021-2023.

The management plan is based on the determination of the public and private stakeholders (relevant ministries, regional and local authorities, non-governmental and private organizations, villages municipalities, the local authorities of villages and settlements on the migration route) related to the management of the reserve administration to be created to preserve the nominated area to undertake the safeguarding and valorization of this heritage resource. The management plan contains an annual operating plan and identifies the necessary means to ensure the control and monitoring of the implementation of the activities. The plan serves as the basis for the management system.

The Management Plan consists of 7 chapters covering general introduction and context to the Management Plan (Chapter 1), describing and evaluating the OUVs of the Site and their attributes (Chapter 2), current management structures, and existing policy and legal framework in the cultural heritage conservation (Chapter 3). The plan focuses on identifying critical issues in various areas such as conservation, risk management, etc. (Chapter 4, 5). Setting management objectives based on the key issues and identifying actions for these objectives are covered in detail (Chapter 6). An additional part is devoted to tourism development plans.

1.5 Vision Statement for the Management Plan

The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig and “Köç Yolu” historic transhumance route is distinguished by its unique cultural traditions and individuality in Azerbaijan. Since ancient times, the people of these villages have managed to tame the extreme climatic conditions and scarce natural resources and develop a genuine semi-nomadic animal husbandry practice, which is still living. The practice is a true example of sustainability, in which every aspect of livestock breeding brings value to the community, starting from the provision of food and shelter to the development of craftsmanship and other intangible values. Given these factors, the project team has identified

the strategic vision of the nominated property. The nominated property will be a representative site for heritage management by achieving the followings:

- a) The Outstanding Universal Values and all the related attributes, as well as historical and cultural individuality of the nominated property, will be protected and conserved for future generations through mobilizing all available resources and involved parties.
- b) The World Heritage status of the nominated property will be effectively used and elaborated to boost the economic and cultural life of the local community and improve the well-being of the community residents.
- c) Captivated and compelling community-based tourism experiences will be created inspired by the exceptional and unique historical, cultural and architectural values of the nominated property. This will promote the significance of the nominated property while safeguarding its outstanding values.
- d) Active participation of private and public institutions in heritage conservation through incentive mechanisms and new development opportunities is considered.
- e) A proposal on the legislative basis for the amelioration of juridical protection of the elements that support the OUVs of the nominated area is elaborated.

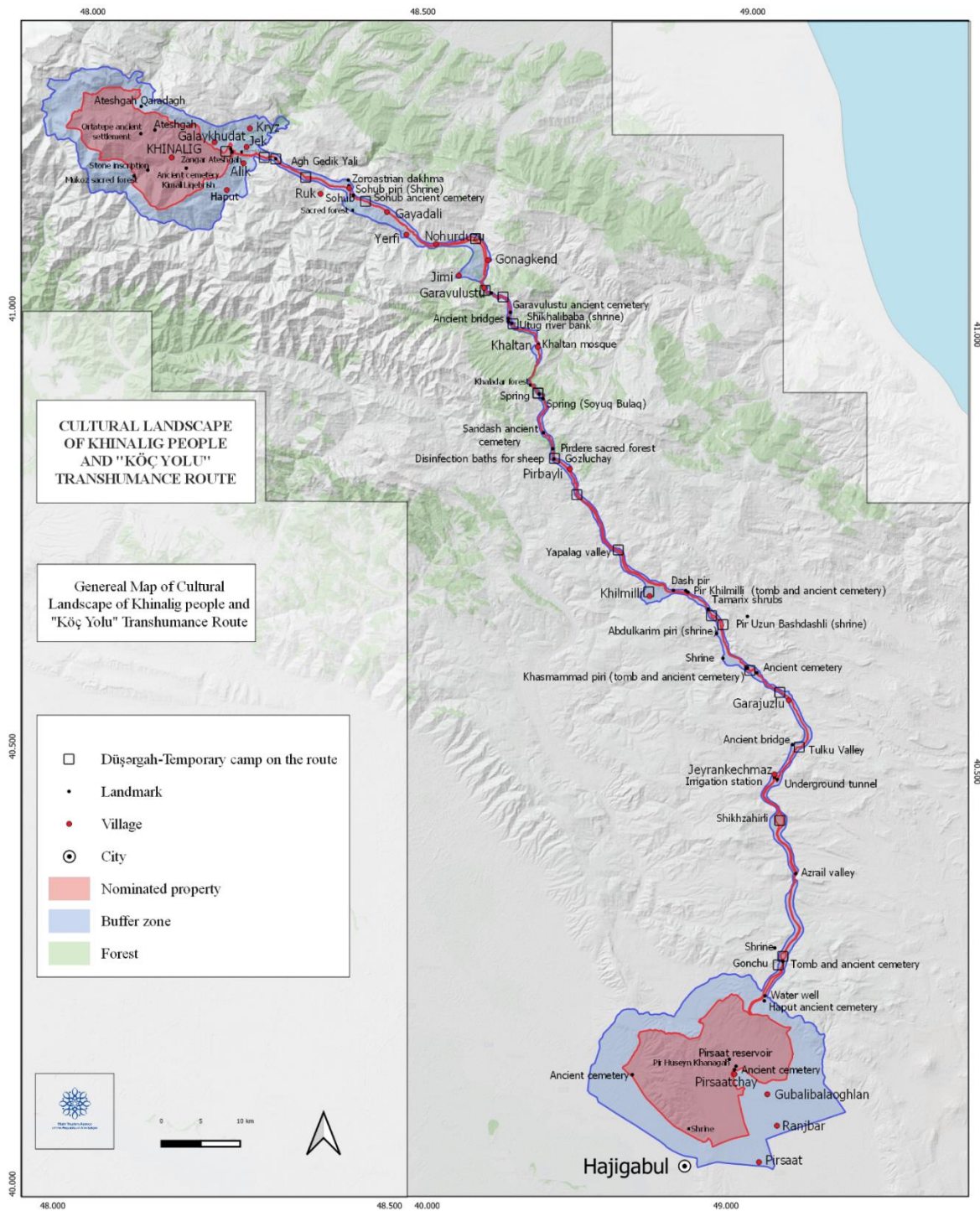
CHAPTER 2 Description of the Nominated Area



Image 3 Herds prepared for the autumn move

2.1 General Information

The official name of the Site	The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and “Köç Yolu” historic transhumance route
Location	The village of Khinalig, summer and winter pastures and Köç Yolu transhumance route passing through six administrative districts of Azerbaijan (Qusar, Quba, Shamakhi, Qobustan, Absheron, and Hajigabul)
Category of the property	In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention and the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (July 2015), this is a living cultural landscape



2.2 Statement of Significance and OUVs

Brief synthesis

The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and *Köç Yolu* transhumance route is an exceptional living testimony to the uninterrupted vertical transhumance culture of the Khinalig people practiced over millennia. It bears witness to the development of a sustainable eco-social system adapted to various climate and environmental conditions, which continues to be the leading socio-economic activity of these semi-nomadic people. The seasonal migration between summer pastures (*yaylaq*) in the highest altitudes of the Great Caucasus mountains and winter pastures (*qışlaq*) in the semi-desert Shirvan plainlands have formed the culture of Khinalig people. The strong ethnic identity and unique language of these people enable transferring the ancestral knowledge about the transhumant way of life and the spiritual beliefs.

Vertical transhumance is the most optimal economic activity for Khinalig people and an excellent example of sustainable use of resources, allowing to avoid extreme cold and hot temperatures and provide natural fodder for the herds throughout the year by oscillating between summer and winter pastures. The nominated property is a rare remaining example encompassing all elements of this pattern, which was once widely spread in the Caucasus region. The infrastructure used by the transhumant people for centuries (watering stations, temporary camps, etc.), as well as the religious and worship places, testify to the uninterrupted tradition of transhumance. The prolific terminology and microtoponymy of Khinalig people attached to this practice and different areas of this cultural landscape constitute another layer of the living heritage.

Set against the scenic mountain peaks, the village is characterized by its location on steep slopes of high altitude, economical use of scarce land resources, tiered architecture, and flat roofs functioning as streets and shared public spaces. Besides their permanent houses in the village, the semi-nomadic people of Khinalig stay in temporary dwellings – subterranean *qazma* houses in *qışlaqs* and *alaçiqs* tents in *yaylaqs*. *Qışlaqs* and *yaylaqs* are well organized into land plots of different functions, allowing optimal utilization with a minimum negative impact on the environment. The well-preserved shrines, cemeteries, and other places of worship of Khinalig people are scattered across the village, and the *yaylaqs*, *qışlaqs*, and *Köç Yolu*.

Communal management system still practiced by Khinalig people facilitates the collective decision making related to the organization and scheduling of the seasonal move, the use and maintenance of public spaces in the village, shared infrastructure on *Köç Yolu* and pastures. Grouped in 4-6 families, Khinalig semi-nomadic people organize small production units in winter and summer pastures, in which labor is distributed among all family members. The continual communal management and organization of production units lay the foundation of the living semi-nomadic lifestyle of the Khinalig people.



Image 4 Shepherd's tools

Transhumance has played a significant role in the cultural interchange between the semi-nomadic people of Khinalig and the sedentary people of the plainlands, as the primary migration vector of goods and services, knowledge, skills, symbolism, rituals, spiritual beliefs, traditions, and other values. The relations between the sedentary and the semi-nomadic people based on the complementary use of resources is a brilliant living example of socio-economic interdependence and a conflict avoidance strategy. This coexistence has been the defining feature boosting socio-economic and cultural development in the entire region since the Bronze Age.

The profound indigenous knowledge of these people about livestock breeding and diverse environments transmitted from one generation to the next while adapting to the changing conditions of nature and climate have enabled the sustainability and continuity of their semi-nomadic lifestyle. This adaptation is a risk emergency planning ability of Khinalig people that has helped maintain and perpetuate their semi-nomadic sustainable economy, which stands on the basis of their ethnic identity.

Justification for OUV Criteria

The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and the “Köç Yolu” transhumance route is nominated to be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a continuing cultural landscape based on criteria (iii) and (v).

Criterion (iii): “to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization, which is living or which has disappeared”

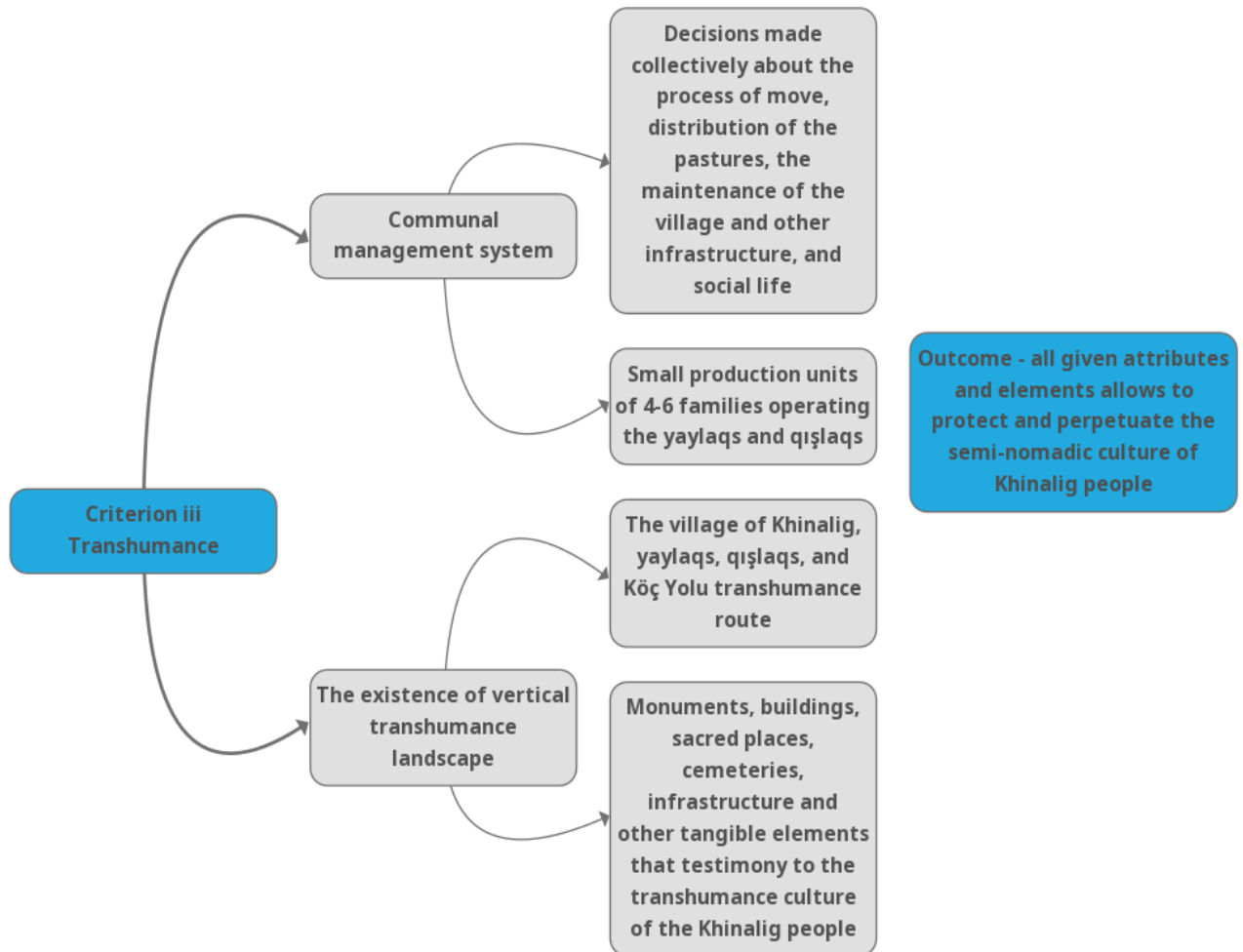
The Cultural Landscape of Khinalig people and the “Köç Yolu” transhumance route is an exceptional living testimony to the living transhumance cultural tradition of Khinalig semi-nomadic people practiced since medieval times. The nominated property, which has emerged as a result of the traditional transhumance activities of Khinalig people encompasses all tangible elements of this practice still in use, including the medieval village of Khinalig set against the highest altitudes of the Great Caucasus mountains, the 200-km long Köç Yolu transhumance route, winter and summer pastures with their temporary dwellings – yataqs with qazma houses and alaçiq tents and arxac areas respectively, old cemeteries and shrines, sacred forests, and other places of worship.



Image 5 Old Khinalig (1970s)

Built on the notion of mutual assistance and collective decision-making, the communal management system continues to regulate all socio-economic activities, including the scheduling and organization of the seasonal move process, the sustaining of the watering stations, temporary rest areas and other infrastructure along Köç Yolu, the distribution of summer and winter pastures, and the maintenance of public spaces in Khinalig village. The semi-nomadic socio-economic model in qishlaqs and yaylaqs is composed of small production units of 4-6 families, in which the labor is distributed among all family members.

The living practice of transhumance underpins all aspects of the way of life of the Khinalig people, which has enabled them to maintain their solid ethnic identity and the unique Khinalug language. Through this language, the ancestral knowledge is transferred to the young generations. The living transhumance practice and the Khinalug language remain rich and rare resources for scientists to reconstruct the historical picture of the way of life in the ancient Caucasus region.



Criterion (v) “to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change”

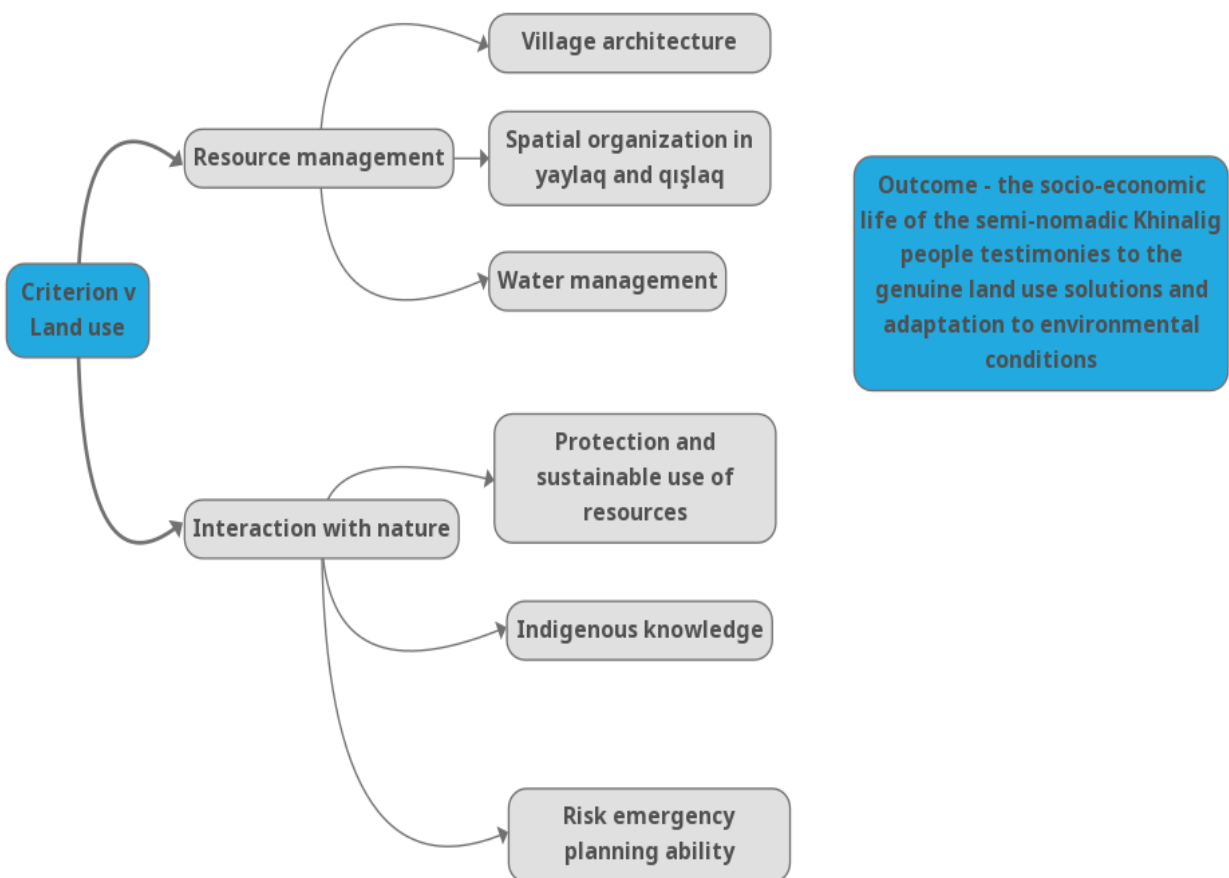


Image 6 Khinalig in winter

The Cultural Landscape of the Khinalig people and the Köç Yolu transhumance route is an outstanding example of land use representing the continuous semi-nomadic Khinalig culture and the uninterrupted human interaction with the environment. It bears witness to developing a sustainable eco-social system adapted to extreme environmental conditions, which has served to build and retain transhumance as the dominant sustainable and resilient economy practiced here at least since the 10th century.

