WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE
TRANG AN LANDSCAPE COMPLEX, NINH BINH PROVINCE

STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT

Property: The world cultural and natural heritage – Trang An Landscape Complex
State party: Việt Nam
Ref: 1438bis

I. Introduction

This State of Conservation Report of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Site, the Trang An Landscape Complex provides information on the state of heritage conservation and implementation of requests made by the World Heritage Committee in Decision 44 COM 7B.76.

Para. 4. The Committee notes that visitation continues to increase beyond previous estimates, urges the State Party to expedite the proposed study to determine the sustainable carrying capacity of the property, and requests the State Party to ensure the protection of the property’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is at the core of this study and that its findings are strictly enforced, especially regarding limits on visitation at “hot spots” and throughout the property and the offer of alternative itineraries for visitors;

Para. 5. The Committee also requests the State Party to ensure that existing management tools and new Decrees and Regulations are aligned in order to allow for a proactive approach to the overall management of the property by the Management Board, notably by:

a) Ensuring a balanced approach to tourism, heritage management and nature conservation as a whole, with appropriate expertise within the Management Board,

b) Applying a clearer reporting protocol concerning any major new development within the property and ensure the necessary prior consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

Para. 6. The Committee also notes the conclusions and recommendations of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICUN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and also urges the State Party to instigate a well-resourced programme for the progressive implementation of the mission recommendations, particularly with respect to:

a) Further improvements to governance and management,

b) Comprehensive and proactive planning, beyond project-level assessments, to ensure a systematic monitoring of natural and cultural values,

c) A regular review of priorities to determine budget and human resource allocation,
d) A documentation system for built and moveable heritage and a storage system for moveable heritage,

e) The development of an overall interpretation plan and public outreach strategy,

f) Continued international cooperation,

g) A survey of the natural landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity, archaeological elements of different historical periods, and moveable heritage, and

h) The involvement of the local community in site management;

**Para. 7.** The Committee also welcomes the State Party’s assurances that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) will be undertaken for any major developments within the property and its buffer zones, and reiterates its request to the State Party to use these tools to assess both the individual and cumulative impacts of current and planned developments, with a special focus on potential impacts on the OUV of the property, in line with the IUCN and ICOMOS guidelines on impact assessments;

**Para. 8.** The Committee further urges the State Party to finalize the Management Plan for the property, as a matter of high priority, in line with the recommendations of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission, and to ensure the integration of biodiversity conservation into the management and decision-making processes;

Responses to the above requests made by the Committee are presented in this State of Conservation Report. Furthermore, the report mentions other important directions of development within the property, which aim to make contributions to managing and protecting the OUVs of the property.

**II. Responses to World Heritage Committee Decision 44 COM 7B.76**

**Para. 4.** The Committee notes that visitation continues to increase beyond previous estimates, urges the State Party to expedite the proposed study to determine the sustainable carrying capacity of the property, and requests the State Party to ensure the protection of the property’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is at the core of this study and that its findings are strictly enforced, especially regarding limits on visitation at ‘hot spots’ and throughout the property and the offer of alternative itineraries for visitors;

The Trang An Landscape Complex has six main tourist attractions, namely: (1) Hoa Lu Ancient Capital; (2) Trang An Eco-tourism site; (3) Tam Coc – Bich Dong area; (4) Sung Sights Valley area; (5) Thung Nham Bird Eco-tourism site and (6) Galaxy Grotto.

