

Our Ref. GB/TA/1695/IR

Charenton-le-Pont, 21 December 2022

H. E. Ms Maria Diamantopoulou
Ambassador, Permanent Delegate
Permanent Delegation of the Republic of
Greece to UNESCO
Maison de l'UNESCO
1, rue Miollis
75732 PARIS Cedex 15

World Heritage List 2023

Zagori Cultural Landscape (Greece) – Interim report and additional information request

Dear Ambassador,

As prescribed by the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies have to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2023. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation procedure.

The joint IUCN-ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to “Zagori Cultural Landscape” was carried out by Mr. Tarek Abulhawa (Jordan) for IUCN and Mr. Pierre Marie Luciani (France) for ICOMOS in October 2022. The mission experts highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organisation and implementation of the mission.

On 14 October 2022, a joint IUCN-ICOMOS letter was sent to request further information regarding communities' involvement, management, UNESCO Global Geopark, boundaries and buffer zone, comparative analysis, state of conservation, factors affecting the property and maps. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 13 November 2022 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

At the end of November 2022, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2023. The additional information provided by the State Party, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2023.

We thank you for the availability of your Delegation for attending the meeting held on 25 November 2022 with some representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. The exchanges during this meeting were of great help for the third part of the ICOMOS Panel meeting.

While the ICOMOS Panel considered that “Zagori Cultural Landscape” might have the potential to meet the requirements for Outstanding Universal Value, this has not yet been demonstrated.

Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points related only to the cultural values and attributes of the nominated property:

Boundaries

The ICOMOS Panel appreciates the State Party's clarification in the additional information on the fact that the traditional villages that are part of the nominated property are only those located in Zone A of the Presidential Decree for Zagori. The ICOMOS Panel noted that Skamnéli, listed in Zone A, is currently presented outside of the boundaries of the nominated property and Dipótamo, listed in Zone B, is presented within the boundaries of the nominated property in the maps provided in the nomination dossier. Based on the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, the Panel further noted that Skamnéli has been burnt during the Second World War, which, as explained in the additional information, is the reason for the distinction between villages listed in Zone A from those listed in Zone B. Therefore, the ICOMOS Panel considers that Skamnéli and Dipótamo should be part of the buffer zone. Accordingly, the ICOMOS Panel considers that this should be reflected on the maps showing the boundaries of the nominated property and the buffer zone and would be pleased to receive updated maps in that regards.

Documentation

In order to better understand the system the traditional villages are forming, the ICOMOS Panel would be pleased if supplementary documentation could be provided. Particularly, illustrations of the system including the elements that link the traditional villages (i.e. stone bridges and stone paths) are critical to understand its connections. The progressive transformation and consolidation of the system should be traced in maps showing periods of significant change. Therefore, the ICOMOS Panel would appreciate to receive the following information:

- Further documentation of the traditional villages' system including a topographic map of the area with the implantation of the nineteen traditional settlements that are part of the nominated property (the traditional villages included in Zone A excluding Skamnéli) and the historical paths connecting them, as well as the location of the stone-arched bridges, in order to understand the structure and connections of the system.
- Maps presenting the villages' structure and their historical development during the 18th and 19th centuries, period mentioned in the nomination dossier as the time of consolidation of the traditional villages' system.
- Further documentation, including architectural plans (layouts, sections and elevations) of the relevant typologies of traditional buildings with information about their date of construction and later interventions (i.e. additions or restorations). Such documentation would be particularly important in regard to the most representative mansions and traditional houses that were built or improved during the 18th and 19th centuries with the funding of the remittances, as described in the nomination dossier. In addition, the ICOMOS Panel would also like further information on the state of conservation of the interior architecture and design of these 18th and 19th centuries buildings.
- More details on why and how the building traditions in Zagori are distinctive and could be considered exceptional.

Conservation

The ICOMOS Panel noted that, while it appears that there are organisations trying to maintain the traditional craftsmanship, there might be no financial support or incentives available to support the increased costs of traditional practices and the use of traditional materials. Moreover, although the dry-stone building technique has been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, there are no longer working quarries in the area and no supply of local stone, as former quarries are currently protected for its geological values by regulations of the Northern Pindus

National Park and Vikos-Aoos UNESCO Global Geopark. The ICOMOS Panel noted that imported sawn stone is being used and few local craftspeople are continuing traditional practices.