The culture of Khinalig people is built around notions of sustainable use of resources and respect for the environment. The morphology of the medieval Khinalig village with its tiered architecture, is a brilliant example of the efficient use of scarce land and other resources. On the other hand, yaylaqs and qishlaqs, which expand to territories as vast as tens of thousands of hectares, are systematically divided into plots of land, allowing optimal use of fodder resources while keeping the environmental risk factors like erosion and overgrazing under control. The water management systems in all parts of the nominated property include nohurs for collecting rainwater in qishlaqs, irrigation ditches on steep mountain slopes of yaylaqs, and the multiple springs in the village that allow accessing drinking water under all conditions.

Throughout history, the people of Khinalig have generated thorough indigenous knowledge, including insights about semi-nomadic animal husbandry, as well as the geography, vegetation, climate, water, and other resources. This accumulated knowledge based on experience and observations is tested over centuries of use and transmitted from one generation to the next. Moreover, these people have gained excellent adaptation skills due to the constant seasonal oscillation between the varied landscapes of the high altitudes of the Greater Caucasus and the low semi-desert zones. Such ability to regulate economic activities, especially in the face of climate change and modernization pressure, is a risk emergency planning ability of Khinalig people and a testimony to the sustainable use of resources that has enabled the Khinalig to maintain transhumance as their leading economy.



Statement of Integrity



Image 7 The window of Sheikh Shalbuz mosque in Khinalig village

The continuing cultural landscape of the Khinalig people and the Köç Yolu transhumance route represents an outstanding testimony to the vertical transhumant practice that the semi-nomadic Khinalig people have developed over millennia. The nominated property includes tangible elements of the historical environment like cemeteries, shrines, bridges, springs, and other buildings with preserved functional and visual integrity. Pre-Islamic nature-related beliefs and rituals on the transhumance route (related to specific mountain peaks, the forest fragments considered sacred, etc.) constitute a strong living heritage. Intangible elements (crafts like wool processing and weaving, gastronomy, vestimentary, etc.) and processes intrinsically related to the vertical transhumance practice are well preserved and convey their significance. The ancestral indigenous knowledge about transhumance, seasonal plant, and fruit gathering, natural resource management solutions, ancestral skills as rotational grazing, and communal management of pastures witness strong living semi-nomadic traditions. The temporary dwelling structures, artificial ponds (nohur) to collect rainwater in arid areas, and irrigation ditches on the steep terrains have been mostly conserved.

The semi-nomadic lifestyle and unique Khinalug language are interconnected, and the continuity of this lifestyle has stipulated the preservation of the language as well.

Functional integrity

The functional integrity of the nominated property is conserved owing to the uninterrupted transhumance practice that maintains the use of the ancestral summer and winter pastures and the transhumance route. The semi-nomadic lifestyle follows the ancient model where 4-6 families together form a small production unit, live in sub-terrain houses (qazma) and traditional tents (alaçiq), and herd their flocks of sheep within the defined borders of a single summer and winter pasture plot. The temporary dwellings and other constructions and infrastructure related to the animal husbandry in yataq and arxac preserve their structural and functional integrity. Traditional land use and resource management methods ensure the perfect eco-social system and serve to its sustainable development.

Natural formations like mountains, springs, valleys, riverbeds, and meadows, which are integral parts of the Köç yolu, are well preserved and play an essential role in the semi-nomadic practice. The ancient functional features of these natural forms are well conserved because the livelihood of the semi-nomadic Khinalig people is closely connected to them and their role in the spiritual worldview of these people.

Today's practice of seasonal migration follows the ancient Köç Yolu transhumance route in its defined path with occasional minor deviations. This eco-social system has preserved the landscape from changes and maintained the functional and structural integrity along the migration route.

Visual integrity

The nominated property is protected from urbanization and industrialization and remains mostly intact. The entire continuing landscape derived from the interaction between semi-nomadic people and nature encompasses the whole visual setting of the transhumance elements from the high mountain to semi-desert settlements. The typical yaylaq and qışlaq landscapes with yataq and arxac areas, subterrain houses, barns, temporary tents, artificial irrigation ditches and ponds, and grazing pastures without fences and borders are well preserved. The semi-nomadic community of Khinalig is facing increasing dry season, water shortage, desertification, and other negative impacts of global warming, which shows on the pastures.

The cultural landscape of the Khinalig village on steep slopes of the Great Caucasus at an altitude of 2300 meters retains its visual integrity. Integration of modern materials to some buildings and infrastructural improvement works have had some negative impact on the visual integrity of the village. However, these structures have not been severely damaged or altered the structures. The traditional Khinalig houses, with their usual organization of the space and use of local riverstone and soil roofs and the compact urban fabric remain intact.



Image 8 Traditional flat roofs in Khinalig village



Image 9 Left – a door at a residential house in Khinalig; right – Mehrab of Abu Muslim mosque in Khinalig

Statement of Authenticity

The continuing cultural landscape of the Khinalig people and the Köç Yolu transhumance route exhibit an exceptionally high degree of authenticity expressed by tangible and intangible attributes related to all elements of their vertical transhumance practice dating back to the Bronze Age. The property illustrates all aspects of the Khinalig people transhumance practice and demonstrates the authenticity of use and function, materials, location and setting, management systems, traditions, and lifestyle. The intangible aspects of language and the spirit and feeling are maintained due to the continuity of the transhumance practice. The uninterrupted practice of transhumance of Khinalig people is documented in various archive materials, bibliography, and visual sources (photos and videos).



Image 10 Təzək

Today's seasonal migration of the Khinalig village families with their livestock follows the millenary Köç Yolu transhumance route with only a few new deviations. The continuity of the use of historical summer pastures (yaylaq) on the highest levels of the Great Caucasus and winter pastures (qishlaq) in Shirvan semi-desert lowlands landscape is maintained.

The authenticity of all the elements of the multiple locations and settings of Khinalig transhumant culture and their interrelation is preserved. The use of seasonal pastures and settlements and the transhumance route remain unchanged due to the continuity of use. The scenic setting of the Khinalig village and the winter and summer pastures with their temporary settlements, the migration on the Köç Yolu route, and its associated places of worship and infrastructure on it such as watering stations and temporary camps, are protected. The natural habitats and ecosystems of transhumance have been modified according to animal husbandry over millennia and continue to be in use.



Image 11 Qonchu watering station at the end of the Köç Yolu

The medieval character of Khinalig village is preserved despite the recent introduction of modern materials and new additions. Khinalig is a living village and ethnic group which continues practicing the traditional transhumant way of life and traditions. The authenticity concerning the traditional transhumant lifestyle, land use, architecture, language, and beliefs still constitute the Khinalig identity. The authenticity of the traditional morphology of the village and its tiered architecture, traditional use with communal spaces on rooftops, and internal and external architecture and function are preserved and monitored by communal management and the traditional mahalla – neighborhood system. The villagers still use the traditional construction materials for building houses, such as using river stones and covering the houses’ exteriors with clay for protection from natural damages. The authenticity of traditional techniques is also illustrated in the seasonal reconstruction by Khinalig families of their temporary sub-terranean houses (qazma) in lowland winter pastures which takes place each season. Artificial terraces on the mountain slopes surrounding the village of Khinalig traditionally used for agricultural purposes have been repurposed as hay fields and are actively used for beekeeping, while their form remains intact. In yaylaqs and temporary stops, the shepherds continue using traditional tents – alaçıqs, which have preserved their function and form, although the traditional felt material has been altered with modern tarpaulin in most cases.



Image 12 Eastern façade Abu Muslim Mosque made of local river stone and with traditional stone cladding

The nominated property encompasses the cultural landscape of Khinalig, where traditional management systems are still used to maintain the infrastructure of the village, Köç Yolu, pastures, terraces, and irrigation systems. The traditional production units of 4-6 families who stay together in yaylaqs and qışlaqs for optimal division of labor is still practiced. The natural high mountain landscape and its fauna are protected by conventional practices and beliefs.

The authenticity of traditions, customs and lifestyles, and spirit and feeling are preserved because they are closely adapted to the transhumance practice system. Equally, the cultural interchange of the transhumant people since ancient times is seen in the sacred places, shrines, and sanctuaries, which are still in use along the transhumance route.

The way of life of the Khinalig people is fully adapted to the practice of ancestral transhumance. Their strong identity and unique language are linked to the millennia of ancestral transhumance way of life. The transfer of knowledge by the Khinalug language can also constitute a testimony to and potential for in-depth scientific research about the evolution of high mountain vertical transhumance.



Image 13 Germəşov tree branches collected to make alaçıqs – temporary camps

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Image 14 Jimi village mosque with traditional wood carvings

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CHAPTER 3 Management of the Nominated Area



Image 15 "Köç Yolu".

This chapter describes the ownership status, management, governance structure, and control mechanisms of the nominated area. It lists all the responsible government and independent institutions involved in this structure and their role in managing the property.

In general, the property management is complex due to various bodies and structures involved in their respective area of responsibility. Besides, the area is spread across the territory of six administrative districts of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which are expected to act in cooperation. The chapter provides a detailed description of all structures and bodies involved in the management of the nominated areas and their levels of involvement.

The chapter also provides information about how cultural heritage and transhumance practice is legally protected and supported in national legislation through various laws and normative legal acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

3.1 Ownership

Under the current legislation in Azerbaijan, there are three forms of property: State, municipality, and private properties.

The nominated area includes Khinalig village, the *yaylaq*, and the *qışlaq* areas, and the *Köç yolu* transhumance route belongs to a diverse group of public and private owners.

Part 1: Khinalig village and yaylaqs

The Khinalig village of the nominated property is essentially composed of private houses and a few gardens of Khinalig people, the public buildings under a municipality or state property inside the village.

All cemeteries, intra-village roads, public spaces, mosques, religious sites in the village, hayland areas, and some yaylaqs around the village are recognized as the municipality's property. The most significant part of the municipality lands is needed for agricultural use (livestock farming). The municipality-owned pasturelands near Khinalig village have two categories regarding their use. The first category of the pastures is intended for shared use and is given to the community indefinitely. These pastures are free to use. The second category is grazing sections and meadows remaining in the reserve fund of the municipality, and they are provided to legal entities and private individuals on lease.

Some buildings related to the state institutions, including cultural monuments in Khinalig village, are state property.

All the summer pasturages except for those that belong to the village's municipality are under exclusive state property, according to the Land Code of Azerbaijan. The local executive authorities of Quba and Qusar districts oversee these lands.

Nominated property borders with Shahdagh National Park and protected areas of the State Border Service as the national border with Russia is nearby. There is a military post of State Border Service near Khinalig guarding the access to the western side from Khinalig village. It is not allowed to access the protected area without special permission for individuals, excluding Khinalig inhabitants who also have special pass privileges to go their *yaylaq*.

Units of Part 1	Ownership	Management institution
K H I N A L I G		
Private houses, shops, cafes, and other service buildings inside a residential area	Private residents of the village	STA and Reserve Administration
Gardens and hayland areas		
Roads, cemeteries, religious buildings of the village; Administrative building of the village's municipality	Municipality	Khinalig Municipality

Public service buildings, such as local post office, the library, medical point, etc.; Cultural monuments, such as mosques, shrines, etc.; the cultural house; school	State	STA, Khinalig Reserve Administration, Quba Ex.COM
Y A Y L A Q		
Summer pastures and the pastures in common use of Khinalig Municipality;	Municipality	Khinalig Municipality
Summer pastures of State Land Fund	State	Quba ExCOM; Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

Part 2: *Köç Yolu* transhumant route

Köç yolu transhumance route and *düşərgə* places on it are exclusively under state property according to the Code of Land as well. *Köç yolu* seasonal transhumance migration route extending up to 200 kilometers covers the vicinity of Shahdag Mountain and finishes in the Absheron lowland winter pastures. The width of the *Köç yolu* route varies in certain places depending on the availability of the way. Still, it is averagely about 50-200 meters, except for a few narrowed areas in the mountainous landscape. It crosses four districts of Azerbaijan (Quba, Shamakhi, Gobustan, and Absheron) follows mainly local roads, passing through 3 villages, different routes, and several territories under the administration of other states and municipality institutions. For example, *Köç yolu* crosses through Shahdag National Park lands in Khaladar forest (near Khaltan village between Quba and Shamakhi districts) under the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources administration. In most parts, *Köç yolu* follows the riverbeds and riversides that are only under state property according to the Land Code and under the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources administration.

Ownership	Districts covered	Division by percentage	Management Institution
State (100%)	Quba	38	ExCOMs of mentioned regions; Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
	Shamakhi	17	
	Gobustan	35	
	Absheron	10	

Part 3: *Qışlaqs*

According to the official law, all winter pastures in Azerbaijan are exclusively under state property and can only be used on lease contracts. The local executive authorities are respective state bodies overseeing the use of *qışlaqs*. Khinalig *qışlaqs* are essentially in the territories of Absheron and Hajigabul districts, so the local administrative management of these districts leases the *qışlaqs* in the nominated area.

Ownership	District division	Stakeholder division
State (100%)	Absheron,	ExComs of Absheron, Hajigabul
	Hajigabul	

3.2 New Reserve Administration

Even though the property possesses several protection measures, the state party plans to enlarge the border of the existing Khinalig reserve and include the nominated property in one cultural heritage area according to the local legislation, given the heritage value of the transhumance culture of Khinalig people. Consequently, a cultural heritage reserve under STA will be established to conserve all the property's cultural heritage monuments and landscapes. The new Reserve is planned to be found in 2023.

The State Tourism Agency will appoint the Director of the New Reserve.

After establishment, all activities to be carried out in the property area will need to be approved by the STA. Since the property includes tangible and intangible heritage and natural heritage elements, *yaylaq*, and *qışlaq* pastures, grazing areas, and haylands, it needs to represent relevant state bodies in the management. These are the following lines:

- Local Executive Authorities of six administrative districts (Qusar, Quba, Shamakhi, Absheron, Gobustan, Hajigabul),
- The State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- The State Service on Property Issues under the Ministry of Economy
- The Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan,
- The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Emergency Situations
- Khinalig Municipality
- Council of Elders

For the effective management of the New Reserve, integrated management will be applied. **The Coordination Committee** will include those already mentioned above organizations that make common decisions and provide consultations. A member from each State and municipal organization and representative of the local community (elders' institution) will be represented in the Coordination Committee.

In addition, a Technical Committee will be established in the new Reserve for dealing with any activity related to construction, restoration, and development projects in the nominated property and the Buffer zone. Members of the Technical Committee will consist of experienced specialists, including archeologists, civil engineers, architects and restoration and conservation experts, historians, a sociologist, an ecologist, GIS specialists, and tourism experts.