One important characteristic of the property to note is the fact that five out of the six tourism sites (the exception being the Hoa Lu Ancient Capital) requires tourists to engage with the property in an overall passive fashion, namely through boat tours following fixed tourist routes. This considerably limits impacts on the natural and social environment, important archeological sites and protection of the property’s characteristics and OUV.
During the period 2020-2021, due to the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic, all tourist sites within the property had to close to visitors. At this point, the Management Boards of the tourism sites decided to upgrade to meet visitor expectations on investing in tourism facilities, restoring landscapes, completing the waste treatment system, and making preparations to welcome visitors in the post-pandemic phase. In 2022, there is an increase in the number of visitors, mainly in Trang An Scenic Area and Tam Coc – Bich Dong tourist area, those numbers did not exceed the carrying capacity of the sites. Following are the visit statistics of the property over the years (table 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
<th>International</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,210,604</td>
<td>1,773,557</td>
<td>437,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2,457,798</td>
<td>1,865,313</td>
<td>529,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2,606,769</td>
<td>2,014,887</td>
<td>591,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2,923,789</td>
<td>2,309,162</td>
<td>614,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>3,103,093</td>
<td>2,413,807</td>
<td>689,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>1,544,588</td>
<td>1,400,542</td>
<td>144,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>726,123</td>
<td>718,499</td>
<td>7,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022 (to June 2022)</td>
<td>1,333,500</td>
<td>1,319,250</td>
<td>14,250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned in the State of Conservation Report 2019 (response to Decision 42 COM 7B.62), a study for determining the visitor carrying capacity of the property was conducted in tourist sites that attract a considerable number of visitors in the property. In late 2019, the Management Board finished the study of determining visitor carrying capacity in two sites of the six sites: Trang An Scenic Area and Tam Coc – Bich Dong site. The results of the carrying capacity is determined in the table 2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Trang An Scenic Area</th>
<th>Tam Coc – Bich Dong site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social carrying capacity</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>13,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism carrying capacity</td>
<td>42,926</td>
<td>14,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment carrying Capacity</td>
<td>Secured</td>
<td>Secured</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2020 and 2021, due to Covid 19 pandemic, conducting the study of determining visitor carrying capacity in other tourist sites within the property was delayed. However, by October 2022 the Management Board had completed its
carrying capacity study of the Hoa Lu Ancient Capital and Sungsight Valley Area. The results of the carrying capacity is determined in the table 3 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Hoa Lu Ancient Capital</th>
<th>Thach Bich – Thung Nang Tourist Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social carrying capacity</td>
<td>10.986</td>
<td>1.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism carrying capacity</td>
<td>11.055</td>
<td>16.430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment carrying</td>
<td>Secured</td>
<td>Secured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study was conducted by these following methods: Data synthesis; Field survey; Environment carrying capacity assessment; Social carrying capacity assessment; Environment carrying Capacity; Laboratory analysis; Specialist consultancy; Rapid Partitioning assessment (RPA); Irritation Index model.

The Management Board has already implemented several of the recommendations arising from the carrying capacity studies undertaken to-date (four of the six sites). Solutions to mechanism and policies; solutions to human resources and the maintaining sustainable tourism activities associated with the protection of the OUVs of the property; Solutions to tourism infrastructures and facilities; solutions to managing and developing tourism services; solutions to environment protection and applying science and technology.

Para.5. The Committee also requests the State Party to ensure that existing management tools and new Decrees and Regulations are aligned in order to allow for a proactive approach to the overall management of the property by the Management Board, notably by:

a) Ensuring a balanced approach to tourism, heritage management and nature conservation as a whole, with appropriate expertise within the Management Board,

On 08th July 2022, Ninh Binh Provincial People’s Committee issued Decision 21/2022/QĐ-UBND, now on file (an English translation can be made available upon request). This made specific reference to regulating missions, authority and organization structure of the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board, which is a sub-unit of Ninh Binh Tourism Department. This new Decision replaces Decision 06/2012/QĐ-UBND (dated 10/4/2012).

b) Applying a clearer reporting protocol concerning any major new development within the property and ensure the necessary prior consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

On 23rd February 2022, the Tourism Department issued Decision 30/QĐ-SDL with regard to establishing an Advisory Science Commission for managing and conserving the Trang An Landscape Complex. The members of the Advisory Commission include specialists, scientists and managers inside and outside the
country, who work for organizations, namely: the National Cultural Heritage Commission; Vietnam Institute of Archaeology, Vietnam Institute of Geosciences and Mineral Resources... The Advisory Commission is responsible for advising the Management Board on: the protection, management and sustainable use of the values of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Trang An Landscape Complex in order to effectively maintain the cultural and natural OUV in line with World Heritage standards; consultation on implementing social – economic development projects and tourism activities within the property; applying science and technologies, research on archeology, history, geology and biodiversity inside the property; propel cooperation among government organs, institutes, enterprises, and the local community.

