

Executive Summary

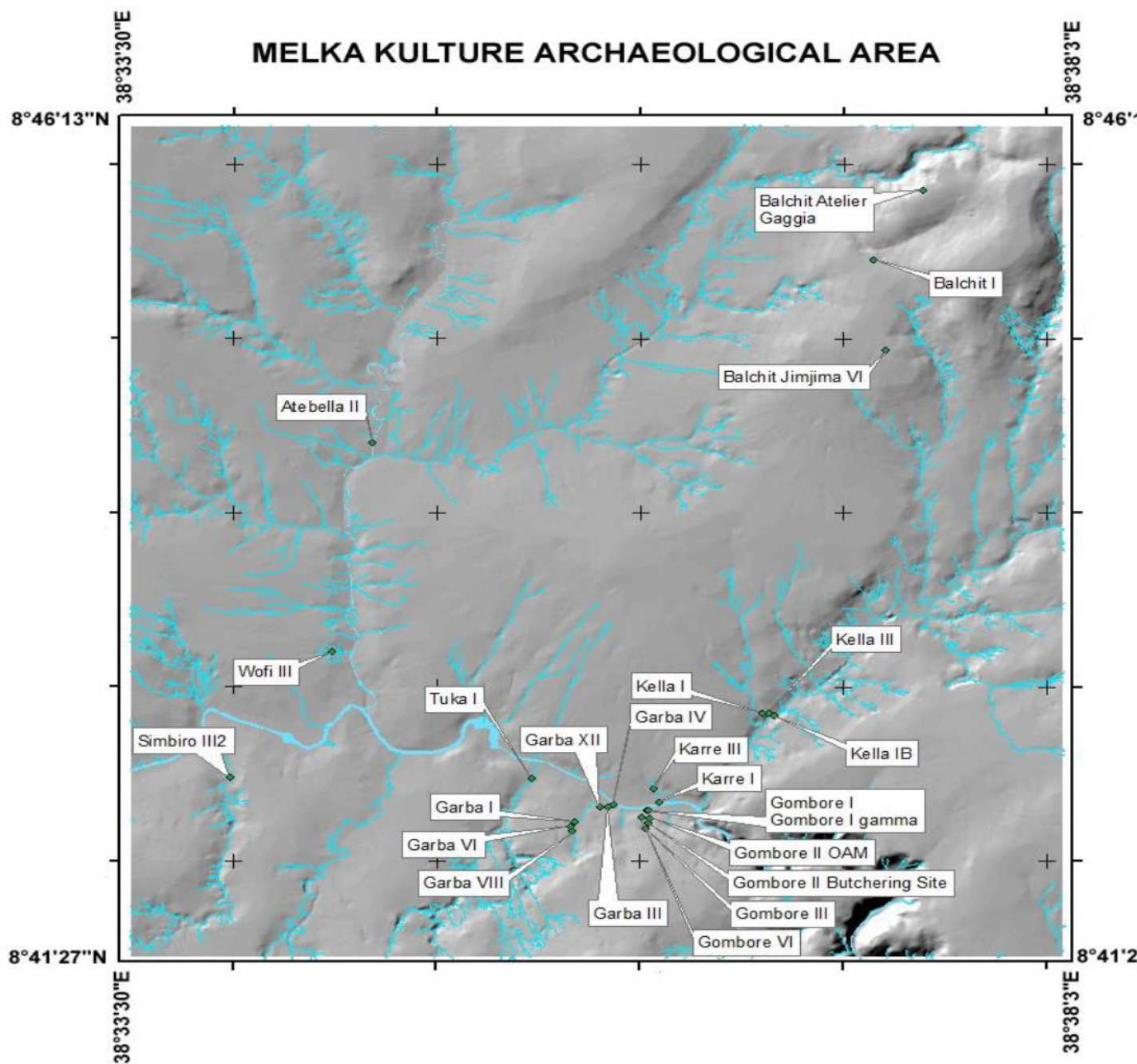
State Party	The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia																																				
State, Province or Region	Oromia National Regional State, South Western Shawa Administrative Zone, Qersa- Malima Woreda and Oromia Special Zone, Sebeta Awas Woreda																																				
Name of Property	Melka Kunture and Balchit Archeological and Paleontological Site																																				
Geographical coordinates to the nearest second	<p>The nominated property, Melka Kunture and Balchit Archeological and Paleontological Site, lies between 38° 33' 3"E on the west to 38° 38' 3' E in the east and from 8° 41' 27" in the south to 8° 46' 13' N on the north.</p> <p>Melka Kunture Balchit Archaeological and Paleontological Site is a serial property. As it is a serial property it has seven main component parts. The coordinates of each component site is listed on the table below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Id No</th><th rowspan="2">Name of the Site</th><th colspan="2">Coordinates of the central point in decimal degree</th></tr> <tr> <th>X-Coordinate</th><th>Y- Coordinate</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Gombore</td><td>38.59907</td><td>8.703464</td></tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>Garba</td><td>38.59907</td><td>8.703464</td></tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>Simbiro</td><td>38.565938</td><td>8.706045</td></tr> <tr> <td>4</td><td>Kella</td><td>38.613332</td><td>8.716779</td></tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>Balchit</td><td>38.619222</td><td>8.858171</td></tr> <tr> <td>6</td><td>Wofi</td><td>38.575031</td><td>8.72</td></tr> <tr> <td>7</td><td>Atebella</td><td>38.57653</td><td>8.737699</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			Id No	Name of the Site	Coordinates of the central point in decimal degree		X-Coordinate	Y- Coordinate	1	Gombore	38.59907	8.703464	2	Garba	38.59907	8.703464	3	Simbiro	38.565938	8.706045	4	Kella	38.613332	8.716779	5	Balchit	38.619222	8.858171	6	Wofi	38.575031	8.72	7	Atebella	38.57653	8.737699
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Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property	<p>Melka Kunture and Balchit Archaeological and Paleontological Site is found in the upper valley of River Awash, Ethiopia. It is located 50 kilometres south of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, on the fringes of the town of Awash Melka. It is bordered on the Northwest Fincha (Qadame Gabaya), on the Northeast, Sokoru Kebele, on the Southwest Dilalessa and On the Southeast, Angafa Kebele. The site is found on the Ethiopian plateau at about 2000 meters above the sea level.</p> <p>The site complex consists of seven main archaeological localities and a dome-flow of obsidian outcropping centre, all together covers approximately 10,000 ha (including the Buffer Zone). Its component parts composed of the localities of Gombore, Garba, Simbiro, Kella, Balchit, Wofi and Atebella. Gombore and Garba main sites have their own sub sites. These are Gombore I, Gombore Iy (Gamma), Gombore Ið, (Delta), Gombore II, Gombore II-2, Gombore III, Garba IV, Garba XII, Garaba</p>																																				