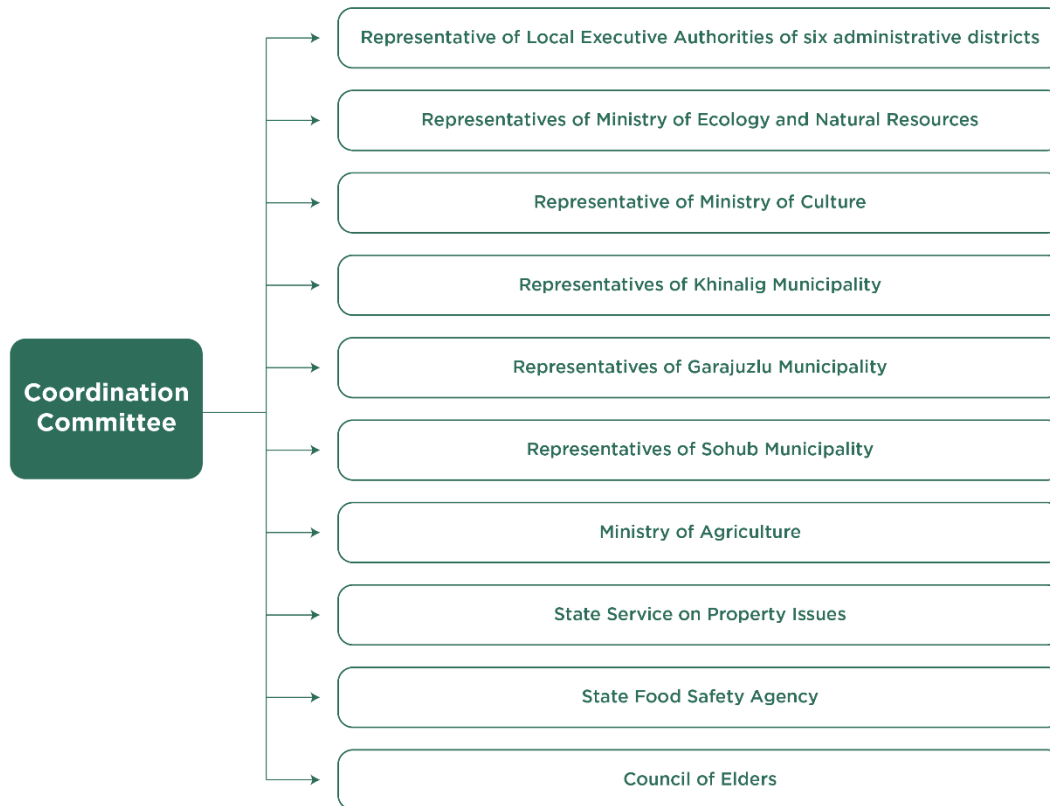


Diagram: Member of the Coordination Committee of new Reserve Administration

Local Community involvement

Khinalig elders will be represented in the management of the New Reserve as a supervisory body. Since the Elders' institution is a strong traditional and social institution in the mountainous villages of Azerbaijan, it will effectively manage the protection of the nominated property's cultural and natural heritage assets. It will be highly effective to involve the locals in conservation works and other related issues that concern the Khinalig people. The elders can give recommendations to the new reserve administration, engage in discussing the challenges, constraints, and opportunities and contribute to the conservation policy of the cultural heritage and especially of raising awareness.

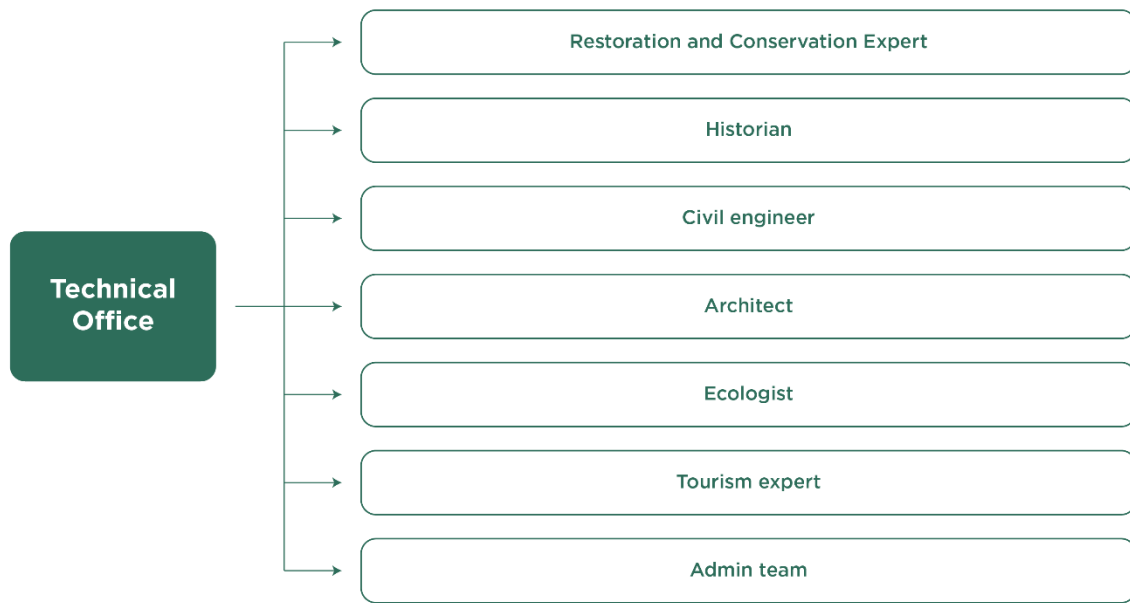


Diagram: Member of the Technical Office of new Reserve Administration

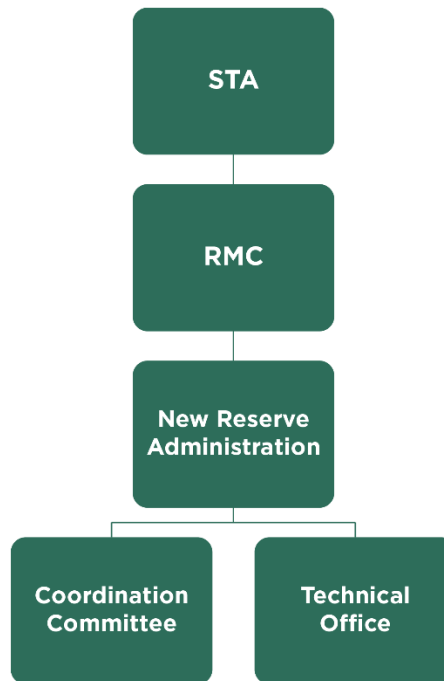


Diagram: Management and coordination structure of the new Reserve Administration

3.3 Management Areas

Four areas of management are identified for achieving effective management of the nominated area:

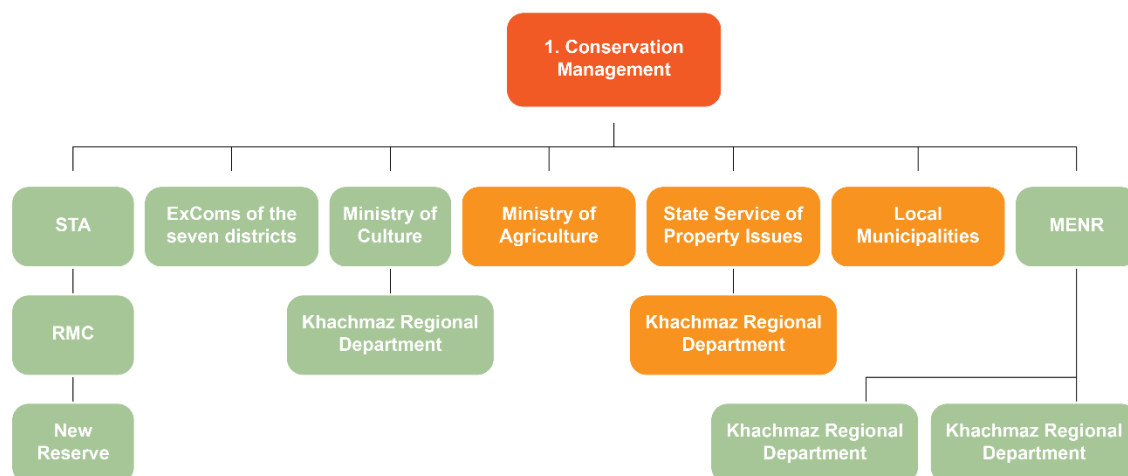
1. Conservation management
2. Development management
3. Land use and public infrastructure management
4. Risk management

Stakeholders have different responsibilities, powers, and influences on topics and choices that will impact the nominated property. There are two groups of stakeholders:

- Key stakeholders are responsible for preserving and increasing the value of the nominated area and have a high impact/authority/commitment over the territory; they are directly involved in and responsible for the decision-making process of the mentioned management areas.
- Supportive stakeholders are involved in the mentioned management area but with limited decision-making participation. They support the key stakeholders by sharing their expert opinion and active participation in processes. They hold no specific and direct obligations in decision-making but are expected to contribute to these processes.

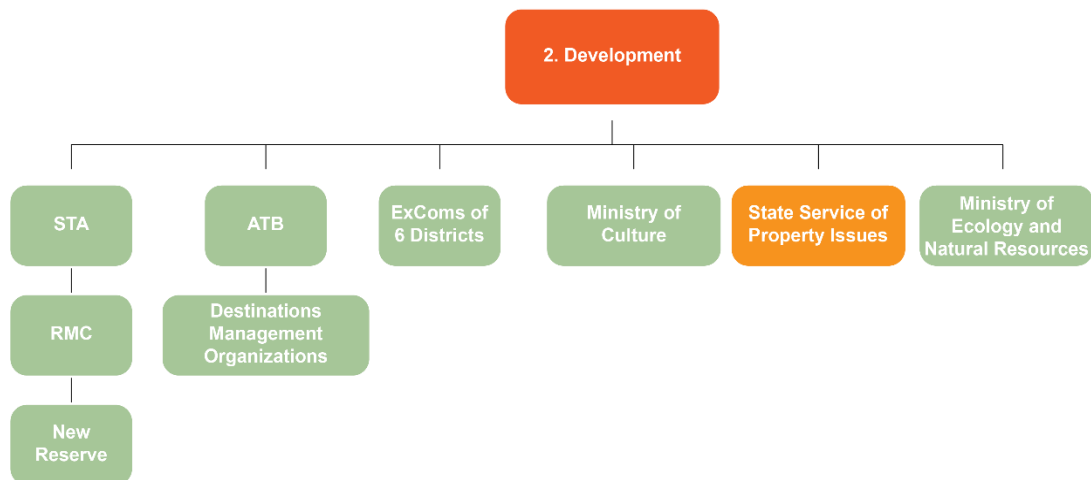
Management Chart is provided below with key and supportive roles of all involved parties in four management areas:

green – key stakeholders
yellow – supportive stakeholders



As seen from the diagram, several key stakeholders are the main actors in the cultural heritage protection of the nominated area. All these stakeholders will be represented in the management

through a consultative body – Coordination Committee under the State Tourism Agency. The Coordination Committee will coordinate all these public institutions with different duties and responsibilities in the nominated property.



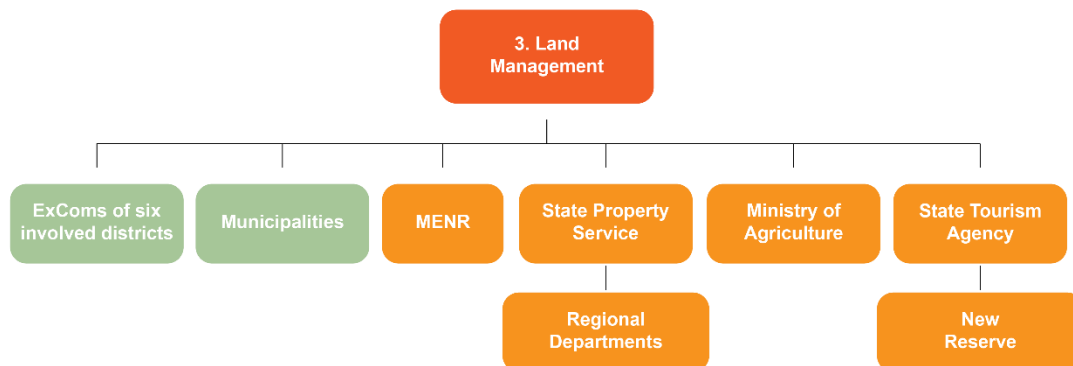
The socio-cultural and economic sustainability of the nominated area is envisioned by the introduction of new development projects and initiatives. These projects are expected to abide by the conservation policies of the heritage areas, including yaylaq and *qışlaq* pastures, and Köç Yolu migration route of the herders, respect the existing cultural and environmental context, at the same time add value to the economic growth of the community in the nominated area. Some projects could only be implemented if there is a platform for coordinating the state institutions. For example, the passage of the herders from other regions through Khinalig and nominated areas towards the Shahdagh’s other yaylaqs is done only with the special permission of the State Border Service. Another example, as the territory of the Shahdagh National Park is in the buffer zone, the Ministry of Ecology and National Resources’ strategy and visions regarding this protected area will consider the particularities of the nominated area. This Park and its natural resources support the attributes of the nominated area and create a continuity of the same ecosystem.

Investment in the nominated area and the introduction of new innovative eco-social projects should add more value to the villages around and at the same time respect the existing social,

cultural, and environmental context. Therefore, a strategy to balance heritage conservation, economic growth, and social inclusion should be developed.

There is a development pressure from the sedentary populations along the Köç yolu who extend their sphere of activities, especially regarding the cultivation of the riversides.

The nominated area is located in complex geography and climate conditions. The mountainous part is already one of the most visited places in Azerbaijan by local and international tourists. A new service industry is being developed in this part of the nominated areas: new hiking routes are designed, the homestay accommodations prosper from year to year, new asphalt roads are built, and this factor facilitates easy access for all the people. It increases the pressure on this part of the nominated area.



Land-use and Public Infrastructure management cover all issues related to land property – yaylaq and *qışlaq* pastures, grazing areas, haylands, and Köç Yolu migration route of the herders, as well as critical public infrastructure for the population within the nominated area and its buffer zone, temporary habitats and Khinalig village.

The nominated area covers 40443.255 ha area and 100491.845 ha Buffer Zone, and the population residing in the nominated area, including transhumance families of Khinalig people, is

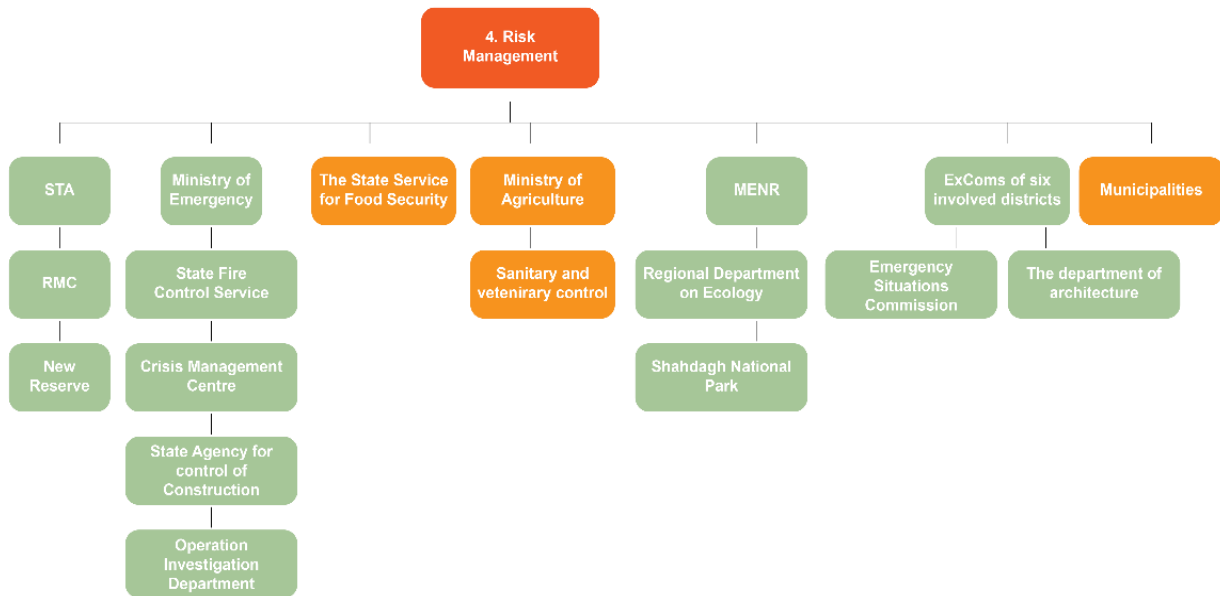
1357. There is a huge need to attract more investment for improvement of basic infrastructure in yaylaq, *qışlaq*, and the Köç yolu migration route in between.

One part of the nominated area population doesn't pursue a transhumant lifestyle anymore—some work at school, public institutions, and private sectors who don't migrate to the lowlands. Of course, they are involved indirectly in the transhumant life to a different degree: they continue to use the yaylaq and hayland in summer periods and lend some part of their livestock to those families who migrate to *qışlaq*.

Among the supportive stakeholders, the Ministry of Agriculture facilitates the seasonal movement of livestock by carrying out vaccination of the animals and distributing the certificates allowing the transhumant herders to migrate from yaylaq to *qışlaq* and visa versa. Without these certificates attesting to the safe, sanitary situation of the herd, a transhumant family can't move on the Köç yolu. If the distribution of these certificates is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture (State Service of Veterinary), the State Service for Food Security controls having each herder's certification along the Köç yolu migration route.

The local executive authorities and municipalities are the relevant bodies to play a key role in managing all aspects of public infrastructure and land property in the nominated area. STA plays a supportive role by providing consultations when the conservation of heritage is concerned. According to the legislation, STA approves any construction permit inside the Reserve territories. For instance, the collaboration between the local government bodies and STA is needed to control the construction and maintenance works of houses/buildings and public infrastructure and use of pastures in yaylaq and *qışlaq* zone as migration route of the herders.