At the time of writing (Nov. 2022), development activities within the property have to adhere rigorously to the Master Plan for the Trang An Landscape Complex, which was approved by the Prime Minister following the Decision 230/QĐ-TTg dated 04/02/2017, in order to minimize new developments with regard to scale and density for the protection of the natural landscape within the property. New developments are mainly civilian constructions, principally, community members who need to restore or renovate their house. In each case, the individual concerned needs to submit paperwork in order to obtain a construction license approved by the Municipal People’s Committee. No buildings are allowed to exceed three stories (or 12 meters) in height; outward appearances must be in harmony with natural surroundings. Before construction all buildings must also be approved by local or national Heritage management organizations.

Para. 6. The Committee also notes the conclusions and recommendations of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property and also urges the State Party to instigate a well-resourced programme for the progressive implementation of the mission recommendations...

The recommendations of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission (RMM) to the property were gratefully received and have been duly acted upon. Regulations enhancing the Management Board mission now state even more directly that its over-riding mission is to conserve the OUV of the property and ensure a balanced approach between conservation and development, which will contribute to economic growth through sustainable tourism activities – see above response to Decision 44 COM 7B.76 para 5, point a). Finance and human resources are ensured. Management capacity and expertise are regularly assessed with regard to both quantity and quality. Priorities and mechanisms for cultural and natural heritage management have been expounded in detail – see the Management Plan for the Trang An Landscape Complex for the period 2021 - 2025, Vision to 2045 (p210 + four appendices) was submitted to the World Heritage Committee in Nov. 2021. The official technical review of the Management Plan from ICOMOS (April 2022) found it to be ‘comprehensive and detailed’ The Board has not yet received a technical review of the Management Plan from IUCN.

A particular development in the Management Plan is its attention to policies concerning public–private partnership management of tourist sites in order to
protect the OUV of the property under the three pillars of: government, enterprises, and local community.

With reference to further specific recommendations by the RMM, the Management Board would like to draw attention to the following:

**RMM recommendation: a) Continue to enhance governmental heritage management**

Governmental heritage management is implemented in accordance with Heritage Laws by the Authorities. A system of heritage managerial documents is constantly reviewed, amended and supplemented.

Besides documents issued by the authorities pertaining to governance during the period from 2020 to 2022, there are other issued documents with regard to enhancing regulations on heritage management and conservation associated with tourism development. Article I.5, Chapter I in the Management Plan 2021-2025 states, as follows:

- Conclusion No 07-KL/TU, which is dated 12th May 2021 and approved by the Standing Committee of the Provincial Party, concerns continuing implementation of Resolution 02-NQ/TU, which is dated 17th, August 2016 by the Executive Committee of the Provincial Party, concerns conserving and developing values of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Trang An Landscape Complex.

- Plan No 107/KH-UBND, which is dated 16th, July 2021 and approved by Ninh Binh Provincial People’s Committee, concerns the implementation of Conclusion 07-KL/TU, which is approved by the Standing Committee of the Provincial Party;

- Plan No 1306/QĐ-UBND, which is dated 30th November 2021 and approved by Ninh Binh Provincial People’s, concerns the approval of the Management Plan for the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Trang An Landscape Complex, period 2021 – 2025, vision to 2045.

In addition to these policies and steering documents issued by the Provincial Government, the Tourism Department in managing and protecting the property’s heritage, the Management Board has also been active in issuing guidelines. For example, in August 2021, the Board gave advice on completing the Cooperation Regulation on managing and conserving the Property between the Tourism Department and the People’s Committee of Hoa Lu District (the largest district in the Property). These undertakings by the Management Board and the local authorities play a key role in timely strong cooperation among the stakeholders to conserve and develop the values of the property effectively.