Noting that this is an important characteristic of the traditional villages, the ICOMOS Panel would be pleased to receive further information on how traditional practices' crafts are being sustained today and planned to be sustained in the future. Furthermore, the ICOMOS Panel would be grateful if the State Party could also clarify what are the conservation measures in place for the traditional buildings, including their interiors.

Protection

In the Presidential Decree for Zagori, a number of regulations are established for new constructions and renovations to maintain the character of Zagori traditional villages. Could the State Party clarify whether based on this Decree, all buildings in the traditional villages are legally protected or only those that are listed under specific designations? The ICOMOS Panel would also like to know whether this protection extends to interiors of the traditional residences or mansions which contain murals and ornate wooden ceilings.

In addition, could the State Party explain where are new buildings permitted in the traditional villages and what is the process for authorising new constructions or renovations? The ICOMOS Panel would be grateful if the State Party could provide maps depicting the different protective designations of the traditional buildings in the nineteen traditional villages.

Finally, the ICOMOS Panel would be pleased to receive information on how many houses are permanently inhabited in each of the nineteen traditional villages, how many are vacant or abandoned and how the State Party intends to address depopulation in the villages as regards preservation of the houses in the villages.

We look forward to your responses to these points, which will be of great help in our evaluation procedure.

Please note that this interim report is related only to the cultural values and attributes of the nominated property. IUCN will provide an interim report in due time to address points related to the natural values and attributes of the property.

We would be grateful if you could provide **ICOMOS** and the **World Heritage Centre** with the above requested information by **28 February 2023 at the latest**, the deadline set out in paragraph 148 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* for additional information on nominations to be received. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by ICOMOS in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while ICOMOS will carefully consider any additional information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. So, we would be grateful if the State Party could keep its response concise and respond only to the above requests.

We thank you for your support of the World Heritage Convention and the evaluation procedure.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gwenaëlle Bourdin', with a stylized, flowing script.

Gwenaëlle Bourdin
Director
ICOMOS Evaluation Unit

Copy to Municipality of Zagori
 Service of Modern Monuments and Technical Works of Epirus, North Ionian and West
 Macedonia
 Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO
 UNESCO World Heritage Centre



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25 January 2023

IUCN Evaluation of Zagori Cultural Landscape (Greece) – Interim Report and request for supplementary information

Dear Ambassador,

Further to the above nomination to the World Heritage List, I am writing with information on progress with the IUCN evaluation. As noted in previous correspondence, IUCN seeks to develop and maintain a dialogue with States Parties during the evaluation process of all nominations.

The IUCN World Heritage technical evaluation missions to Zagori Cultural Landscape was undertaken by Mr Tarek Abulhawa (IUCN) and Mr Pierre Marie Luciani (ICOMOS) from 3 to 8 October 2022. The evaluators greatly appreciated the excellent support, organisation and co-operation provided by your authorities in the preparation and implementation of the mission, and the kind welcome throughout the missions. Please convey our sincere thanks to all of the officials, scientists and contributors that assisted the missions.

Following the field evaluation mission, the IUCN World Heritage Panel is in the course of examining World Heritage nominations for natural and mixed properties, and cultural landscapes. This process will conclude in March/April 2023, following which the IUCN evaluation report will be issued to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. The IUCN Panel examined in detail above-mentioned nomination, including reports of field evaluators and desktop reviews of external reviewers, as well as other references regarding the nominated properties.

The Panel greatly appreciated the State Party's efforts in relation to this nomination, and will be discussing the nomination again at its second meeting, to be held in March 2023. Based on the information available to the Panel, there does not appear to be a compelling case for global significance under criterion (viii). Regarding criterion (x) and related integrity and protection and management requirements, the Panel would be very grateful to your authorities for further information as set out below:

1. Regarding the species supporting the nominated property's potential under criterion (x), the Panel considers greater precision is required regarding the specific values and attributes of the nominated property, and would be grateful if the State Party could please provide:
 - a) one consolidated and complete species list detailing all species recorded within the boundaries of the nominated property, including plant species, invertebrates as well as fish species. This species list should indicate:
 - i. the currently valid species name (following the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species: <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>),
 - ii. the global conservation status of each species (Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable, Near-threatened, Least Concern) according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, when available,
 - iii. information on distribution (endemic to nominated property, endemic to North Pindus National Park, endemic to state, endemic to region), size of the population or percentage of the global population, if this data is available.The attached table may be used to provide this information, if your authorities wish.
 - b) a second table listing species of conservation interest that are present in those areas of Northern Pindus National Park that are not part of the nominated property, but which are not present within the nominated property.