According to the current legislation, when a person wants to rent a yaylaq or *qışlaq*, the Local Executive Power is a main responsible state structure that signs the contract with him. After the establishment of the new reserve for the nominated area, the reserve's approval for land-lease contracts will be additionally requested inside the nominated area. The transhumant families have some special needs, and this will be taken into consideration by the Reserve administration for the land lease contracts.



The identified risk factors are man-made and natural disasters for which the mentioned stakeholders are involved in disaster reduction and preparedness activities.

The main concern in the nominated areas from the point of view of the risk management that will encourage the tight communication between the Reserve and other state institutions:

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources will survey the ecological situation in the pastures, overgrazing issue and quality control of the vegetation process. There is an official Decision of the Cabinet of Minister, “Regulations on the use of winter and summer pastures”, that puts a precise quota for the number of animals allowed to graze in one hectare in winter or in summer pastures. This is also indicated on the leasing contract, putting a limitation for the number of animals allowed to graze in the yaylaq or *qışlaq* territories. The Reserve will enforce its capacity to survey this issue in the nominated area. There are some mountainous rivers that generate risk zones for transhumant families due to their inundations in spring periods inside the nominated areas, near Khinalig village and on the Köç yolu.
- The erosion process and landslide areas in the nominated area will be communicated via Coordination Committee within the Reserve administration to the relevant state institutions. The Reserve will work closely and on a regular basis with the relevant state institutions.

- The Ministry of Ecology will inform and coordinate the migration process of the wild animals in the mountainous zone. The transhumant families use the pastures that have been traditionally the natural habitat of these migratory animals.
- The hydrometeorological observation in Azerbaijan is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Ecology. The transhumant lifestyle in the nominated area depends largely on the climate and meteorological conditions. The Reserve management team will effectuate coordination between this state institution and the local population in order to help them to organize their lifestyle, make relevant planning for migration time and while in Köç yolu, to prevent the bad meteorological conditions and save their temporary shelters and domestic animals. As tens of thousands of domestic animals move from *qışlaq* to *yaylaq* and vice versa, the veterinary condition of herds must be under medical control the whole year. According to the State Program on Veterinary, there are some mandatory vaccines financed by the state, applied by the State Veterinary Service under the Ministry of Agriculture. This state institution's regional body attributes the certificate to the herd owner when all the vaccines are done, and this certificate is a mandatory document to move the herds on Köç yolu. There are some checkpoints on the Köç yolu where the district police, State Service for Food Security, and veterinary services could control these certificates. The Reserve administration could help the transhumant families of Khinalig with documentation and bureaucracy issues.
- There are more than 150 different herds moving on the Köç yolu two times in a year (May and October). For effective regulation of the schedule of the move of all these herds, the reserve management will contribute to establishing good coordination on this subject via the Coordination Committee where the relevant public institutions and private, community representatives are present.

3.4 Responsible Institutions and Stakeholders in Management

State Tourism Agency (STA)

STA is a body established by the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan responsible for taking measures to improve public administration in the field of culture and tourism. The Agency was established on April 20, 2018 as a result of restructuring the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

STA is the central executive body implementing state policy and regulation in the field of tourism in Azerbaijan, as well as the protection of historical and cultural monuments located in the territories of state reserves under its subordination.

Khinalig State Historical-Architectural and Ethnography Reserve is one of those subordinate entities of STA according to a decision no. 220 of the Cabinet of Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted on June 19, 2018, which covers a part of the proposed property

According to Articles 3.0.31-3.0.46 and 4.0.15 of the Statute of STA, it has the following rights and duties in relation to its subordinated reserves:

- to exercise state control and state monitoring delegated to its powers by law in the territories of reserves
- to organize efficient use of cultural, natural, and historical heritage properties which are in the territories of the reserves and are tourist attractions
- to prevent the violation of the protection regime in the territories of the reserves
- to enter into protection agreements (contracts) with the owners and/or users of the listed historical and cultural monuments in the territories of the reserves on the protection of the cultural assets
- to control the limited use of the listed immovable cultural properties
- to give consent for the beautification works in the territories of the reserves, and the reconstruction works in the protection zones of the monuments
- to develop tourism, to identify tourist routes, to develop, maintain and preserve tourism infrastructure in the territories of the reserves.

A more detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of STA is provided in the Annex.

Reserve Management Center (RMC)

Reserve Management Center was established as a public legal entity under STA by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on December 20, 2018 in order to ensure the efficient management of the reserves subordinated to STA. RMC is a public legal entity engaged in scientific, historical and cultural study, promotion, purposeful use, preservation and development of historical and cultural heritage assets and monuments and increasing the tourism potential in the territories of 8 historical-cultural Reserves (heritage sites) subordinated to STA, including Khinalig State Historical-Architectural and Ethnography Reserve which is a on the Tentative List of World Heritage Site. One of these Reserves, “Yukhari Bash” National Historical-Cultural and Architectural Reserve is already a World Heritage Site. Another Reserve under STA, “Ateshgah” Reserve (old Zoroastrian temple near Baku) is also on the tentative list of the World Heritage.

The areas of activities of RMC as:

- preserving historical and cultural monuments, and cultural heritage in the reserves
- researching the monuments from historical and cultural points of view while ensuring their integrity and maintaining the protection regime for the territories of the reserves
- ensuring tourism-friendly uses of the reserves
- ensuring the financial viability of the reserves, and seeking the diversification of funding sources
- ensuring sustainable management of the reserves
- participating in the implementation of the unified state policy concerning the reserves
- organizing planning, control, and coordination of the activities concerning the reserves
- organizing their purposeful functioning of the monuments in the territories of the reserves
- ensuring the preservation and integrity of the monuments in the territories of the reserves
- organizing development and management of tourism infrastructure in the territories of the reserves.

RMC is the main institution managing the Site from all aspects of the management including planning and controlling, administration, and implementation under the subordination of STA. It has 66 staff members divided in Board Management with members and 7 departments:

- Management
- Project Management Department
- Cultural Tourism Development Department

- Cultural Heritage and Research Department
- Architecture and Construction Department
- Human Resources and Document Control Department
- Administrative Department
- Financial and Procurement Department

Khinalig State Historical-Architectural and Ethnography Reserve was established with Decree no № 2563 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on December 19, 2007, to oversee the protection of Khinalig's important heritage. The Reserve is a state-owned institution with its management team and a state-funded budget. It ensures the village's important historical, cultural, architectural, archeological, ethnographic, numismatic, epigraphic, and anthropological monuments are carefully protected and managed according to the regulations of its charter. The Reserve is subordinated to the State Tourism Agency in 2018. The Reserve submits its semi-annual activity reports to RMC.

The Reserve is headed by the Director appointed and dismissed by the Chairman of STA upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the Board of RMC. Currently, the reserve management has 18 staff members at the expense of special funds:

- Reserve director
- Chief accountant
- Chief cultural heritage manager
- Researcher
- 3 x guides
- 3x monument guards
- Driver
- Human resources specialist
- servant
- 3 x workers
- 2 x security guards

The Reserve is a main local executive office supporting STA and RMC in management, conservation and development activities. The detailed duties and responsibilities of the Reserve are provided in the Annex.

The Reserve’s Cultural-Scientific Fond keeps the precious thousands of manuscripts, hundreds of cultural-historical objects, and lots of archeological findings. Some of these objects and artifacts are shown in an exposition hall to other visitors of the Khinalig village.

Local Executive Committees

The nominated area passes through the territories of six administrative districts each of them under the management of relevant Local Executive Power: Gusar, Guba, Shamakhi, Gobustan, Absheron, and Hajiqabul.

The Local Executive Powers are the main executive state body in the districts. The legal status of local state administration in Azerbaijan is determined by the Provision on Local Executive Authority, adopted on 16 June 1999. According to the legislation, the president of Azerbaijan establishes territorial branches of state administration in regions, cities and city districts and appoints ahead to manage their operations. These heads in turn appoint local administrations in the villages and settlements situated within their territory. Heads of local state administration carry out executive duties in regions, cities and city districts, ensure rights and freedoms of citizens, and further the economic, social and cultural development of a given territory.

The activities of Local Executive Power, including those concerning the management of cultural heritage assets are regulated by the Decree No 648 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on approval of the “Regulations on Local Executive Committees” dated June 6, 2012. Paragraph 3.11.5-1 of the Regulations stipulates that in case any signs of cultural heritage are discovered during construction, the heads of local executive authorities have to inform respectively the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, or the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan(concerning 8 reserves under its direct administration), in order to ensure the implementation of the measures envisaged by the Law on Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments. This is one of the main duties of the heads of local executive authorities in the areas of construction, architecture, and urban planning.

Local Executive Power’s responsibilities are the followings:

- Permits for construction work in the reserve are issued by the Department after the approval of the State Tourism Agency. Projects of construction presented by different

individuals are controlled by the Department of Architecture and Construction of the Local Executive Power. The Department also controls the implementation of the works. Repair and beautification projects concerning the streets and public spaces are also developed and/or coordinated with the Department. This element concerns only Guba Executive Power. The construction is forbidden in the yaylaq, *qışlaq* under state property and in all the pastures registered as agricultural land, as well as on the migration route. There is no permanent settlement and residential land in *qışlaq*.

- The Department of Territorial Management of Local Executive Power plays a coordinating role between population and government agencies through the neighborhood committees. Khinalig village is divided into three neighborhoods (Upper neighborhood – Gəmk, Middle neighborhood – Məlikli, and the Lower Neighborhood – Kəmk). The neighborhoods can appeal to the Executive Committee with regard to disputed issues, and problems of local residents. This Department also manages the land lease issues related to Yaylaq and *Qışlaq* areas.
- The Housing Maintenance Department of ExCom is responsible for maintenance of non-private (public) buildings in the reserve area, collection of maintenance fees, issuance of certificates of registration to local residents, and their registration at the place of residence.
- Public Utilities Production Union is responsible for cleaning, waste management and beautification works in the reserve territory together with the reserve management. Installation and maintenance of communication and utility lines are undertaken by specialized entities separate from the Executive Authority:
 - Power grid by Azerishiq OJSC
 - Water supply and sewerage by Azersu OJSC

According to the legislation, summer and winter pastures, cattle camps and migration roads of the herders are managed by local executive authorities and inside the Administrative Territorial Units by the municipalities. Also, the Local Executive Powers exercise control over the pastures and migration routes.

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

The Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) of Azerbaijan Republic is a governmental institution in charge of regulation of the activities in the country relating to ecology, environmental protection, and use of natural resources of Azerbaijan.

MENR is one of the key stakeholders and responsible bodies in the management of the nominated area. MENR is responsible for the protection, conservation, control of natural resources. Before all, the MENR is the main state body that surveys the quality of the winter and summer pastures, debit of water in the riverbeds, the forest areas falling under State Forest Land (one part of the Köç yolu passes through Forest Lands). The nominated area borders Shahdag National Park and the proposed buffer zone takes part of the ecosystem of this National Park. The Shahdag National Park of the Republic of Azerbaijan was established in accordance with Order No. 1814 from December 8, 2006 of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to protect the environment, to use it effectively, to preserve biodiversity, as well as rare and endangered plant and animal species and to develop ecotourism in the administrative areas of Ismayilli, Guba, Gusar, Gabala, Oghuz and Shamakhi districts.

State Committee on Urban Planning and Architecture

The State Committee on Urban Planning and Architecture (the Committee) is a central executive body that conducts a unified government policy and regulation in urban planning, zoning, architecture, and related design. The Committee has been involved in unified urban development policymaking and continues to implement the policy, develop the zoning planning documents, perform regulatory activities in the relevant area. It also ensures the preservation of sensitive urban planning and national architectural traditions (heritage), and effective use of their territories together with the relevant local authorities taking into account the natural and local context of cities and their historically established communities. The Committee's activities include maintaining the urban-planning cadaster in accordance with the national legislation, ensuring the improvement of architectural planning solutions for buildings, installations, and facilities, overseeing their development in accordance with urban planning and construction standards and other areas defined in the legislation. In particular, the development of a regulatory framework plays a vital role in the Committee's activities.

Ministry of Culture and the relevant Regional Departments

The Regulations of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan were approved by the decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 119 dated June 6, 2018 on ensuring the activities of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Pursuant to Paragraph 1.1

of the Regulations, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan is the central executive authority enforcing state policies and regulations on culture, arts, preservation of historical and cultural monuments, publishing, and filmmaking (hereinafter – the relevant areas). The activities of the Ministry are:

- participating in the development of the unified state policy in the relevant areas, and ensuring its implementation
- undertaking norm-establishing activities in the relevant areas
- undertaking the state regulation, state control, and coordination in the relevant areas
- undertaking the protection of cultural heritage, and the state control over the conservation, restoration, reconstruction, regeneration, and technical upgrade of the state-protected historical and cultural properties (monuments) – except for the state reserves subordinated to the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Icheri Sheher State Historical-Architectural Reserve, and Gala State Historical-Ethnographic Reserve – and the project design of current and capital repairs through its subordinate entity, the State Service for Protection, Development, and Restoration of Cultural Heritage.

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan regulates its activities in the regions. The nominated area falls into the sphere of activities for different regional departments of this Ministry. The responsibilities of the local units are:

- developing and ensuring the implementation of the programs and action plans for the development and implementation of cultural policies in the city (district)
- undertaking comprehensive analysis and prognostication of the main directions of the development of the cultural sphere
- organizing large-scale cultural events, memorial events, theatre performances, concerts, conferences, consultations, seminars, and meetings, fair and exhibitions, festivals, competitions, and other events, as well as film screenings.

Guba Destination Management Organization (DMO)

The great part of the nominated area located in Guba and Qusardistricts is covered by Guba Destination Management Organization (DMO), which has been in operation since February 2019 under the Azerbaijan Tourism Board (ATB). Besides that, Shamakhi DMO's responsibility covers the Köç yolu segments in Shamakhi and Qobustan districts.

ATB is a national tourism organization under STA. Its core tasks include promoting Azerbaijan as a holiday destination and developing the domestic tourism industry. ATB runs regional offices across the country and Guba DMO is one of them. The main role of DMO is to contribute to the long-term sustainable economic development and promotion of the regions of Azerbaijan. Guba DMO as the regional representative of STA and ATB coordinates the development of the tourism industry in Guba and Gusar regions.

Guba DMO aims at achieving sustainable and continuous tourism development in Guba and Gusar regions by awareness-raising and promotional activities, organizing training, connecting the public sector with the private sector (public-private partnership). DMOs also have the authority to manage local tourist information centers or info points.

The primary duties of the DMO include:

- To conduct research to study the tourism potential of the destination
- To ensure tourism brand development of destination
- To support creating a favorable investment environment for the tourism industry in the destination, to encourage public-private sector partnership
- To support local producers, craftsmen to develop destination-related product brands
- To collaborate with different entities for the purpose of marketing and distribution of local products
- To organize tourism-related festivals and events as well as to be involved in the organization of them
- To organize and sell tickets for tours, events, and excursions as well as attend travel industry fairs, exhibitions
- To organize info tours for media and travel sector actors
- To support tourism product development
- To define and develop new tourism routes/itineraries in the destination with the relevant stakeholders
- To prepare promotional campaigns of destination
- To organize various tourism services in destination, to supervise the implementation of services
- To measure visitors' satisfaction
- To gather a statistical database on tourists and tourism industry and update it on a regular basis

- To increase awareness in tourism and to improve the skilled tourism specialists in destination
- To upgrade the functions of tourism industry representatives in destination and to organize training
- To offer marketing activities, business consultancies to strengthen industry potential
- To create and update online platform, e-marketing tools of DMO on a regular basis in partnership with ATB
- To carry out capacity building actions and training for the TICs and info points in the destination in order to meet modern tourism requirements
- To coordinate tourism grants, scholarships, and sponsorships that are initiated and approved by ATB
- To raise awareness on tourism-related policies among the population of the destination

Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan is a central executive body responsible for the following areas:

- civil defense
- protection of the population from natural (geophysical, geological, meteorological, hydrological, maritime hydrological contingencies, natural fires, etc.) and man-made (arsons, explosions, collapse of buildings and constructions, chemical, biological and radiological hazards, accidents in electric power supply system, vital utilities, waste treatment facilities, breakdowns in hydrodynamic installations, oil and gas production units, main pipelines, transportation and traffic accidents, etc.) disasters
- prevention of emergency situations and elimination of their consequences
- fire security
- safety in construction
- drafting of government policy and regulations on the state material reserves funds
- protection of strategic facilities, objects, and installations in cases of occurrence of emergency situation.

All activities have undergone in the nominated area, including those related to renovation, safety, and security, are regulated by the Ministry of Emergency Situations.

Ministry of Agriculture

According to the current legislation, the State Veterinary Service under the Ministry of Agriculture provides the certificate on the sanitary situation of the herds before the migration process. Each herd owner should be furnished with this document in order to start to move from Highlands to lowlands and vice versa. This certificate is presented on the checkpoints on the Köç yolu to the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the State Service for Food Security, and other relevant institutions. This certificate indicates the number of the sheep or other animal in the move, the information about the vaccination of the animal, the owner of the herd, and the date of the migration. All this information serves also to calculate the number of domestic animals after and before the migration process. As some mandatory vaccines are applied twice per year, the Guba Veterinary Service is charged also to follow the sanitary situation also in *Qışlaqs*, going from Guba to Hajigabul and Absheron districts in the winter period. So, the semi-nomadic families in lowlands continue to be served by the mountainous district of Guba and the responsibilities in this sense are not transferred to the local institutions of Hajigabul and Absheron districts.