**RMM recommendation: b) Comprehensive and proactive planning, beyond project-level assessments, to ensure systematic monitoring of natural and cultural values,**

This recommendation has been implemented as follows:

- Completion of locating the coordinates of ranked cultural relics within the property for cartography; locating coordinates of accommodation businesses within
the property in order to input those coordinates into the Boundary Map of the Heritage in the area of seven communes belonging to Hoa Lu district, Gia Vien district and Ninh Binh city.

- Cooperation with the local authorities to constantly review, amend and supplement boundary markers separating the property from its buffer zone as an instrument of providing assistance to the local authorities’ mission of managing and protecting the heritage.

RMM recommendation: c) A regular review of priorities to determine budget and human resource allocation,

Some tasks are prioritized for resource allocation:

- Establishment of a Zoning Plan for developments within the property is a key mission to construction management as well as a base for the Government to establish detailed construction plans for local areas in the property.

In April 2020, a Zoning Plan in Trang An Landscape Complex (zone 3-1, 3-2, 3-3) in the General Urban Plan of Ninh Binh province to 2030, vision to 2050) was compiled. The process of compilation and appraisal included consultation by scientists, technical agencies, local authorities, and the local community in the property. The Zoning Plan has been appraised by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and it is going to be approved by the Provincial People’s Committee in 2022

- Establishment of Conservation Plan of Trang An Landscape Complex to 2030, vision to 2050, This is an urgent request from ensuring the effectiveness of management, conservation and development of the world heritage OUVs in accordance with Heritage laws and the World Heritage Convention 1972, meanwhile it can also mediate dissonances between conservation and development with regard to heritage conservation and the local livelihoods.

As for human resources: During the period from 2019 to 2022, enhancing human resource capacity has been highlighted. Eight employees have enrolled for postgraduate degrees in business management, culture and heritage; another twelve employees attended nurturing courses in landscape and environment management, heritage conservation, archaeology, tourism and tour guides; other thirteen employees attended nurturing courses in reasoning and other education programs. Especially, there are 140 property staff have received training in either biodiversity or cultural heritage management during this same period (externally funded - UKRI Impact Acceleration Award + Arts & Humanities Research Council Follow-On Funding award).

Table 4: Expertise table of the Management Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expertise</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape and environment management</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project and construction management</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RMM recommendation: d)** A documentation system for built and moveable heritage and a storage system for moveable heritage.

- In 2019, the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board completed locating the ranking existing relics within an updated Heritage Management Map.

- In 2020, the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board finished the digitalization of more than 4,000 artifacts recovered from excavations within the Trang An Landscape Complex. The artifacts were handed over to the Ninh Binh Museum for curation, in accordance with Provincial law.

- In 2021, the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board published the book titled Trang An – Relic and Landscape.

- In September 2022, two information systems of heritage management and artifact management were deployed in accordance with Decision 2579/QĐ-BVHTTDL, which is dated 07/10/2021 by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

- In December 2022, collaboration between the Management Board and Queen’s University, Belfast on an exhibition of cultural and natural heritage values in Trang An will be completed. This includes 13 bespoke 1/5th scale museum-grade exhibition models of prehistoric people and animals (derived from recovered archaeological evidence within the property); one forensic facial reconstruction of a 12,000 year-old individual from one of the Property’s key cave sites (Thung Binh 1); four GIS-based interactive ‘story-maps’ that will be accessed by visitors through touch-screen exhibition panels; and a p210, richly illustrated non-academic book entitled: Prehistoric Caves & Rock Shelters of Tràng An.

**RMM recommendation: e)** The development of an overall interpretation plan and public outreach strategy.

- The Management Board has been collaborating with the UNESCO Office in Ha Noi to implement a project entitled: Enhancing The Tourism Quality In The Heritage. At ist completion, this cooperation included training courses on being a heritage tour guide; on developing and differentiating tourism products; on building awareness about sustainable tourism; and on sustainable tourism marketing. It also included promotion of a contest called: Heritage stories through paintings, aimed at elementary school and middle school students within Ninh Binh Province.

- In 2020, the Board organized two training events for accommodation businesses and other tourism service businesses. The events concerned the conservation and development of the OUV of the Trang An Landscape Complex.
associated with protecting landscape environment and developing sustainable tourism.