	XIII, Garba I and Garba III.
A4 or A3 size map(s) of the nominated property showing boundaries and Buffer zone (if present)	The map is attached
Criteria under which the property is nominated	(iii). (iv). (v). (viii)
Cultural Landscape	Yes
Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value	<p>a) Brief Synthesis</p> <p>Melka Kunture and Balchit, is a cluster of archaeological and paleontological sites, located on the Ethiopian plateau, 2000 meters above sea level. This cluster of sites found in the Graben of the Upper Awash Valley, preserves one of the longest and most complete prehistoric sequence in Eastern Africa, with a chronological sequence beginning over 1,800,000 years ago and practically reaching down to the present times.</p> <p>The site is known for its extensive archaeological and paleontological investigation that began in 1963 and is still in progress. The five decades of excavation have yielded the Oldowan, Acheulean, Middle Stone Age (MSA) and late Stone Age (LSA) techno complexes associated with faunal and hominin remains that has brought to light an important prehistoric record. Many Pleistocene horizons containing fossil footprints have also been identified in the site recently.</p> <p>Thus, Melka Kunture and Balchit presents a sequence of Paleolithic sites with lithic industries, fauna and hominid remains, distributed over in situ living floors, with structures that can still be recognized, together with economic and social activity area.</p> <p>Altogether, the major archaeological units discovered from the site, dated with radiometric methods suggesting human occupation of the area starting at about 1.8 Million years ago and reaching down to the modern times. Consequently Melka Kunture and Balchit Prehistoric is one of the very few sites where both Homo sapiens and earlier hominins (Homo erectus sensu lato and Homo heidelbergensis) are preserved, in direct association with</p>