The Ministry of Agriculture’s responsibility regarding the nominated area is also the following:

- If the Law doesn’t preview the active involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture in the process of the land lease contracts of *qışlaq* and *yaylaq* pastures, in another way it is charged to provide the proposals in order to improve the quality of the winter and summer pasturages and it participates in the process of the protection of these areas. Ministry of Agriculture has a state monopoly on the vaccination process of the domestic animals
- According to the current legislation, the approval of the Ministry of Agriculture is mandatory in case the category of winter or summer pastures is planned to change and used for other purposes (construction, cultivation of these lands etc.). In general, there is a complex juridical process in Azerbaijan to change the category of the winter and summer pastures and to use it for other purposes.

3.5 Financial management

If we take into consideration the Khinalig Reserve case, the financial management of the New Reserve covering all the nominated property seems sustainable to respond to all the challenges and assure the relevant conservation and development costs. Financial management of the nominated area is planned to be carried out through the budget allocated from the state and the

internal income generation mechanisms. The management of cultural and historical reserves in Azerbaijan, including Khinalig Reserve, which constitutes a major part of the nominated area, is financed from the state budget and other sources that do not contradict the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan. These means are allocated from two main sources:

- Financing through the State Budget, allocated by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Azerbaijan, is used for covering the administrative expenses of Khinalig Reserve. These expenses include wages and benefits of the Reserve staff, maintenance costs such as utilities, regular renovation works, and other routine expenses.
- Financing through the Investment Fund, allocated to STA, is used for non-routine works undergone in the Reserves, as per the priorities defined by the STA management. Financing through this channel has been used for the renovation of the buildings in the Khinalig Reserve in need of urgent interference.

Additionally, STA has introduced a new management mechanism for its subordinate reserves. The new management aims to improve the financial management and introduce transparency to reduce the dependence of the reserves on the state budget and achieve sustainable financial development by creating conditions for public-private partnerships. RMC delivers effective management of the revenues from cultural and tourism services, and also other activities not prohibited by law. Collected revenue is used in an efficient manner for the development of the reserves.

An integrated financial resource management system coordinating the relevant executive decision-making body (STA) and the people who implement these decisions on location is being introduced to ensure the financial methods and tools, as well as the objectives set in the field of financial stability and growth.

A Financial Management Plan is currently developed for the implementation of the system, and the Plan will include financial policies providing for the effective use of financial resources in the short- and long-term, and the direction of financial services. This Plan will act as a reference document in the financial management of the new reserve along with the financial regulations of the superior bodies (STA and RMC).

Sources of financial analysis for the development of the Financial Management Plan are official reports of the state-funded reserve, statistical data, and a comparison of seasonal revenues and

expenditures. The objectives of the Financial Management Plan are ensuring financial stability, maximizing profit by minimizing costs and attracting new sources of financing.

So, Khinalig reserve is financed from the centralized expenditure appropriated for STA in the state budget, and also from the income derived from its activities, donations, grants, investments and other sources not prohibited by law. The income of the reserve is the funds received from other activities not prohibited by law, such as cultural and tourism services provided in accordance with its Statute, and joint activities with public and other organizations based on cooperation agreements.

3.6 Planning, Policy, and Legislative Framework

The preservation of cultural heritage has major importance in the national legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The following normative legal acts exist in the legislative system of the Republic of Azerbaijan regulating cultural heritage preservation:

1. The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan
2. International treaties which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party of
3. Laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan
 - a. Law on Culture
 - b. Law on Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments
 - c. The Land Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan
 - d. Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Management of Municipal Lands
 - e. Law on Museums
 - f. Law on the Folklore
 - g. Law on the Carpet weaving tradition
 - h. Law on Advertising
 - i. Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Protection of Environment
 - j. Code of Urban Planning and Construction
 - k. Criminal Code
 - l. Code of Administrative Offenses
 - m. Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the status of municipalities
4. Decrees of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
5. Decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan
6. Normative acts of central executive authorities

7. State programs on the social-economic development of the regions of Azerbaijan

The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan has the highest and direct legal power in the Republic of Azerbaijan and is the basis of the national legislation. According to Article 40 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to participate in cultural life, to use cultural institutions and cultural resources. Everyone should treat historical, cultural, and spiritual heritage with due care and respect, preserve historical and cultural monuments. According to Article 77 of the Constitution, it is everyone’s duty to protect historical and cultural monuments.

International treaties which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a party of are integral parts of the legislative system of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Several UNESCO conventions on the preservation of cultural heritage have been ratified by the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Management Plan also refers to those documents. The UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage adopted in 1972 and ratified by Resolution No. 764 of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan on December 6, 1993, and the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted on October 17, 2003 and ratified by the Law No. 134 of the Republic of Azerbaijan on October 2, 2006 are among these conventions.

Laws (acts of parliament) play an important role in normative legal regulation in the legislative system of the Republic of Azerbaijan. According to Article 93 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, normative legal acts of the Milli Majlis (the Parliament) of the Republic of Azerbaijan are adopted in the form of laws. Public relations referred to the powers of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan by Article 94 and Part II of Article 95 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan are regulated by laws. The following are a number of important laws regulating the preservation of the cultural heritage and the organization of the activities of cultural institutions:

The Law on Culture: In accordance with Paragraph 1 of Article 94 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Law on Culture determines the goals and principles of state cultural policy, the rights, and obligations of the subjects of cultural activity, legal, organizational, economic and social guarantees in the field of culture, and regulates relations arising from the creation, accumulation, research, promotion and preservation of cultural values in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Law on Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments regulates the relations arising from the preservation, research, and use of historical and cultural monuments. The law defines

and classifies historical and cultural monuments, and regulates important public relations, such as ownership of monuments, preservation, restoration, listing, use, state registration and degrees of the significance of monuments, state guarantees for the protection of monuments, and rules for the use of monuments, their research and study, as well as beautification of monuments, and reinforcement works carried out for protection purposes, and liabilities for violating the legislation on protection of monuments.

The Land Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The land categories of grazing areas, pastures and haylands, the specific use of those lands, and the right of ownership over those areas shall be determined by the Land Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Some important points from the Land Code regarding the use, managing and protecting pastures and transhumant migratory routes are extracted as below:

Article 16. Peculiarities of using land plots as pastures, grazing fields and meadows

1. Summer and winter pastures, grazing areas and haylands are provided to legal entities and individuals who own and use livestock. State-owned summer and winter pastures are transferred to the use of administrative and territorial units (red - i.e. local executive committees) by the decision of the relevant executive authorities (red- i.e. Cabinet of Ministries), taking into account the needs of state-owned sheep farms.
2. To develop livestock breeding, summer and winter pastures are provided to enterprises owned by municipalities for use following a decision of the municipality and to any other legal entities and private individuals only on lease.
3. Of the lands owned by municipalities, sections for grazing publicly owned cattle are provided for common use, while the grazing sections and meadows remaining in the reserve fund are provided to legal entities and private individuals on lease in an order established by the legislation
4. The sections of grazing fields in common use are provided to the population for use over an indefinite period of time. Summer and winter pastures, as well as sections of grazing fields and meadows from the municipal reserve fund, may be leased to legal entities and private individuals mainly for a period between 10 and 15 years. When the lease term for sections of grazing fields, pastures, and meadows expires, the agreement may be extended as per the results of conducted land bids or tenders. When the livestock owned

by the users and lessees of summer and winter pastures, sections of grazing fields and meadows reduces by more than in half, or in the event of the complete demise of the animals, or in the event of a change of their owner, the lease agreement and the decision on using them is reconsidered in an order established by legislation.

5. The sowing of winter and summer pastures shall be unacceptable. It is only possible to sow barley for green crops on a section of less than 3% of the usable area.
6. Legal entities and private individuals must use summer and winter pastures, sections of grazing fields, and meadows in a rational way, try to preserve the plant cover, sources of water, routes, and herding locations, observe sanitary and veterinarian rules and other regulations. If required, summer and winter pastures may accommodate dwelling facilities for shepherds, sheep shelters and other structures of the cultural-domestic and industrial purpose (except for capital structures).
7. Assignment of grazing areas, pastures and haylands for use and lease, and establishment of regulations for their use shall be established by the relevant executive authority (i.e., Cabinet of Ministries) in accordance with the legislation.

Article 29. Lands of cultural and historical purpose

1. The lands of cultural and historical purpose shall include the lands of cultural and historical reserves, memorial parks, cemeteries, tombs, archeological monuments and rare geological formations.
2. Any activity which may impede the use of the lands of cultural and historical purpose in accordance with their designation shall be prohibited.

Article 39: Land use planning

3. Use and appropriation of land resources is carried out on the basis of decisions of the relevant executive authorities (i.e., local executive committees) and municipalities on land development planning.

Article 46. Right of the state to own land

1. Lands of summer and winter pastures, temporary cattle camps and the migration routes of the herders belong to state-owned lands.

The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Management of Municipal Lands

7.2. Lands for public use pastures used for livestock of the local people cannot be transferred to private ownership.

The Law on Museums defines the organizational, legal, and economic basis of the museums in the Republic of Azerbaijan and regulates the relations arising from these provisions.

The Law on Advertising regulates the placement of advertising signage on the monuments and their protection zones. Article 26.3 of the Law stipulates that advertising signage (any forms of advertising) can be placed on the territory, and/or the façades, walls, fences, and roofs of historical and cultural monuments only with the approval of the relevant executive authority, and any forms of advertising can be placed in the protection zones of historical and cultural monuments only with the approval of the relevant executive authority or the subordinate body established by the relevant executive authority.

The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Protection of Environment determines legal, economic and social grounds for the protection of the environment. The purpose of the law shall be ensuring ecological safety in the field of maintenance of ecological balance of the environment, prevention of harmful impact of industrial and other categories of operations upon natural ecological systems, protection of biological diversity and organization of efficient use of nature. This law shall regulate correlation between the nature and the society in an effort of strengthening of legality and application of norms of the law in the field of improvement of the quality of the environment, efficient use and restoration of natural resources, protection of the environment.

Article 35. Ecological requirements imposed upon use of natural resources Ecological requirements in relation to the use of lands, subsurface, air, water reservoirs, forests and other plants, fauna, environmental objects with unique ecological, scientific or cultural value, especially protected environmental natural territories and areas of ecological disasters shall be regulated by normative-legal acts.

Article 36. Ecological requirements imposed upon design works Qualitative environmental norms, efficient measures in relation to neutralization and use of harmful wastes, application of technologies and production methods associated with low level or no wastes, efficient measures for the prevention of pollution of the environment shall be taken into account in course of design works in relation to residential settlements, industrial and agricultural objects and facilities, water supply and sewage systems, hydro-technical installations, transportation and communication devices, technological processes and equipment, other objects.

The Code of Urban Planning and Construction of the Republic of Azerbaijan: Article 4.1 of the Code defines the main purposes of the state policy regarding urban planning and construction as providing socio-economic development of territories and settlements; protecting individual interests; preventing threat or damage to the life, health, and property of individuals, and property interests of the state; ensuring environmental protection and environmental conservation; and preserving historical and cultural monuments (cultural heritage). Article 93.1 of the Code requires all construction works to be halted immediately in case if any signs of cultural heritage are discovered during construction, and the respective information to be submitted to the competent executive authority (in cases of installation of any forms of advertising – to the competent executive authority and/or the body established by the competent executive authority). The decision to resume the construction works and/or to undertake other necessary measures is rested with the competent executive authority. Persons who do not comply with the requirements of Article 93.1 of the Code bear responsibility in accordance with the law.

Construction permits in the territory of the reserve are subject to the approval of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan in accordance with the Code of Urban Planning and Construction of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Reconstruction projects and other necessary measures for the houses in dilapidated and unsafe conditions and in need of restoration are to be coordinated with the State Tourism Agency.

It is prohibited by law to demolish or destroy the monuments in the reserve entirely or in part; to change their artistic and aesthetic appearance; to carry out repairs, reconstruction, economic and other activities that may pose a threat to them; and the proprietor who ordered the works is directly liable under the law. At the same time, people or entities, which violate the rules of protection of monuments, are subject to criminal, administrative, disciplinary, and civil liabilities in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the status of municipalities:

Article 4. Local social protection and social development programs:

2. Local social protection and social development programs shall be aimed at resolving important local social development issues which are not mentioned in the state’s social development program or, in addition to them, social development issues of local importance. These programs may cover pre-school upbringing, education, healthcare, culture, maintenance and use of inhabited and uninhabited buildings, organization, maintenance and development of sanitary

institutions, apartments construction, use of water resources of locally importance, organization, maintenance and development of local water supply and sewage, organization of fuel supplies and sales, construction and maintenance of roads of local importance, organization of local transport and communication services, creating the environment for organization of trade, public catering and welfare services, assisting the development of cultural facilities, maintaining historical and cultural monuments, organization of information services, creating conditions for mass media activity, providing additional assistance to people without families, sick, old, poor people, children without parents or guardians as well as talented children, assisting the development of physical education and sport, assisting people to find work relevant to their professions, assisting in socio-legal protection of youth, development of family settlement farm and other fields of local infrastructure.

The Code of Administrative Offenses of the Republic of Azerbaijan: According to Article 231.3 of the Code, people who violate the requirements for the protection and use of cultural and natural heritage, including the historical and cultural monuments in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments are subject to warnings or fines – 50 to 100 AZN for individuals, 250 to 300 AZN for officials, and 1,500 to 2,000 AZN for legal persons.

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan: Under Article 246 of the Code any intentional destruction of or damage to state-protected historical and cultural monuments are punishable by a fine of 2,000 to 4,000 AZN or imprisonment for up to two years.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan issues normative legal acts in the form of Decrees in accordance with Article 113 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Typical normative legal acts issued by the President in the field of cultural and natural heritage include the decrees on the implementation of laws on culture, cultural heritage, preservation of historical and cultural monuments; decrees on supporting or enhancing the activities or approving or amending the statutes or internal regulations of public bodies overseeing the preservation of cultural heritage. Some examples of such acts are the following:

- The decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the approval of the law amending the Law on Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments
- The decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on improving the activities of the State Service for Protection, Development and Restoration of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan

- The decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the establishment of the Reserve Management Center of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on ensuring the activities of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan issues normative legal acts in the form of Decisions on the basis of and for the purposes of implementation of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the acts of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on the issues delegated to its powers by the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the acts of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Some of the important normative legal acts issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on the cultural heritage issues are:

- The Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Approval of the Categories of Immovable Historical and Cultural Monuments under State Protection; and the subsequent decision amending the first decision
- The Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Approval of the Protection Guarantees for Owners of National Cultural Heritage Properties
- The Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Approval of the Regulations for Preservation, Restoration and Use of Cultural Heritage Properties in the Republic of Azerbaijan
- The Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Approval of the Regulations for Designating Underwater Cultural Resources in the Territorial Waters of the Republic of Azerbaijan as Underwater Cultural Heritage Properties and the Regulations for the Use of Underwater Cultural Heritage Properties
- The Decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Approval of the Statute of the Reserve Management Center of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan
- Regulations on use and lease of pastures and hayfields approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated March 15, 2000 No. 42

As showing in the Code of the Land (article 16) and identified by Presidential decree No 176, dated August 4, 1999, it is the Cabinet of Ministries which issues a decision to clarify regulations on use and lease of the pastures and haylands hayfields. The following extracts from the regulations are worth mentioning:

Article 1: Summer and winter pastures, cattle camps, and movement route of the herders pertaining to the state land reserves of the Republic of Azerbaijan are exclusively owned by the state. Grazing areas and haylands are managed by local executive authorities or owned by municipalities. Allocation of the state-owned lands for the use of individuals and legal entities owning and using cattle and small ruminants in accordance with these Rules shall be implemented in a manner prescribed by law. Grazing areas and haylands owned by municipalities shall be provided for use only to municipal enterprises who own cattle and small ruminants and shall be leased in a manner prescribed by law. Cattle camps and migration routes shall be used for their intended purpose only.

Article 4: State control over the intended use of grazing areas, pastures and haylands shall be exercised by the State Committee on Property Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the State Committee on Real Estate and Land Issues of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic within their powers, as well as by local executive authorities and municipalities.

Article 5: If the productivity and fertility of grazing areas, pastures and haylands are lost due to natural factors, these areas shall be withdrawn from circulation and preserved at the request of the relevant local executive authority or municipality. The procedure for rehabilitation of these areas shall be governed by relevant statutory instruments.

Article 25: Land users or tenants shall be obliged to comply with the following conditions:

- a) use pastures for their intended purpose
- b) efficiently use and preserve water sources in pastures
- c) protect boundary markers in pastures
- d) use the migration route and the cattle camp for their intended purpose
- e) use special roads between pens and pastures, avoid making unnecessary roads and paths
- f) strictly comply with veterinary and sanitary requirements in pastures
- g) avoid grazing cattle in pastures in herds.

Article 28: The users and tenants of pastures and hayfields are not allowed to buy, sell, mortgage, arbitrarily change or violate other requirements of land legislation.