- In 2021 the Board organized two training courses on regulations concerning managing, conserving and promoting the OUVs associated with sustainable tourism development; the Management Board also edited promotion content on managing, conserving, and promoting the heritage values for radio transmission over the communes within the property.

- In 2022, the Board organized two training courses on raising awareness about conserving and promoting the values of Trang An Landscape Complex associated with sustainable tourism development. Additionally, four education events on heritage protection for high school and middle school students were also held within the property.

- A scientific documentary film, entitled: ‘The adaptation of prehistoric human in Trang An’ was produced promoting the OUV of the Trang An Landscape Complex.

- The Board has overseen the establishment and installation of new signage on arterial roads within the Property, and the popularization of laws on managing and conserving the heritage occurred in six out of twelve communes within the Property. This latter has included the installation of six panels for promoting managing and protecting the Trang An Landscape Complex in communes within the Property.

- During this period, a provincial-level science research project has been completed entitled: ‘Study of solutions to ensuring sustainable livelihoods for local community within the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of Trang An Landscape Complex, Ninh Binh province in the process of tourism development’. This promotes practical advice for conserving heritage as well as ensuring sustainable livelihoods for the local community in the property.

- Occasional promotional and conservation materials have also been prepared and published by the Board, including notably a book entitled: ‘Handbook of Heritage’.

RMM recommendation: f) Continued international cooperation,

During the five-years of research undertaken by SUNDASIA (2016-21), the understanding of Tràng An’s exemplary prehistoric record was expanded significantly. Detailed reconstruction of its past environment, landscape and coastlines was completed for a large and representative area of the property; settlement, mobility and cultural changes were also catalogued with respect to the prehistoric hunting and gathering communities that used this landscape. To better understand the prehistoric records that were being accumulated, the project compiled new modern biodiversity and climate change data, while engagement with local communities in the fields of natural and cultural heritage aimed to help property managers ensure future sustainability in environmental and economic conditions for Tràng An. Following the SUNDASIA Project (funded by AHRC/GCRF, GIAA, and Xuan Truong Enterprise), the Management Board renewed its cooperation with specialists from Queen’s Belfast University, the UK to design and establish an exhibition space for interpreting prehistoric cultural values, the lives of prehistoric
humans, palaeoenvironment of Trang An and to create a 3D map interpreting the geological – geomorphological values, archaeological caves, and the long-standing history of Trang An. For further information on this initiative, see above the response to RMM recommendation d). Further collaborative research is currently at a planning stage, though includes working with provincial authorities in Ninh Binh and neighbouring provinces on a major conservation initiative.

RMM recommendation: g) A survey of the natural landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity, archaeological elements of different historical periods, and moveable heritage...

- In 2020 the Board, SUNDASIA project cooperated with Cuc Phuong National Park to transfer and reintroduce the Critically Endangered endemic primate Delacour’s Langur into Trang An Scenic Area, in a secure trial island setting. This initiative has already proven highly successful. The first births to the reintroduced troop were recorded in Oct. 2021 and Sept. 2022.

- Inside the Visitor Center of Trang An boat wharf, the Trang An Landscape Complex Management Board in collaboration with the Vietnamese Institute of Archaeology established and maintained the archaeology display space entitled: ‘History of human inhabitation and adaptation in Trang An’

RMM recommendation: h) The involvement of the local community in site management.

Communities that are local to Trang An play a key role in managing and protecting the Property. Their involvement in conserving and displaying traditional cultural values and local customs is inherent in their livelihoods, cultural community and local festivals. They have been contributing to conserving the local culture and cultural values, which strengthens and popularizes the OUV of the Property.

In addition, local people have a good sense of protecting their surrounding environment and agricultural landscape. They have been deeply involved in cleaning the tourism sites and their neighborhoods. They conduct waste classification in the residential areas. Meanwhile, they are also local tour guides who administer regulations on environment protection and tourism culture to tourists.