	<p>the lithic implements they produced.</p> <p>Therefore, its authenticity, associated with the integrity of the site, the uniqueness of the archaeological sequence and the comparisons carried out with similar properties, justifies the nominated property for its inclusion in the world Heritage list under the criteria set out in paragraph 43, 44(a) (i) of the operational Guidelines.</p> <p>b) Justification for Criteria</p> <p>The nominated property is presented for inscription in the World Heritage List under the following criterion:</p> <p><i>Criteria (iii): bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.</i> The archaeological record of Melka Kunture and Balchit spans over 1.8 million years, and ends in historic times. Prehistoric human groups made a living out of natural resources, both in terms of vegetables, which rarely survive in prehistoric contexts, and in terms of wild animal resources, which left ample archaeological evidence. Obsidian and other locally available volcanic rocks were knapped and used to produce implements.</p> <p><i>Criteria (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history:</i> the nominated property is a repository and archive of well-preserved fragments of landscapes of Pleistocene age, which include great amounts of archaeological remains documenting the environment and ways of life of prehistoric human groups.</p> <p><i>Criteria (v): 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.</i> Most of the archaeological evidence of Melka Kunture and Balchit belongs to the times when neither farming nor herding was practiced. Humans belong both to <i>Homo erectus</i> (sensu lato) and, later, to <i>Homo heidelbergensis</i> and <i>Homo sapiens</i> were invariably organized in little groups, which walked from place to place to make full use of naturally available resources.</p> <p><i>Criteria (viii): "Be outstanding examples representing major stages of</i></p>
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	<p><i>earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features.</i>” Melka Kunture and Balchit prehistoric site is an outstanding example representing the major stages of the geological and geomorphological evolution during the Quaternary era, as well as flora and fauna changing through time, including hominins. The nominated property exhibits an outstanding universal value as a prehistoric site representing the ongoing biological process and biological evolution of plants and animals. The geological conformation of Melka Kunture and Balchit prehistoric site includes Pleistocene formations and sedimentary successions of great paleo-geographical and paleo-ecological interest. Humans lived in this area by developing cultural and physiological behavior adapted to the cool to cold climate of the highlands; their remains date back to several hundreds of thousands of years, while climate changed, wildlife migrated, and hominins evolved. The stone assemblages are the outcome of the relationships established by the hominins with their environment. This combination of geological, ecological and cultural elements provides ample information of the changing Quaternary times.</p> <p>c) Statement of Integrity: The prehistory of Melka Kunture and Balchit, comprise serial property, preserves the most exceptional ensemble of paleoarchaeological landscape and natural environment. All localities where discoveries were made remain intact, as does their context. Overall the areas that might provide further evidences of artifacts, flora and fauna are undisturbed. The component parts and their outstanding constituent elements are in a good condition with a minimum of cultural and natural threats. Almost all its localities have an intact geological history and contextual integrity. The peculiar preservation of the property is due to the fact that its proximity to the Awash River which guarantee the protection of the property. Furthermore, the integrity of the plaeo archaeological attributes and all the sensitive landscape was delineated and protected under the jursdiction of the Oromia Regional State.</p> <p>d) Statement of Authenticity: The nominated property has been the focus of long-term archaeological, paleontological, and geological researches</p>
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	<p>over the last 50 years. The results have been disseminated in the scientific community following the standard procedures of participation to international congresses; publication in scientific journals as well as a comprehensive monograph by reputed publishers and on online magazine proved that the property all together with its localities are preserved in good condition and its authenticity has been truthful and precisely maintained.</p> <p>e) Requirement for protection and management: The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is responsible for the conservation and preservation of the property. Consequently the Government sets out a management plan for the site designed to insure the conservation and sustainable development of the archaeological, paleontological and natural resources of the property. The management plan brings local and national benefits to the people of Ethiopia. The management and protection requirement aims to protect critical habitats and archaeological sites, assist regional and national development programmes and to establish appropriate management structure.</p>
Name and contact information of official local institution/agency	<p>Organization: Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH)</p> <p>Address: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia</p> <p>Tel: +251-11-5157630</p> <p>Fax: +251-11-5510705</p> <p>E-mail: crcch@ethionet.et</p> <p>Web address: http:// www.arcch.gov.et</p>



Melka Kulture and Balchit Archaeological and Paleontological Site and its Localities