Central executive authorities can issue normative legal acts in the cases and within the limits stipulated by the acts of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, and only on the issues delegated to their powers by the acts of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic. The central

executive authorities which can issue decisions concerning the preservation of the cultural heritage, historical and cultural monuments are the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, “İcheri Sheher” Historical and Architectural Reserve Administration and the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Local Executive Authorities may adopt normative acts within their competencies, but these acts must comply with the superior acts of the legislative system regulating the respective areas. Local self-government bodies – municipalities may also adopt normative acts which are mandatory for the residents and legal entities in their respective territories.

Decisions of the Parliament (Milli Məclis) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and executive orders of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Cabinet of Ministers, and other central executive authorities can serve as non-normative regulatory acts concerning the preservation of cultural heritage, and historical and cultural monuments.

Nominated property regulations

As seen from the legislative base, the legal instruments at national and provincial levels have substantial bases to protect the nominated area.

- Yaylaq and *qışlaq* pastures are owned by the state and cannot be privatized and should be used for intended purposes.
- A part of the nominated area - Khinalig village was declared as the “Khinaliq” State History-Architecture and Ethnography Reserve in 2007. The target of this Reserve is to protect the unique architecture of Khinaliq village, the traditions of the local people and their ethnic language and transfer the cultural heritage to the next generation.
- Usage of any construction materials, restoration and reconstruction works that do not respond to the requirements of the Restoration Manual of Khinalig village and harm the historical fabric of the village are strictly forbidden.
- Any rural development projects are controlled by the relevant state body and must have a master plan that meets cultural heritage conservation criteria
- Disposal of pollutants, cutting of trees, any other activity harming natural and cultural assets of the property is forbidden in the nominated area.

Regulation of Buffer Zone

- According to the law, there is a buffer zone of the cultural heritage reserves regulations which applies to the Buffer Zone accordingly.
- Construction of any industrial facilities and exploration activities that would harm the functional, structural and visual integrity of the property is prohibited.
- Any activity related development projects plans regarding watercourses, conservation and research works of natural assets (flora and fauna, yaylaq and *qışlaq* pastures, forest fragments, riverbed and water reserves, etc.) as well as public infrastructure construction and reconstruction requires a permit by the relevant state bodies and must not harm OUVs, integrity as well as the authenticity of the property.
- Redevelopment projects of the villages must be based on master plans that are approved by the responsible state body for the management of the property.
- Functional change of yaylaq and *qışlaq* pastures in the Buffer Zone is forbidden.
- Functional change of Köç yolu in Buffer Zone that could put the movement of the herders at risk is forbidden.
- The package of regulations of the conservation regime of Buffer Zone is under development and the relevant proposal has been sent to the Cabinet of Ministries by the State Tourism Agency to be confirmed. The package includes the regulation system of the buffer zone on the basis of which the individual conservation regime for the Buffer Zone of each reserve will be able to be developed.

CHAPTER 4 Tourism Development Plan



Image 16 A camper on the "Köç Yolu"

4.1 Current tourism infrastructure

Tourism in Khinalig and other parts of the Shahdagh region usually starts from the city of Guba. A Destination Management Organization (Quba DMO) located in the center of Quba provides visitors with information about available tourism products in the region and can help to organize transportation, homestays, meals, etc.

The Reserve Administration Office in Khinalig also functions as a tourism information center. Here, tourists can book guides and drivers among locals, stay at the guesthouse, and dine. Alpinists and mountain tourists can use the office as their base camp.

Roads and transportation. Khinalig village is connected to the center of Quba via a 57-km asphalt road built in 2006. The road allows any kind of vehicle to travel to the village all year round, except for times of heavy snowfall and landslides.

Additionally, Khinalig is soon planned to be accessible through a new road from the village of Susay. The total length of the new road is planned to be 58.8 km. 24 km of this is already ready for use and the rest is under construction. The new road is expected to connect seven villages, including Khinalig, with Quba.

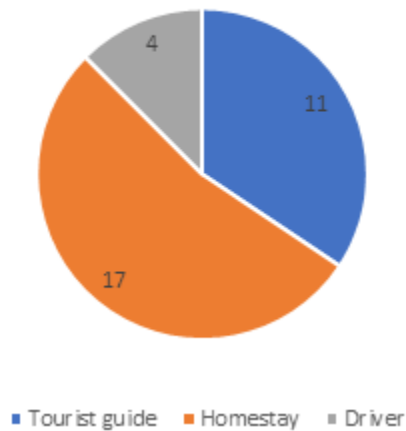


Image 4 Quba-Khinalig road

Accommodation. There are two options for accommodation currently available for visitors in Khinalig – a guesthouse and a homestay. Homestay accommodation is the preferred type of accommodation as it is oriented to the community-based tourism supply and helps tourists discover more about the local cultural heritage. Staying together with a local family allows visitors to immerse themselves into the local culture. As there are no restaurants in Khinalig, homestay also is the only option for food catering.

According to a recent survey conducted by RMC officials, 32 people in Khinalig are involved in some sort of tourism activities, the most popular of which is offering homestays for visitors.

Engagement in tourism activities



4.2 Tourism potential

The lifestyle of Khinalig people is built around the main occupation of these people – animal husbandry and seasonal migration of the livestock. Both villages, as well as their yaylaq and some qışlaq areas and the migration route lie in spectacular nature settings, offering nature and active tourism activities. Additionally, the unique ethnography, folklore, tangible and intangible attractions and products of these people offer many cultural tourism activities. Thus, tourism potential of the proposed nomination area consists of the following three main directions:

- Pastoral and rural tourism
- Nature and active tourism
- Cultural tourism

Pastoral and rural tourism potential

Pastoral and rural tourism focuses on actively participating in such a lifestyle. The people of Khinalig still practice traditional transhumant animal husbandry. In a world where animal husbandry is increasingly industrialized, the nominated property is one of the last few parts of the world where one experiences the ‘old-fashioned’ way of keeping livestock and organizing one’s life entirely around these activities. Thus, the middle-aged people in Khinalig are mainly shepherds, who spend the biggest part of the year in yaylaqs and qishlaqs, returning to their villages for short periods between seasonal moves. This lifestyle can be considered a traditional living example of sustainable production, as it involves other related activities such as making of cheese and other dairy products, wool processing for weaving *jorabs* (socks), handling animal manure to be used as fuel in cold periods and for cooking, etc.

The people of Khinalig are hospitable and eager to invite and host visitors. Visitors can stay with the local families and participate in their household by engaging in various tasks and learning and experiencing the traditional lifestyle of migrating shepherds and their families. Homestays are

typical in the village but can also be extended to the summer and winter camps for those who want a holistic semi-nomadic lifestyle experience. Moreover, the 200-km long migration route, which takes place twice a year through the traditional Köç Yolu is also causing increasing interest from visitors, who follow the shepherds throughout or in certain parts of the route. The route involves beautiful nature scenes and allows observing the landscape change between highland and lowland parts of Azerbaijan.

Nature and active tourism potential

The village of Khinalig is set against breathtaking views of the Greater Caucasus mountains. Khinalig is located at an altitude of 2350 meters and surrounded by four giant peaks – Qizil Qaya (3725 m), Shahdagh (4243 m), Tufandagh (4191 m), and Khinalig peaks (3730 m).

The mentioned areas are protected as Khinalig Reserve and a part of Shahdagh National Park, hence any tourism activities developed here are regulated by the relevant authorities to be carried out according to strict conservation plans.

Research carried out by Azerbaijan Tourism Board has identified strong potential for following nature tourism activities:

- Mountaineering: ice climbing; rock climbing
- Trekking
- Hiking
- Horseback riding
- Trail running
- Mountain birdwatching
- Stargazing
- Mountain biking
- Photography tours
- Camping

Cultural tourism potential

The village of Khinalig is home to small ethnic minority groups of Shahdagh region. They bear elements of the high-mountain Caucasian lifestyle blended with Azerbaijani rural areas. The village offers experiences related to unique traditions of architecture, craftsmanship, folklore, gastronomy, religious and belief systems, holidays and celebrations, and many other elements of cultural tourism. Additionally, there is an Ethnography Museum and Culture House in Khinalig. One can see exhibits collected from the village, fossils and other natural artifacts, paintings of Khinalig by famous Azerbaijani artists, etc.

4.3 Tourism development plans

Khinalig is already a popular tourism destination for both domestic and foreign visitors. 2022-2023 action plan of RMC plans developing or improving some of the attractions and experiences to enhance the tourism activities in the nominated area.

Culture tourism

RMC is planning to restore several facilities to enhance the tourism experiences in the village of Khinalig and the new reserve to be established.

Reactivation of History-Ethnography Museum of Khinalig. According to the 2022-2023 Action Plan, Khinalig Reserve management plans to acquire one of the village's historic buildings as the History-Ethnography Museum. It is intended to collect artifacts about the cultural heritage, lifestyle, history, folklore, art, and crafts in the village and organize an exposition to tell the story of the Khinalig and other high-mountain Caucasian villages. It is planned to finance the project through the Investment Fund, allocated to STA by the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Khinalig village Culture House. Khinalig Culture House is a state-funded organization with five employees. The purpose of the Club is to revive the cultural life of the village and host any public events. The Culture House is also hosting several paintings by renowned artists of Azerbaijan.

The building of the Culture House needs renovation and the organization of a proper display area. RMC plans to renovate the building of the Culture House through the Investment Fund, allocated to STA by the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan per the 2022-2023 plan.



Image 5 Artworks in the Culture house in Khinalig

The watermill. The 2022-2023 action plan of Khinalig also includes the renovation of the old mill on the Khinalig river to offer a new touristic experience to the visitors.

Active tourism

The rich mountain landscape around the nominated property is suitable for the development of active tourism.

Mountaineering. Rock climbing and ice climbing. Khinalig is surrounded by some of the highest mountain peaks in Azerbaijan, scattered with scenic waterfalls, rivers, canyons, and valleys, which can be used to develop summer and winter mountain tourism activities. Some of the main routes being developed are the following:

1. Khinalig summit (3713 m) – classic route 1B
2. Khinalig summit (3713 m) – more difficult route 2A
3. Gizilgaya summit (3726 m) – classic route 1B
4. Gizilgaya summit (3726 m) – couloir route 2A
5. Heydar summit (3751 m) – classic route 1B
6. Tufandag summit (4191 m) – classic route 1B
7. Gizilgaya rock-climbing route 1) Heydar couloir
8. Gizilgaya rock-climbing route 2) Gizilgaya couloir
9. Twin waterfalls, Laza village
10. Anzir waterfall, Khinalig village

Trekking. The village of Khinalig has been historically linked with others for trade, spiritual, kinship, and other relations. Equipped with horses, supplies, and tools, the native people of these villages were used to crossing snow-capped mountains and rushing rivers. Today historical roads of the people of these lands have become attractive tourism destinations, and their potential is being realized in the form of 3-4 day guided long trekking routes. Some of the popular trekking routes are as follows:

1. Khinalig – Laza, Gusar with the eastern slope of Gizilgaya, 2 days, difficult
2. Khinalig – Laza Shahyailag, Gusar route, 2 days, easy
3. Khinalig – Laza, Gabala through Salavat pass, 3 days, moderate
4. Khinalig – Giriz – Girizdahna, 2 days, easy

Hiking. The village of Khinalig is surrounded by caves, river valleys, waterfalls, yaylaqs, and other places of interest, most of which are accessible on day trips from the villages.

Tourism experiences

Tourism experiences in Khinalig should be developed with several key components in mind, such as community empowerment, benefits for the traditional local management, and sustainability. As villages with living heritage, the traditional lifestyle should by no means be disrupted by tourism development activities and facilities. Instead, tourism development should serve the local community as an alternative source of income and incentive to continue the traditional lifestyle, craftsmanship and practices.

That being said, the following tourism experiences are planned to be implemented in the nominated area.

Homestays. Homestays are the only accommodation options in the nominated area except a small guesthouse in the latter. Apart from its primary function, which is offering accommodation to the visitors, homestays comply with the tourism development approaches in Khinalig Reserve in different ways:

- The local community administers, manages, and yields the results of this tourism experience.
- Visitors are offered an actual image of the culture through an intimate interaction between the host and the guest.
- Hosts get the chance to sell their products, such as dairy products, wool socks, herb mixes, etc., to the visitors, which enhances local production.
- Accommodation adds no burden of newly built structures to the property and occurs within its existing infrastructure.

RMC is already implementing an extensive renovation project in the village of Khinalig, which aims to improve the living conditions of the Khinalig people and address problems in need of urgent intervention. This project will help the community be better equipped to open its doors to the visitors.

Apart from the villages, visitors will also be encouraged to follow the path of migrating families to their summer and winter houses in yaylaq and qışlaq areas to get a more holistic approach to the seasonal migration practice.

Experiences with local producers. Khinalig people have accumulated centuries-old knowledge of using available resources to make products for daily use. Animal products such as making cheese and other dairies, honey making, collecting and using medicinal, bread making on *xərək* and *təndir*, weaving socks and carpets, etc. are some practices that the locals do daily, but are of great interest to visitors. By engaging in these activities with the locals, tourism can gain a unique experience and insight into local production.

On the other hand, such experiences create additional sources of income for the local community and contribute to sustainable tourism development with respect to tradition. Some experiences, which can be easily developed and integrated into existing tourism experiences are as follows:

- **Cheese-making.** Shahdagh people make different types of cheese depending on the season and with different methods. In a broader sense, cheese-making has three stages, each of which can be turned into a tourism experience: milking the sheep, processing the milk for cheese making and cheese tasting.
- **Apitourism.** Khinalig village is surrounded by the subalpine yaylaqs ideal place for beekeeping. The people have old traditions related to this activity and honey from this region is a brand. Visitors can be offered tours to the spectacular locations where honey

bees are kept and learn about the process of honey-making – choosing the right site for the bees depending on the season, looking after the bees, honey tasting, apitherapy, etc.

- **Herbal products.** Khinalig people have accumulated ethnobotanical knowledge about the plants growing in their surroundings and their value for human health and gastronomic characteristics. Herbs are collected mainly in yaylaqs, but also in winter pasture areas. Participating in the process of collecting, drying, storing and learning to use these herbs for various purposes can be an engaging touristic experience.

Transhumance trails and migration process. Participating in transhumance is a unique opportunity to discover the way of life of the shepherds and their families and the profession and practices. The opportunity for this activity comes twice a year in spring and autumn when the stocks of sheep cross 200 km between the center and the north of the country, allowing one to experience different landscapes as the altitude changes. Participants of the transhumance route can share the duties with the shepherds and in the household and share the same shelter and food to get a holistic insight into this lifestyle.



Image 6 Sheep stocks in highland yaylaqs

Pilgrimage tours. Another legend is created about the Babadagh mount, which is located southeast of the village. The shrine of Hazrat Baba on the top of the Babadagh mount is considered sacred not only for the people of Khinalig, but for the whole region. According to the legend, there is a grave of a sacred person on top of the mountain, and this is a place of pilgrimage for childless women and against toothache. Making seven turns around the peak of the mountain equals a Hajj visit.

The people of Khinalig believe that Babadagh is a live creature, and every stone taken from this mountain is a part of it and is equally sacred. People keep these stones as symbols of abundance and fertility. Stones from Babadagh are thrown into the river as part of rain-calling rituals.

Today, Babadagh is visited by Khinalig people as a place of pilgrimage and by active tourism enthusiasts as a hiking tour. The plan is to organize pilgrimage tours to Babadagh to revive the old tradition.

4.4 Development plans and activities

Historic house restoration program. The RMC restoration program aims to support the conservation of Khinalig’s built heritage, in particular its unique terraced houses. Many of the houses are 200-300 years old and reflective of a Medieval architectural typology. Restoration of 44 traditional houses in need of urgent intervention is currently underway and due for completion by late-2022, with the village’s other houses in need of restoration to be completed by 2025.

Alternative new road connecting Khinalig, and other mountain villages with Quba. An alternative road connecting Khinalig, and seven other residential areas with Quba town center is currently being developed. The total length of the new road is planned to be 58.8 km and 24 km of this is already ready for use and the rest is under construction. The new road is being developed per the highest construction standards. The two-lane road is 6 meters wide with 2 meters shoulder on both sides and includes two new bridges too. The new road is expected to increase the tourism potential of Khinalig, as well as Kryz, and other high-mountain villages.

Creative art project. Launched in late-2019 and with plans to become an annual program, the project aims to revive the cultural, social, and economic life of the Khinalig community. With the participation of creative art professionals, the project brings together local and foreign artists and painters to apply new creative design approaches to traditional crafts such as weaving as well as the development of new products using the natural and cultural resources of Khinalig. The project has resulted in the development of newly designed woven products and attractive new traditional herbal packages that can be sold as souvenirs. The project is also transferring knowledge and new skills to local artisans through various workshops and training.

Rural entrepreneurship development project of KOBIA: STA cooperates with KOBIA (Small and Medium Business Development Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan) on their “Rural entrepreneurship development” project, which provides village guest houses with appropriate equipment (sofas and armchairs, tables and chairs, bedding, wardrobes, refrigerators, air conditioners, televisions, microwave ovens, vacuum cleaners, kitchen utensils, etc.) and also organize training for their owners to acquire knowledge and skills in the field of tourism and services. Five guesthouses in Khinalig participate in this project.