The Management Board would like to draw attention to the following illustrative activities with regard to community involvement and engagement with management practice:

- Cooperation in heritage management was especially highlighted by the local authorities (the People’s Committees of districts, cities, communes and wards). Implementation of protecting landscape environment and cultural historical relics was in accordance with laws on land, construction, cultural heritage, tourism, environment and forest protection and development.

- The Board oversees monitoring activities that are regularly conducted by the local authorities in order to discover and respond to any infringement of lawful activities within the Property; and support the local people in agriculture production, tourism business, protection of forests, environment and biodiversity.
- The Board has undertaken a wide-ranging paper and (trial) online survey of 167 local respondents through a 122-question survey (conducted in collaboration with Queen’s University Belfast, SOAS University of London and Munasinghe Institute for Development, Colombo) to assess the role and perception of ecotourism and World Heritage among local communities in Tràng An and Sinharaja (Sri Lanka). Results of this study are being prepared for publication.

Promulgating regulations on heritage protection was a priority. In order to raise local people’s awareness about involvement in heritage protection, over these years, there have been many promotion activities imprinted with rich content and diverse forms. During the period from 2015 to 2021, there have been 31 training courses on heritage management and conservation, environment protection and sustainable tourism, which were organized for more than 6000 people, among them are 2100 key public servants, and employees working at tourist sites within the Trang An Landscape Complex.

Para.7. The Committee also welcomes the State Party’s assurances that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) will be undertaken for any major developments within the property and its buffer zones, and reiterates its request to the State Party to use these tools to assess both the individual and cumulative impacts of current and planned developments, with a special focus on potential impacts on the OUV of the property, in line with the IUCN and ICOMOS guidelines on impact assessments.

- During the period from 2019 to 2022, there were no large-scale developments within the property. The new developments in the period were mainly civilian constructions, the Management Board cooperated with local authorities to issue construction permits for 78 households. The local people followed the regulations on construction orders, land use and other regulations on heritage protection.

- Enterprises implementing projects within the property have followed regulations to mitigate the negative impacts on the environment, soil, water, air and the surrounding landscape. They have committed to conducting Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and obeying the current laws on protecting the environment and natural landscape within the property. At this time (Nov. 2022), there are six enterprises operating tourism businesses in the property. Overall, these companies have been actively involved in protecting the landscape environment.

Para.8. The Committee further urges the State Party to finalize the Management Plan for the property, as a matter of high priority, in line with the recommendations of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission, and to ensure the integration of biodiversity conservation into the management and decision-making processes;

- As noted above (in response to Para 6 of Decision 44 COM 7B.76), the Management Plan for the Tràng An Landscape Complex for the period 2021 - 2025, Vision to 2045 (MP21-25) was submitted to the World Heritage Committee in Nov. 2021. It scheduled to be approved by the Ninh Binh Provincial People’s Committee in Decision 1306/QĐ-UBND dated 30/11/2022.
MP21-25 lay out nine actions as the basis for the Management Board and related agencies to prioritize activities, and from which to build plans and projects for submission to appropriate authorities for approval and implementation. The actions itemized are as follows:

1) Improve infrastructure for conservation and promotion of heritage values. (especially the databases, information system, archive, explanation systems);

2) Protection and preservation of cultural heritage values (including investigation, survey, research, observation, and monitoring of outstanding universal values and other heritage values (objects, intangible heritage, living human heritage, movable heritage);

3) Protection and preservation of natural heritage values (including investigation, survey, research, observation, and monitoring of outstanding global values and other heritage values (landscape, geological heritage, natural disasters, and geological calamities);

4) Environmental and biodiversity protection (including investigation, survey, research, observation, and monitoring of ecosystems, biodiversity values, crises caused by natural disasters, epidemics);

5) Management and control of tourism activities (especially completing and regularly updating the assessment of tourist load-bearing thresholds, reducing tourist load in hot spots, proposing and implementing activities/alternative tourist sites/areas);

6) Management of sustainable development activities/residential areas/mining activities and commercial services; Improve the reporting system, towards more transparency and clarity for development activities/projects in the Heritage Site, in advance consultation with the Center World Heritage Center and Consulting Agencies);

