



The Government of the Republic of Indonesia

**STATE OF CONSERVATION STATUS
OF THE WORLD HERITAGE IN INDONESIA**

World Heritage Property
Komodo National Park (N 609)

March 2023

STATE PARTY REPORT 2021: STATE OF CONSERVATION OF WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY (INDONESIA)
KOMODO NATIONAL PARK (N 605)

In accordance with the recommendation of the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Fuzhou – China, 16 – 31 July 2021 No. **44 COM 7B.93**: Paragraph 9, the State Party wishes to report on the State of Conservation of the Komodo National Park.

Executive Summary

In response to the recommendation of the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Fuzhou – China, 16 – 31 July 2021, particularly the recommendation related to the World Heritage Properties in Indonesia on Agenda item 7B.93: Komodo National Park, the Government of Indonesia, together with relevant stakeholders, has taken measures on the protection and preservation of Komodo National Park.

The Government of Indonesia is committed to preserving the Outstanding Universal Values of Komodo National Park through various programmes and policies as laid out in the management plan of the park as a national conservation area and a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site. This management plan operates under the following five conservation principles: (1) regulation-based; (2) science-based; (3) evidence-based; (4) experience-based; and (5) precautionary principle-based.

Our commitment to follow up the recommendation of the World Heritage Committee on Komodo National Park is reflected in the following measures:

1. Finalizing the revision of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) document for the tourism infrastructure projects on Rinca Island in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment;
2. Developing the Integrated Tourism Master Plan for Komodo National Park and Labuan Bajo in Flores Island as a guideline to develop a sustainable future of tourism in Labuan Bajo Flores area;
3. Ensuring the state of conservation of Komodo dragons and other associated wildlife as evidenced in the dynamic trend of Komodo dragon's population in the past 6 years.

The Government of Indonesia appreciates the committee's decision on Komodo as a part of World's Natural Heritage. However, due to security and technical reasons, more time allocation and further assistances are still required for the government to implement all programs in Komodo National Park.

Response to the Decision: 44 COM 7B.93

In response to the recommendation of the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Fuzhou – China, 16 – 31 July 2021, particularly the recommendation related to the World Heritage Properties in Indonesia on Agenda item 7B.93: Komodo National Park, the State Party would like to inform the World Heritage Committee that the Government of Indonesia, together with relevant stakeholders, have taken constructive measures to protect and preserve Komodo National Park.

Decision: 44 COM 7B.93

The World Heritage Committee,

1. **Having examined** Document WHC/19/44.COM/7B,
2. **Recalling Decision** CONF 202 21B.11, adopted at its 26th session (Budapest, 2002)
3. **Takes note** that an Integrated Master Plan is being developed and **requests** the State Party to provide detailed information on how the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property will be safeguarded in the design of the Plan, and how plans to significantly increase tourism at the property reflect the stated intention to move away from mass tourism and can thus ensure the protection of the OUV;

Response:

The Integrated Tourism Master Plan (ITMP) for Komodo National Park and Labuan Bajo in Flores Island is currently being developed and the draft is expected to be finalized by July 2022. The document provides detailed guidelines for the development of tourism and property in Labuan Bajo Flores areas, covering 8 regencies. The ITMP is aiming to attain the target set out by the President of Indonesia to boost socio-economic development for the people in Flores Island by bringing in 500,000 foreign tourists and 1,500,000 domestic tourists to the island within the period of 4 years (2016 – 2019). The document also ensures that neither tourism nor development in Taman Nasional Komodo will have a negative impact on the OUV and all projects will be implemented sustainably.

The ITMP for Komodo National Park and Labuan Bajo in Flores Island covers a robust tourism management plan. One of the most highlighted is the tourism carrying capacity implementation. The ITMP ensures that the distribution of

tourists will not be concentrated in Labuan Bajo and Komodo National Park but will be distributed to more than 100 tourism sites in Flores's mainland, Lembata, Alor, and Bima. The tourism carrying capacity will be consistently applied and managed to protect the OUV of the property supported by integrated information technology. The idea is to shift from mass tourism and focus more on sustainable high-end tourism and improved infrastructures that boost the local economy and stimulate community development, which ultimately will support the long-term protection of the property. The Government of Indonesia will collaborate with IUCN experts to ensure that none of the actions proposed in the document will have a negative impact on the OUV of the property