2. Regarding the protection of the nominated property's plant biodiversity, the Panel would be grateful if the State Party could please indicate its view on the need and priority to restore and maintain traditional grazing regimes by sheep and goats, noting that a number of the biodiversity values depend on traditional and sustainable practices? Please could the State Party detail the extent and success of measures already taken, to ensure traditional grazing regimes are maintained in the nominated property, to support the conservation of the nominated property's plant diversity, and the plans and scope to strengthen planning and support in the future on this issue?
3. IUCN has also noted that the Aoos Springs dam, built in 1988, has affected the wider Aoos River basin, significantly reducing the water discharge. Please could the State Party provide relevant information regarding its commitment and action to restore the hydrological regime around the nominated property, so as to potentially improve the condition of riverine species and habitats in the Aoos River basin, and specifically in relation to the buffer zone of the nominated property, and the North Pindus National Park as a whole.

We would appreciate your response to the above points as soon as possible, in order to facilitate the evaluation process, but **no later than 28 February 2023**, as per paragraph 148 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Please note that any information submitted after this date will not be considered by IUCN in its evaluation for the World Heritage Committee. It should be noted, however, that while IUCN will carefully consider any supplementary information submitted, it cannot properly evaluate a completely revised nomination or large amounts of new information submitted at the last minute. Therefore, we kindly ask your authorities to keep their response concise and to respond only to the above requests.

Supplementary information should also be submitted officially in two copies to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in order for it to be registered as part of the nomination. An electronic copy of all completed and submitted supplementary information to both the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Mr Alessandro Balsamo (a.balsamo@unesco.org) and IUCN Headquarters, Mr Clemens Küpper (clemens.kupper@iucn.org) would also be greatly appreciated. Taking into account your response, IUCN will formulate its final recommendation to the World Heritage Committee.

In the interest of ensuring full transparency and dialogue regarding the IUCN evaluation process, we are happy to respond to any questions you may wish to raise regarding IUCN's work on the World Heritage Convention, including the above points. We would be pleased to organise a meeting via conference call.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr Clemens Küpper, Evaluations & Operations Officer (clemens.kupper@iucn.org) if you have any questions regarding this request, or if you would wish to arrange a conference call to discuss this request.

Please allow me to reiterate our thanks for your support and for the conduct of IUCN's recent mission. We thank you for your cooperation in providing this very important information, which will facilitate the Panel in making its recommendations.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your kind cooperation in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, and I remain,

Yours sincerely,



Tim Badman
Head, Heritage and Culture

Enc.

cc. Municipality of Zagori
Service of Modern Monuments and Technical Works of Epirus, North Ionian and West Macedonia
Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO
UNESCO World Heritage Centre
IUCN European Regional Office

Annex – Template for species list

Scientific Species Name (according to IUCN)	Common Name (English or French)	IUCN Red List Status (Global) (if known)	% of population within nominated property (estimate)	Source of population estimate	Component parts of the nominated property (if relevant)	endemic to nominated to property	endemic to North Pindus National Park	endemic to State Party/Parties	endemic to region

Please follow the instructions below when filling the species list in the table above:	
Scientific Species Name	Please use the currently accepted scientific species name according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (or other accepted classifications if the species is not included in the IUCN Red List).
Common Name	Please enter the common name, in English or French, as provided by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (if existent).
IUCN Red List Status (if known)	Please enter the current global Red List category according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (please list only global status, and please do not list status as per regional assessments).
% of population within nominated property	Enter the estimated percentage of the global population of the species located within the nominated property boundaries (or for migratory species, which visit the nominated property), if known.
Source of population estimate	Please note the source used to undertake the population estimate provided, and, if known, the basis for making this estimate (e.g. number of mature individuals; area of occupancy; extent of suitable habitat; range; number of localities; distinct genetic diversity)
Component parts of the nominated property (if relevant)	In case the nominated property consists of several component parts, please specify in which component parts the species is found
Endemic to a) nominated property b) endemic to North Pindus National Park c) State Party/Parties d) region?	Specify by indicating <i>yes</i> or <i>no</i> in each relevant column in the table, whether the species is endemic to the nominated property, to the nominating State Party (or Parties if this is a transnational nomination) or to a wider region