7) Propagating, promoting, fostering, raising awareness, and educating the community (especially building a system of explanations and interpretations, sets of promotion materials and activities; enhance the participation of local communities in the management and conservation of the Heritage Area);

8) Capacity building of the Management Board of Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex (implementing regular projects to improve the capacity of the Management Board (adding further human resources, strengthening international and domestic cooperation, especially in the fields of heritage management, SEA strategic environmental impact assessment, HIA heritage impact assessment, towards a balance and harmony between heritage management, nature conservation, and sustainable tourism...); continuously update priority orientations, update and adjust the Management Plan to identify and allocate sufficient and appropriate human and material resources;

9) Scientific research and international cooperation (maintaining existing relationships/projects and finding and expanding new relationships, new
cooperation projects in some new fields such as nature conservation, biodiversity conservation, geological heritage, etc.).

III. Development and significant progress in heritage management:

The mission of managing, conserving and developing values of the Trang An Landscape Complex, which is in accordance with the World Heritage Convention and Viet Nam laws, has reaped positive results. Recommendations from the World Heritage Commission have been implemented seriously, meaning that the properties and OUV of this World Heritage Site have been respected and well conserved. Meanwhile, scientific research has helped to propel those values towards greater public awareness and green growth, and has contributed considerably to local socio-economic development, and to ensuring the integrity of the Property.

The OUV of the Property have been respected, well conserved and developed as a result of these actions. The local authorities, public servants, party members, local enterprises and the people have grown in their role and responsibility in managing, protecting and developing the values of the property; while the Board and authorities are seeking to develop avenues for greater interaction and consideration of local knowledge within management practice. Governmental management of heritage and tourism has developed and continues to mature, creating a strong connection between heritage conservation and tourism and socio-economic growth. A mechanism for heritage management associated with tourism development has been instituted; and there is another mechanism for cooperation between related agencies and local authorities to inspect and handle any infringement or violations of conservation heritage.

In the period since the last State of Conservation Report, there has been rigorous attention to managing the use of land and resources within the Property and its buffer zone, including accommodation sector and other service providers, with scope for the implementation of sanctions where and if required within the Property. Archaeology research (from survey and excavation to display and dissemination) has been enhanced, as has the scale of recognition pertaining to the special national relic Hoa Lu Ancient Capital.

There have been training courses on biodiversity, heritage conservation and management, and sustainable tourism development for people who are responsible for delivering heritage management at administrative and public interface levels. The local people who are involved in the tourism business have also attended training courses on tourism knowledge foreign languages, and modern technology for heritage management. Cooperation with institutes, international organizations and especially specialists from the UNESCO to interpret heritage values for conservation and social-economic development continues to great effect.

There have been signature tourism products imprinted with provincial culture identity. Tourism products associated with archeological sites, geological sites, and
historical cultural relics within the property are acclaimed. Tourism activities have benefited conservation and community development contributing to protecting natural resources, culture and history with the involvement of the local community.

**IV. Conclusion**

Managing, conserving, and developing the values of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Trang An Landscape Complex have been defined as the responsibility of the local authorities, related agencies and the people of Ninh Binh.

At the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO’s Director General affirmed “*We must give culture and heritage the importance they deserve. We must consider cultural policies as powerful levers for public action, as is the case here, in Viet Nam and at the model site of Trang An*” and “*Trang An has successfully reconciled economic development and sustainable tourism, while respecting nature. That is why UNESCO chose this site, along with 3 others worldwide, to launch a pilot project strengthening sustainable tourism – so that it creates more benefits for local populations, and women in particular*”.

Through implementation of MP21-25, experience in heritage management, specific solutions and actions, as outlined in this State of Conservation Report, Visitor Management Action Plan, Archaeological Relic Management Action Plan, Community Training Programs, and related reports in accordance with the implementation of recommendations from World Heritage Commission and its Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS and IUCN) represent Ninh Binh Province’s strong commitment to ensure the integrity, authenticity, and OUV of the Property, and the ambition of all concerned to hand it down to the future generations in faithful accordance to the spirit of the World Heritage Convention.