As stipulated in the ITMP, the Indonesian Government has no intention to relocate the people of Komodo Village who live in the Komodo National Park. A Community Based Ecotourism program is currently being developed highlighting local community involvement and based on the traditions and culture of Komodo Island. The program empowers village communities inside the National Park to actively participate in conservation and tourism. Villages in the park will be empowered as part of social culture attractions and to be included in the park travel tour destinations, such as fisher villages, coastal culture performances, creative economy, etc. In addition, some tourism products made by locals have been introduced to attract visitors since 2021. Rearrangement of tourism experience has been delivered through improved interpretive tour and heritage museum to optimize education contents of the World Heritage Site.

Upon the finalization of ITMP, the Government of Indonesia is setting out a plan to conduct a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) to ensure that any development proposed within the ITMP will not have any negative impact on the OUV of the property.

The Komodo National Park has been closely and constructively involved throughout the process of developing the ITMP Labuan Bajo, particularly in formulating the development plan of tourism sites outside Komodo National Park's territory and limiting the number of tourist visits in the area.

In this regard, The Komodo National Park is fully committed to supporting the local government and other relevant institutions in developing tourism sites beyond the park's area to minimize the risk of mass tourism as indicated in the trend of tourist visits to Komodo National Park in the past 10 years (2010 – 2019).

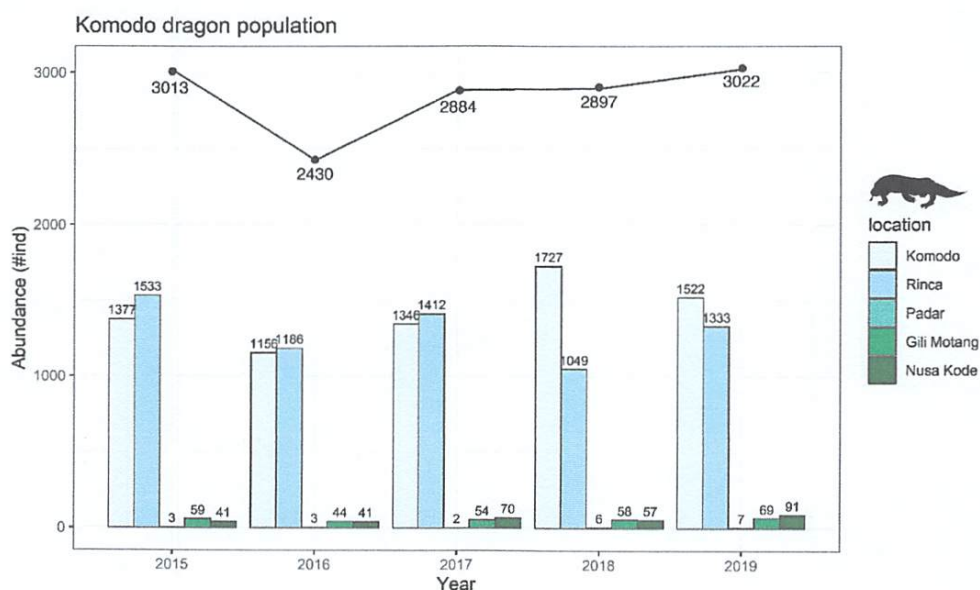
The Komodo National Park has implemented a tourism carrying capacity policy based on a scientific study conducted by the Ministry of Environment and

Forestry Republic of Indonesia in 2018. Operationally, it limits the number of visitors in at least four locations, namely: (1) Karang Makassar, (2) Batu Bolong, (3) Siaba Besar, dan (4) Mauwan. The document of Tourism Carrying Capacity of Komodo National Park (2018) is attached in **Annex 1**. The trend of tourists visits to Komodo National Park (2010 – 2019 Period) is attached in **Annex 2**. Since August 2021, an online registration platform has been developed to manage the tourism carrying capacity of 2 sites: Gili Lawa Resort and Padar Selatan Resort (<https://registration.labuanbajoflores.id/>)

4. **Notes with satisfaction** the research activities and long-term monitoring of the Komodo dragon, which show a stable population trend, and **urges** the State Party to continue regular population censuses and implement management measures in the context of proposed tourism increase;

Response:

The Government of Indonesia cq Komodo National Park is fully committed to ensuring the state of conservation of the Komodo dragons and other associated wildlife as evidenced by the dynamic trend of Komodo dragon population in the past 6 years. The Komodo National Park regularly monitors the population of Komodo dragons across the property since 2002 and has reinforced the monitoring activities with the support of the Komodo Survival Program (KSP) since 2007, using a mark-recapture method and camera trapping with site occupancy approaches. In addition, 1,217 Komodo dragons have been permanently tagged with Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT-tag) for population monitoring purposes, including to observe growth and survival rates. The population of the Komodo dragon has shown small fluctuations during the last five years but has remained stable with an abundance of around 3,000 individuals.



