



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

World Heritage Sites

Himā Cultural Area
The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
(Reference Number 1619)

State of Conservation Report

Drafted in October 2022



List of Abbreviations

ARC-WH	Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage
CFRPA	French Centre of Research on the Arabian Peninsula
CNRS	French National Centre for Scientific Research
GIS	Geographic Information System
HC	Heritage Commission
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
MASFN	Saudi French Archaeological and Epigraphic Mission to Najran
MEWA	Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
SCTH	Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SoC	State of Conservation
SOUV	Statement of Outstanding Universal Value
TOR	Terms of Reference
WH	World Heritage
WHC	World Heritage Committee



1. Executive Summary

The present State of Conservation report on *Himā Cultural Area* has been prepared upon the request of the World Heritage Committee to the Heritage Commission of Saudi Arabia, to provide an update on the state of conservation of the property and bring forward all relevant requested information for an examination by the WHC at its 46th session in 2023.

Documentation system

The mapping of the property is in progress in coordination with the Saudi French Archaeological Mission in Najran. The epigraphy inventory is completed, and the database is being upgraded to reflect the needs of the World Heritage property.

Identification of attributes

A comprehensive list of attributes, divided into five typologies has been drafted for the property and its buffer zone to guide the inventory, mapping, research programmes, and database compilation.

Tourism programmes and Heritage Impact Assessments

The tourism management strategy is under development. Currently, there are no threats to the conservation of the property. When larger projects are proposed, they will be evaluated through a Heritage Impact Assessment procedure (a HIA training is scheduled in Nov 2022).

Conservation programme

The Management Plan strategy and agenda for 2022-23 focuses on the restoration of the *Himā* wells, the development of the database, and the strengthening of the staff capacities.

Monitoring programme and indicators

A monitoring programme for the conservation, protection, and use of the property, based on field observers and a monitoring database is under development. This programme will rely on the set of indicators presented in this report that provides a solid base for the preparation of monitoring reports presenting the state of conservation of the property.

Restoration of the wells

In March 2022, a qualified international team undertook a first diagnostic and survey mission and in September 2022 this was followed by a community-oriented mission. The conservation/restoration programme is divided into 2 phases: the cleaning of the site and the consolidation of wells masonries, followed by the design of the site layout in 2023. The design will be shared with World Heritage Centre before implementation.

Buffer zone extension

Based on new scientific information and on ICOMOS' recommendation, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to modify and extend the boundaries of the buffer zone of *Himā Cultural Area*. The new limits are presented in the maps included in the report. Once the new boundaries will be formally approved, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will engage in a process of minor modification of the buffer zone.