Upgrading water system: To replace the existing water tanks (which are significantly incompatible with the village’s architecture), STA had an agreement with AzerSu on implementing the new water provision and sewage system in the village, which is to be carried out in 2022.

Community-based tourism development program. The State Tourism Agency (STA) program is sponsoring some basic infrastructure in local guesthouses and homestays, with Khinalig being a priority destination. Operators are helped to improve standards to increase visitor satisfaction and ultimately increase visitation and sales without harming the village's integrity. An online booking portal that will help local operators boost sales from the crucial digital economy is in progress.

2022-2023 action plan. Reserves Management Center under the State Tourism Agency has developed the Action Plan in the Khinalig Historical-Architectural and Ethnography Reserve, which includes the following key actions:

- Renovation of 44 private houses in Khinalig in state of emergency and in need of urgent intervention
- Renovation of the Culture House. Currently, the Culture House is built in the late Soviet period, and its condition is not satisfactory for accommodating visitors. According to the plan, the building will be renovated and its capacity to host cultural events and exhibitions will increase.
- Renovation of Khinalig Museum. The Museum is located in a private house and is not well-suited to display the exhibition. Renovation and development works will enable displaying the fund of exhibits in the museum building.
- The existing water supply and sewage systems in Khinalig are currently being renovated with Azersu OJSC, and the works are planned to be completed in 2022-2023.

4.5 Marketing and Promotion

The festival, “On the Tops of the Mountains,” organized within the framework of the State program for social support of the Khinalig Reserve, was a first step towards reviving the cultural, social, and economic life of the Khinalig community as well as surrounding mountain villages. In September 2019, the festival included workshops, master classes and training on carpet weaving and theatrical art for youth and children in the village.

The local community actively produced agricultural and craft products for visitors. “On the Tops of the Mountains” festival, designed both by and for the local people, demonstrated a real interest in revival of the local community's cultural, social, and economic life.

Several films have been produced about the cultural heritage of Khinalig and other Shahdagh villages (Haput, Alik, Jek, Gryz, and Budug), including the transhumant pastoral lifestyle of the people and other ethnographic values of those communities.

RMC website was created in 2021 with the critical information about its eight cultural reserves, including Khinalig¹.

¹ <https://www.heritage.org.az/>

Signages: In 2021, Khinalig-Galeykhudat and Galeykhudat-Gryz trails were marked by Azerbaijan Tourism Board² to mark the hiking routes in the given areas.

4.6 Sustainability of Tourism Activities

Transhumant communities of Khinalig and other Shahdag mountain villages have traditionally mastered sustainable production and living methods. As such, animal husbandry, which is the main occupation around which the lives of these people are organized, has many examples of using the natural resources and animal products in a wasteless and sustainable manner.

The same approach is translated in the tourism development plans in the nominated property to minimize the industry's impact and attract extra financial income to be used for the development and wellbeing of the community.

Thus, tourism activities in the nominated property are guided by the following principles:

- Careful use of natural resources, well-planned environmental management and preservation
- Close community involvement in all tourism activities, respect to social and cultural aspects
- Long-term planning of economic processes in a way to enable the generated income return and bring value to the community
- Limiting tourism activities that might disrupt the traditional way of life; a strong focus on the preservation of cultural and social values
- Incentives for the local community to continue the traditional way of life by introducing opportunities created by tourism such as selling goods, organizing homestays, guiding groups etc.

² <https://azerbaijan.travel/khinalig-galakhudat-trail>

CHAPTER 5 Key Issues with the Main Attributes of OUV



Image 17 Flatbread making in Khinalig

Globalization processes, modern developments, and climate change have brought about certain changes and challenges to the traditional life and values in Khinalig, and the surrounding villages. Below, is a list of such issues grouped around the main attributes concerning the cultural landscape of Khinalig and the migration route.

5.1 Transhumance

Transhumant or semi-nomadic pastoralism is vulnerable to irreversible change due to increasing globalization and accessibility between remote villages and cities. People gradually abandon their millenary old traditional lifestyle in the hope of a more leisurely sedentary lifestyle.

Moreover, in the face of globalization, traditional societies lack the previous incentives to continue transhumant practices. Exposure to the outer world through modern technologies and prospects open for the youth through education brings them choices of occupation, which they prefer over the laborious transhumant herding practice.

Key issues related to the preservation of transhumance are below:

Yaylaqs and qishlaqs

State support: With the support of the State Property Committee under the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan and with the consent of the Ministry of Agriculture, the purpose of pastures, hayfields and pastures may be changed and used for industrial, transport, and other purposes. In recent years, some winter pastures have been reassigned for agricultural activities. The involvement of winter pastures in agriculture (mainly grain cultivation) jeopardizes the continuation of the winter-pastoral agrarian tradition of the people of Khinalig and surrounding villages. According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated May 22, 2004, on approval of the "State Program on effective use of summer-winter pastures, hayfields, and prevention of desertification in the Republic of Azerbaijan" state Program for the improvement of the quality of the summer and winter pastures were approved. The reason for the adoption of such a program was the overloading of natural pastures and hayfields in the Republic of Azerbaijan due to lack of natural fodder areas, erosion and salinization of lands as a result of their uncontrolled use, severe damage to the country's forest resources, water resources, and the environment as a whole. The adoption of such a state program again could be an important step.

Social significance and authenticity of nomadism: One of the problems encountered on the migration route was the lack of hired labor among shepherds. Today, large farm owners rent large pastures in pastures and winter areas, hire paid shepherds and keep their herds seasonal. In this sense, although winter-pastoral cattle breeding continues as a historical economic tradition based on farming, it loses its ethnographic and social significance.

Environmental issues: Yaylaq and qishlaq areas used by the people of Khinalig and surrounding transhumant peoples have become subject to many environmental, economic, and social problems. Before all, the number of allowed livestock to graze in the summer-winter pasture has increased considerably since 50 years. The number of sheep belonging to the Khinalig community grew from 10 thousand in the 1920s to 55 thousand in 2020. The normative legislative documents define the quota for grazing the herd in summer and winter pastures, but this juridical requirement is not reinforced for certain objective and subjective reasons. According to the Third National Climate Data, climate change will increase the risk of extreme droughts, rainfall, and flooding in many parts of the country. Global warming poses a serious threat to the seasonal distribution of water due to the change in snowmelt time. Although much of the local flora is drought-tolerant for short periods, global warming may extend the time of droughts and vegetation degradation.

Moreover, droughts increase the risk of wildfires in pasture areas. Less rainfall and higher temperatures can also cause the spread of diseases among valuable plant species, causing their degradation. All these factors threaten food supplies for the livestock.

Decreased rainfall and drier weather will also cause the soil to become drier and less resistant to erosion. In dry soils with weak vegetation cover, wind and water erosion vulnerability increases. This leads to the soil layer's gradual leaching, further intensifying arid-denudation processes in the area and the emergence of flash floods.

Transhumant communities of Khinalig and surrounding villages have already started experiencing adverse effects of climate change, which in the first place threatens the vegetation in both yaylaq and qishlaq pastures. The depletion of pastures adds to the challenges of the already laborious lifestyle of transhumant/semi-nomadic herders. It causes a reduction of incomes, which leads to the gradual abandonment of these traditional lifestyles.

“Köç Yolu” transhumance route

Conflicts of farmers and herders: A part of the seasonal migration route of Khinalig and other transhumant peoples passes through near the cultivated areas under private and municipality properties. In some cases, some sections of Köç yolu or its buffer zones fell under some municipality land due to the lack of precise GPS coordinates. For example, the paddy farms past the village of Garajuzlu of Gobustan district to the north were the former transhumant route. Since this part of the route, both farms and residential areas become denser. Therefore, the space left for the passage of the herds between farms gets narrow, making the management of the herds very difficult, and sometimes animals destroy the farms along the way. This causes major conflicts between farmers and seasonal herders.

The conflict aggravates further since the migration routes traditionally follow the riverbeds, increasingly becoming paddy farms. This makes migration through riverbeds difficult and causes many disputes with the local farmers.

Another problem is related to the fact that farmers are taking some camp and pasture areas. These lands were officially distributed to the farmers following the land reforms of 1990's and the rights of the seasonal herders were not taken into consideration at this time, causing more conflicts with the farmers.

As a result, the migration process is carried out in a much shorter period, and sometimes animals are transported in trucks. Traditional stops along the route and transitory pastures are becoming less available, adding to the burden of overgrazing in summer and winter pastures. Increasing challenges on the migration route-*Köç yolu*, leave many ancestral herders with no choice but to abandon the traditional way of migration, to transfer the herd via other means.

Transmission of knowledge and continuity

The life of a migrating shepherd is considered extremely laborious by nature. Newly emerging challenges such as climate change-related issues, conflicts with farmers along the migration routes and in pastures, as well as new prospects opening for young people such as education and moving to big cities have a direct impact on the motivation of migratory herders to pass their centuries-old knowledge and wisdom to the next generations. As a result, young people are unmotivated and lose interest in pursuing the traditional profession, which puts its existence at risk.

Especially, one should take into consideration that the knowledge about semi-nomadic life was historically transmitted orally from generation to generation. This lifestyle generated during centuries a huge amount of indigenous and non-written knowledge about nature, plants, environment, meteorology, geography, seasonal climate conditions, wild animal migration routes etc. All this knowledge is valuable and constitutes the memory of the whole region. Its protection and revalorization is one of the main challenges for the new Reserve management team.

5.2 Land use

Due to modern roads to and beyond the Property, some modern infrastructure and household things have entered the lifestyle of the Khinalig people, including the increasing amount of waste produced in households, interventions to traditional buildings, and the emergence of new constructions.

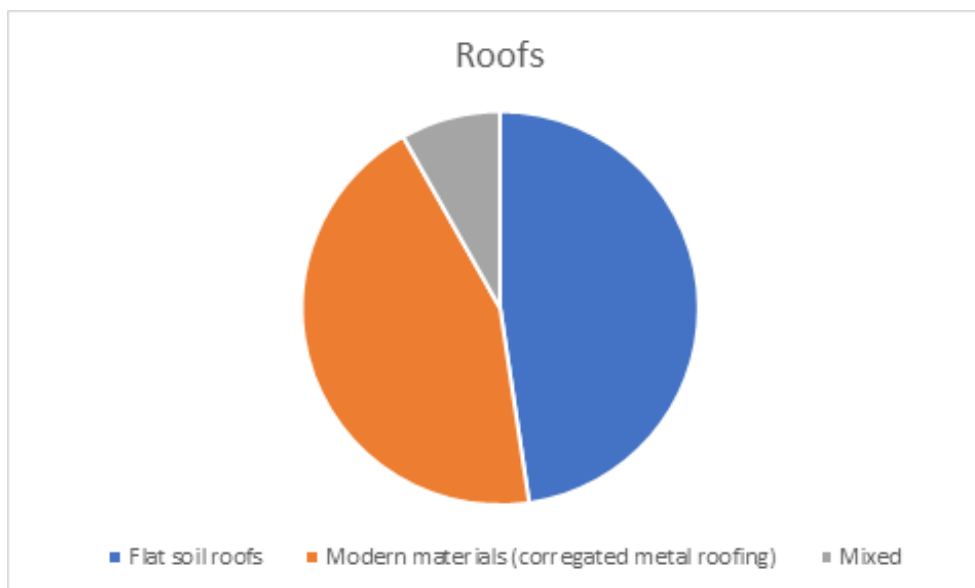
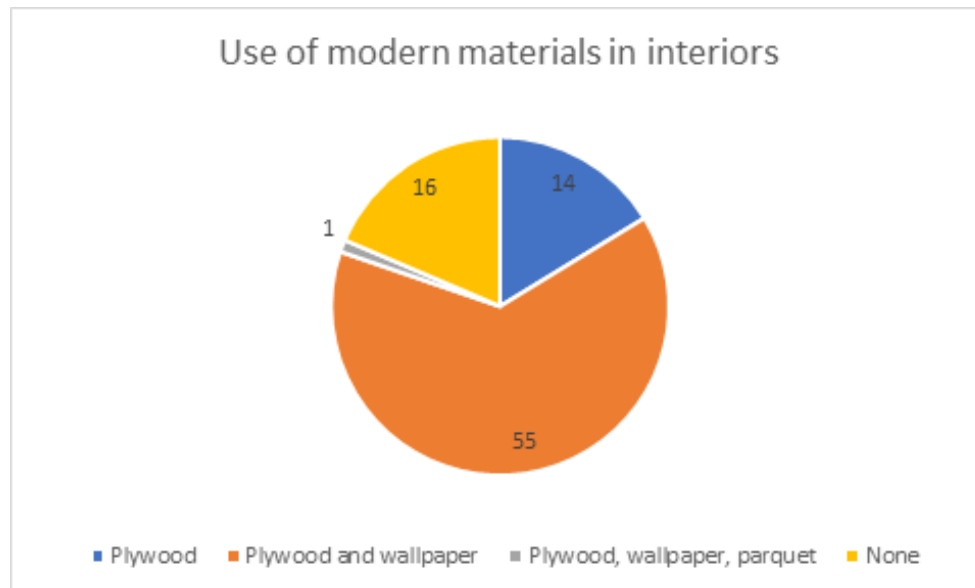
Urban planning

The vernacular architecture of Khinalig has been developed over centuries in response of the people to the existing harsh climate and landscape. The standard features of the houses in terms of material use and functionality are mainly still intact. For example, the local people still use river stones in construction and cover their house façades with special white clay found near the village and use the space of the house for accommodating animals, store hays, and household things, as they did in the past.

However, some external elements of the houses have some interventions such as the use of modern materials like metal and plastic alien to the native construction traditions of the homes. Some houses have metal roofs built on top of the traditional flat soil roofs, as looking after the latter is a labor-consuming process and covering it with metal is an easy solution. Some houses have extensions used as kitchens and bathrooms, which are not native to Khinalig and the neighboring villages. Of course, it is a very positive point that the new functional constructions are added to the houses following the traditional construction materials and decorative forms. As the flat roof has a powerful social function, its protection is a most prioritized issue for Historical Village Landscape.

The white clay for façades are still taken from the same place by all the villagers. This natural resource has been exploited for centuries by the village inhabitants and there is no industrial use

of it. The proportion of these resources used for the covering of dwellings is not a threat for its sustainability.



State of intervention of modern materials to traditional roofs in Khinalig

Water management

Thanks to a large number of springs around the village, the water supply in the village of Khinalig has always been satisfying. The mountainous people invented a very genius way to bring spring water to the village via the ceramic tubes in the Middle Ages. Currently, the villagers are provided with drinking water from Südlübulag (in Azeri, ‘milky spring’) and Khanjar springs. The Südlübulag

water is run through iron pipes and is therefore not used in winter to prevent the pipes from expanding and exploding when the water freezes. The water of the Khanjar spring, which was brought to the village with ceramic tubes was recently replaced with modern materials, but the old system of the gravitational water supply through steep terrain is still in use. Pottery pipes are now kept as historical objects in the Reserve Exposition Hall. If the current climate change trends continue, some springs near villages may dry up and the village may be left without a proper water supply.

Some Khinalig inhabitants take directly the water from the surrounding rivers with modern tubes. There are some fountains inside Khinalig village, used by all the members of the community. These fountains are also a public space where the people gather to discuss and share the news.

One of the main features of the old water management system is the technique of using hydraulic power for watermills. Many of them are in ruins, but one was still in use recently. Their restoration is one of the main objectives of the management team.

One of the main areas of old water management skills in the mountainous village of Khinalig is the genius use of the little river waters to build irrigation channels in the difficult steep zone in order to irrigate the meadows and haylands. As the summer period is short in Khinalig village the people use this means to accelerate the vegetation period of the plants.

If the water resources are abundant in yaylaq region, it is very scarce in winter qishlaq areas of the nominated area. It is interesting that the same semi-nomadic people learnt through centuries of social-economic experience to cumulate and use the rainwater in these areas. The little ponds are created near temporary settlements in qishlaq for domestic animals. These ponds constitute now an integral part of the ecosystem in these pastures. Some insects, little mammals and other wild animals also use the water of these ponds, called *nohur* in Azerbaijan.

5.3 Intangible heritage



Image 18 Carpet weaving is an important activity in Khinalig

Language and Education

The language of Khinalig is one of the main elements of the self-identity of these people and is widely spoken in the village. Khinalig is the mother tongue of the people of Khinalig and the language is used in the household. The language is also taught at the local school in the primary level of education. The school in Khinalig is a secondary school and functions as a boarding school in winter due to parents' seasonal move to qışlaq. This allows people to leave their children in the village when they are gone to qishlaqs.

The Khinalig language has been under state protection since establishing the state reserve in 2007 with emphasis on the ethnographic value of the community for the nation of Azerbaijan. However, the rising threat to the language is that those Khinalig people who leave the village and settle permanently outside Khinalig cannot continue speaking their language in the household due to external cultural pressure. Their descendants often do not speak or speak little Khinalig language. Therefore, the village itself is very important to keep the community together for keeping alive and for the longevity of the Khinalig language.

Traditional crafts

The people of Khinalig have historically been skillful craftsmen, especially in carpet weaving and production of other wool items, leather processing, etc. These traditional crafts are increasingly being abandoned, as the laborious processes cannot stand the pressure of mass-produced modern analogs.

Wool making was traditionally the pillar of the local economy in Khinalig and other surrounding mountainous populations. The semi-nomadic family budget is traditionally constituted from the production and sale of the products made from the raw resources provided by the husbandry.

CHAPTER 6 Management Objectives and Actions



Image 19 A shepherd and a herd in yaylaq

It is essential to have a thorough understanding of the Site, its vulnerabilities and threats, and the opportunities arising from Nominated Property status for an effective management. This chapter sets out the objectives and actions identified to address the issues and challenges in the primary management areas stated in previous chapters.

The problematic areas determined as part of the management plan vision, the goals to tackle them, and the actions to achieve these goals have been summarized under the following main headings:

- A. Transhumance/semi-nomadic life**
- B. Land use**
- C. Intangible culture**
- D. Management**

A Transhumance/Semi-nomadic lifestyle

An important attribute of the nominated property, semi-nomadism, is quite fragile and subject to change under external factors, climate change issues, and modernization pressure. The

management plan proposes several actions to address problems that put the continuity of transhumance practice under question.

Environmental and climate change-related issues. Transhumance practice is highly dependent on climate conditions. On the one hand, global warming trends unfold problems such as extreme temperatures in yaylaqs, short mid-season periods, droughts and floods, and others. On the other hand, environmental change results from agro-pastoral activities and severe deprivation of natural resources by human activity. Below are the key environmental issues affecting the nominated property:

- Climate change-related problems in yaylaqs and qishlaqs such as erosion, extreme temperatures
- Overgrazing and deprivation of the plant cover in pastures
- Lack of scientific research on the causes and effects of climate change

Issues related to land ownership and conflict between migrating herders and farmers on the migration route. Even though the migration route has been historically allocated for transhumant herders, due to the gaps in the Land Reform of 1996, these lands were partially taken by sedentary farmers causing conflicts with the herders.

- Disruption of the seasonal movement of transhumant herders due to lands taken for farming
- The temporary stops on the migration route don't have appropriate infrastructure to assure the security and comfort for the semi-nomadic families
- Shrinking migration period which adds burden to the overgrazing problem in yaylaq and qishlaq areas

Objective A.1.

Issue state subsidies to farmers affected by the consequences of extreme droughts, floods, and other natural disasters.

Action A.1.

- a) Establish a joint program with the Ministry of Agriculture to support farmers in times of extreme droughts, floods, and other natural disaster periods with state subsidies.
- b) Organize meetings with the representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that compensation and state subsidy programs are in place for transhumant farmers in times of extreme climate conditions.
- c) Improve the current management mechanisms of seasonal migration, consulting the families on the weather and climate conditions on the route.
- d) Improve the mechanisms for the vaccination of animals to avoid the massive spread of diseases
- e) Improve security issues of the herds and the people along the Köç yolu

Objective A.2.

- a) Fight erosion by implementing anti-erosion measures in affected areas.
- b) Take preventive anti-erosion measures at places of high risk.

Action A.2.

- a) Involve experts to analyze the causes of erosion and establish and mark the most affected and vulnerable areas.
- b) Collect expert opinions about the causes, solutions, and preventive anti-erosion methods.
- c) Monitor and evaluate the impact of the irrigational channels on the meadow and haylands and their influence on the erosion process.
- d) Create a cooperative group with the Ministry of Agriculture on implementing anti-erosion measures.

Objective A.3.

Overgrazing is one of the main issues affecting the quality of yaylaq and qishlaq pastures, erosion problems, and degradation of vegetation, causing food shortages for the animals.

Action A.3.

- a) Implement and regulate rotational grazing practices in pastures to allow vegetation recovery after heavy grazing periods in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture
- b) Develop mechanisms of reinforcing quotas on grazing areas on qishlaq and yaylaq areas and ensure that the number of animals for grazing allowed by the relevant quotas indicated on lease contracts are complied upon. See support from the local authorities in the implementation of this point.

Objective A.4.

Involve experts to conduct scientific research on climate change and its influence on the transhumance practice, and collect science-based recommendations for semi-nomadic families.

Action A.4.

- a) Organize a working group of scientists of different domains to research climate change trends in the nominated area, their influence on the transhumance practice, and collect science-based recommendations for farmers.
- b) Conduct regular monitoring to evaluate the impact of climate change on transhumance practice.

Objective A.5.

Solve the conflict over land between transhumant herders and sedentary farmers.

Action A.5.

- a) Establish a new cultural reserve with clear and definite boundaries to ensure the continuity of the transhumance way of life in the region in coordination with relevant government organizations
- b) Apply regulating measures of the Reserve along the migration route and ensure that the land is used as intended.

Objective A.6.

Ensure the viability of the traditional transhumant pastoral culture of the Khinalig people.

Action A.6.

- a) Implement all of the above-mentioned actions for a positive impact on the viability of the traditional transhumant pastoral culture of the Khinalig people.
- b) Assign Azerbaijan Tourism Board to develop the “Köç Yolu” transhumance route eco-tourism and nature tourism product in line with the guidelines of the RMC for the management of tourism activities in UNESCO-nominated areas, in which respect for the traditional lifestyle of the people is a central value.
- c) Develop a signage system for the “Köç Yolu” transhumance route tourism product for better navigation of tourists without interrupting the traditional move of the herds
- d) Increase the infrastructural capacity on the migration route putting the lighting, the light construction shelters, the passages on the rivers, and under the routes

B Land use

Due to modern roads to and beyond the nominated property, some modern infrastructure and household things have entered the lifestyle in the nominated area, including an increasing amount of waste produced in households, interventions to traditional buildings, and the emergence of new uncontrolled constructions. The intervention of modern construction methods and materials in the traditional village fabric

- Landslides at irrigated areas (hayfields and yaylaqs) near Khinalig
- Drinking water shortage in Khinalig and qışlaqs for people and animals

Objective B.1.

Ensure the preservation of traditional vernacular architecture and village fabric in Khinalig.

Action B.1.

- a) Continue monitoring the state of conservation in Khinalig.
- b) Ensure that the Restoration Manual instructions are appropriately implemented in Khinalig in both state restoration projects and initiatives by the individuals.

Objective B.2.

Prevent landslides in irrigated areas in haylands and yaylaqs near Khinalig village.

Action B.2.

Establish a working group with experts and community members to address the problem of landslides in haylands.

Objective B.3.

Ensure that a proper water provision system is in place in the villages of Khinalig and qishlaqs.

Action B.3.

- a) Establish a working group with experts, representatives of stakeholders (mainly, Azersu and Amelioration and Water Farm OJST), and community members to address the problem of water shortage in Khinalig and qishlaqs.
- b) Run a new water pipeline to yataqs (temporary settlement complex) in the qishlaq pastures to solve the problem of drinking water supply for the semi-nomadic families.
- c) Establish a proper infrastructure to supply clean water to the temporary camps on the transhumance route.

C Intangible heritage

Language and education. There are several issues related to the intangible cultural heritage of the Khinalig people. Khinalig people speak a unique Khinalug language. Khinalug is well-researched and documented, as well as taught at the local boarding school. Even though the situation with the Khinalug language is better, as it is a part of the school curriculum, the quality of the language lessons is not satisfactory. Moreover, the increasing number of young people do not speak Khinalug, putting its survival at risk. Language and education-related problems are listed below:

- Poor quality/insufficient hours of Khinalug language education at the local school
- Abandonment of the language among young people

Craftsmanship. Another major issue with intangible heritage is the problem of continuity of traditional crafts, and mainly of carpet weaving, disappearing in the face of modernization and lack of demand. A list of all issues related to intangible heritage is below:

- Disappearing craft of carpet and sock weaving
- Lack of demand for locally made products

Objective C.1.

Ensure Khinalig language is taught correctly at the local boarding school.

Action C.1.

- a) Raise the issue of the insufficient amount of Khinalug language classes at the school curriculum before the Ministry of Education.
- b) Raise the capacity of the boarding school in Khinalig to host more schoolchildren of the semi-nomadic families from the surrounding villages.

Objective C.2.

Ensure the continuity of carpet weaving and production of other woven crafts of Khinalig people and that the craftsmanship and skills are transmitted to the young generation.

Action C.2.

- a) Study the underlying issues leading to the disappearance of carpet weaving and other crafts to generate a set of recommendations and actions about how to address the problem.
- b) Develop a set of incentive mechanisms to revive and develop and carpet weaving traditions together with experts.
- c) Organize educational programs and master classes in which young people can learn the craft.
- d) Revive the wool production and the production of the rope made of wool. Encourage the automatization and mechanization of this sector to decrease production costs.

Objective C.5.

Remove bureaucratic obstacles for taking handmade carpets of no historical significance out of the country to create demand for these products among foreign visitors and promote handmade carpets of Khinalig in the world to stimulate craftsmanship.

Action C.5.

- a) Initiate policy proposal to ease customs restrictions for exporting and taking handmade carpets of no historical value out of the country jointly with the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the State Carpet Museum and “Azerkhalcha” OJSC.
- b) Coordinate the display of Khinalig carpets at international fairs with the Azerbaijan Tourism Board.

D Management

Efficient Management structures. It is necessary to improve the management process and coordination between the stakeholders to implement the management plan successfully. The management plan proposes establishing a new organizational approach by creating the optimal

commitment and authorization mechanism. Primary management related issues in the nominated property are the following:

Lack of management means the lack of a reserve covering the entire territory of the nominated property.

- Poor coordination between and understanding responsibilities of the stakeholders
- The seasonality impacts negatively on the tourism flow in the mountainous part of the region
- Poor waste management in the nominated area
- Bureaucratic obstacles to access Ateshgah and several other cultural sites located in areas managed by Shahdag NP and State Border Service
- Lack of community-based tourism content.

Objective D.1.

Ensure management mechanisms are in place by establishing a reserve covering the entire territory of the nominated area.

Action D.1.

- a) Appeal to the President Administration with an order proposal about the establishment of the reserve.
- b) Establish a steering committee with the representatives of all stakeholders.
- c) Coordinate the reserve boundaries with State Service on Property Issues under the Ministry of Economy.

Objective D.2.

Ensure all stakeholders are aware of the values of the nominated area, understand their responsibilities, and coordinate with each other on implementing the relevant actions.

Action D.2.

Prepare a presentation on OUVs and attributes of the Site and deliver informational presentations to all the mentioned national and local authority representatives.

Objective D.3.

Establish an effective waste management system in the nominated area.

Action D.3.

Raise the issue of waste management before the Executive Committees to establish an effective waste management system in the nominated property.

Objective D.4.

Remove bureaucratic obstacles to access Ateshgah and several other cultural sites located in areas managed by Shahdag NP and State Border Service.

Action D.4.

- a) Raise the issue before the State Border Service and Shahdag NP, the building of which is close to the village.
- b) Initiate a pass system for accessing Ateshgah and several other cultural sites.
- c) Relocate the checkpoint of the Shahdag NP to allow the citizens to visit the cultural monuments and the yaylaq areas near the National Park.

Objective D.5.

Develop and promote tourism content in line with the principles of cultural heritage preservation in world heritage sites.

Action D.5.

- a) Raise the issue before ATB and other stakeholders.
- b) Promote the nominated area for the sustainable tourism destination, generate the community-based tourism value-chain.

CHAPTER 7 Monitoring



Image 20 Ateshgah – a fire temple near Khinalig

Monitoring implies the periodic evaluation of the implemented activities in the property, developing a relevant report, and final update of the plan based on the information obtained with the following objectives:

1. Observing and analyzing the activities on preserving of the property values with respect to its integrity and authenticity
2. Reviewing the performance to control the success and check the results based on key performances
3. Providing information to the public to raise awareness and to give advisory services to citizens, property owners and other stakeholders about the conservation of the OUVs in the nominated property area as well as about relevant rules and norms applied to the Buffer Zone.
4. Supporting the objective decision making and taking corrective actions by providing information to decision makers and the affected people, i.e. deriving and communicating the need for action based on the monitoring results and updating the Management Plan.
5. Monitor the implementation of KPI's.

Six disciplines will be considered for carrying out a systemic monitoring service in the cultural landscape of Khinalig people and “Köç Yolu” transhumance route:

1. Management
2. Conservation and Restoration
3. Tourism and Visitor Management
4. Risk Management
5. Education and Awareness
6. Finance

The impact of the monitoring will result in improved management by providing:

- an established assessment, monitoring, and reporting program for evaluating management effectiveness and the state of conservation of the OUVs of the property
- managers from each stakeholder with training in the application of assessment and monitoring techniques
- established or improved communication and co-operation between the involved managers from each stakeholder, Reserve management, local communities and NGOs, regional training institutions and other key experts and stakeholders to ensure the continuation of assessment and monitoring
- improved management in areas of identified deficiency resulting from monitoring
- integration of assessment and monitoring practices into the management.

- project proposals prepared, and funding sought for large-scale projects required to address any identified deficiencies.

7.a Key Performance Indicators

Category		Indicators	Periodicity	Location of Records
Conservation and Restoration	/Khinalig Monuments houses	Supervision the restored and intact houses in Khinalig village	Annually	RMC, STA
		Supervision of construction and repair works in Khinalig village to avoid use of irrelevant modern materials	Monthly	Khinalig Reserve RMC, STA
		Supervision on the state of conservation of cultural and historical monuments, including ancient cemeteries and tomb shrines	Annually	RMC, STA
	Grass land	Number of livestock animals per ha in yaylaq (<i>refer guidelines for conservation of pastures in Chapter 4 of the nomination dossier</i>)	Annually	RMC, STA
		Number of livestock animals per ha in qışlaq (<i>refer guidelines for conservation of pastures in Chapter 4 of the nomination dossier</i>)	Annually	RMC, STA
		Monitoring of winter pastures to counteracting desertification in qışlaq	Annually	RMC, STA, MENR
		Monitoring of summer pastures to counteracting erosion in yaylaq	Annually	RMC, STA, MENR
	Water	Supervision of traditional irrigation system	Annually	RMC, STA
		Supervising of water springs	Annually	RMC, STA
		Monitoring of Pirsaat Reservoir	Seasonally	RMC, STA
	Forest	Monitoring of sacred forest fragments (Mucoz, Jek, Sohob/Yerfi)	Annually	RMC, STA, MENR
		Monitoring tamarix forest scattered along Köç Yolu transhumance migration route	Annually	RMC, STA

	Temporary structures	Supervision of qazma houses and other yataq structures in <i>qışlaqs</i>	Seasonally	RMC/ STA
		Monitoring of the Köç Yolu transhumance route, especially <i>düşərgə</i> places on the route	Annually	RMC/ STA
Social		Total number of jobs created	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Employment / unemployment rate	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Participation of women in labor	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Funds supported with social projects	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Number of Khinalig families who practices transhumance lifestyle	Seasonally	RMC/ STA
		Number of age of Khinalig people living in Khinalig village	Annually	RMC/ STA
Tourism		Number of tourists	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Status of tourism facilities	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Amount of money spent at the destination	Annually	RMC/ STA
Intangible heritage	Language	Number of people speaking in Khinalig language	Annually	RMC/ STA, Ministry of Education
		Number of teaching hours of Khinalig language at school		
	Craftsmanship	Status of Khinalig craftsmanship	Annually	RMC/ STA
		Amount of income gained through handicraft		
Archeological remains		Supervision of archeological sites work conservation status and plans	Annually	RMC/ STA
Implemented plans in Khinalig village		Supervision of rural facilities		
		Number of transportation services		

7.b Administrative arrangements for monitoring property

The existing monitoring policy for the cultural heritage reserves in legislative base of the Republic of Azerbaijan

As the nominated area covers different districts and several kinds of properties, a holistic approach is prioritized while elaborating a proper monitoring policy. The State Tourism Agency instructs the reserve staff to conduct periodic field inspections in order to prevent any damage to cultural heritage during economic or agricultural activities; to take preventive measures when encountering potential threats and submit photos and reports to the management. The reserve management also takes the following actions in this direction:

- While developing and signing lease agreements for monuments in the property of other government agencies or municipalities, the reserve management have to take photos and document their volumetric composition, appearance, and structural elements, in addition to other relevant acts, and make respective notes on monument passports; monument guardians also co-sign these additional notes.
- In case any changes are observed in the monument or its parts, the reserve management as the institution undertaking cultural management of the monuments has to take photos and document these changes and report them to the State Tourism Agency.
- Monument guardians periodically submit proposals to the reserve management for placing reliable protective screens on the surface of the monument in order to protect them from physical, mechanical, and chemical impacts of the environment, taking measures to protect monuments from the groundwater, and ensuring their integrity and preservation; and the reserve management forwards these proposals to RMC for evaluation.

Relevant specialists from the National Academy of Sciences are involved by STA in control and monitoring activities on a paid basis during reconstruction, reinforcement, beautification, conservation, restoration, rehabilitation, regeneration works undertaken on the monuments.

The monitoring committee is seen as a structure within the new reserve management that is going to be established on the basis of “Khinalig” Reserve, to hold regular meetings and develop annual reports. Dissemination of all reports among all responsible agencies and the public is also important.

Reserve Management Center, members of Local Executive Powers of six districts will take part in the monitoring process.

7.c Results of the previous exporting exercise

According to the Annual Work Plan of the cultural and historical reserves under the State Tourism Agency, periodic monitoring activities are carried out and the relevant report is prepared and presented to the Reserve Management Center of the State Tourism Agency.