Around 0.5% of the total population of Komodo dragons in the property is interacting (passing through, resting, etc.) with the surroundings of Loh Buaya site (where the park infrastructure is being renovated and upgraded). According to the EIA result, none of the infrastructure renovation or development will negatively impact the Komodo dragon population, as it occurs in a small area (1.3 ha) that already contains buildings.

The Government of Indonesia cq Komodo National Park establishes 'Team Seven' in collaboration with the Komodo Survival Program to further ensures research activities and long-term monitoring of the Komodo dragon. In 2020 – 2021, a group of selected rangers was trained intensively on the science of dragons, population monitoring techniques, and human-wildlife conflict interventions. The trainees are expected to be a group of experts on komodo dragons to conduct improved activities scientifically and professionally.

The Komodo National Park plans to formulate a 5-yearly Research Roadmap that aims to identify the needs of multidiscipline studies to support the park's management and safeguarding plan of the OUV. Furthermore, the Komodo National Park also provides opportunities for internship and research programs in the Park for universities and other educational institutions, both national and international, who are interested to conduct research on Komodo dragons.

5. **Notes with concern** the different tourism infrastructure projects undertaken and planned in the property and, **also recalling** that it should be informed, via the World Heritage Centre, of any major restoration or new construction before making any decision that would be difficult to reverse, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, **also requests** the State Party to revise the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the tourism infrastructure projects on Rinca Island in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and to resubmit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN as a matter of urgency, in line with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, and to submit further information on other attributed tourism concessions in the property as well as its revised zoning plan;

Response:

The Government of Indonesia highlights that the tourism projects concerned are not new infrastructure developments in Loh Buaya (Rinca Island) of Komodo National Park, but a renovation project of the old park infrastructure in the Loh Buaya area.

The refurbishment of the old park infrastructure in Loh Buaya is considered critical, as based on the Park's assessment, the existing infrastructure would not sustainably support the growing number of visitors to Komodo National Park that has been increasing significantly based on the trend in the past 10 years (2010 – 2019). The highest number of tourists visits in 2019 was reaching 221,703. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence from the park rangers mentioned that Loh Buaya Resort in Rinca Island received almost 400-500 visitors daily, while the previous infrastructures capacity in the resort only ideally support to 150 visitors in a day.

Despite the growing number of tourists has resulted in a positive multiplier effect on the people that live within Komodo National Park and Labuan Bajo, it has also created concern about the infrastructure's durability and the surrounding environment. For this reason, the Komodo National Park has been implementing the tourism carrying capacity, which is aimed not only to cap and distribute the visitor numbers to Flores's area, but also to keep the park as a major attraction to visitors globally.

The tourism carrying capacity system is designed after obtaining constructive feedback from the tourism stakeholders, mainly from the Diving Operator Community Komodo (DOCK), the Indonesian Marine Tourism Association (GAHAWISRI) of Labuan Bajo, the Recreation Boat Network (JANGKAR), the Tourism Boat Association (ASKAWI), and the Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies (ASITA) of West Manggarai. The Komodo National Park had initiated a trial of the tourism carrying capacity system in September 2019 on the most visited diving sites that consist of the Batu Bolong, the Karang Makassar, the Siaba Besar, and the Mauwan. The Komodo National Park had also arranged a monthly meeting with the stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and to gain insights into whether the capacity required to be adjustable following the trend of the tourists in Labuan Bajo.

To better enhance the tourism carrying capacity, the Komodo National Park has also attempted to create an online booking system to better regulate the growing number of tourists and to further prevent the spread of COVID-19 amongst the tourists who will be visiting the park. The Park desires to enhance the carrying capacity implementation by setting daily quotas on the park's terrestrial destinations: the Loh Liang Resort, the Padar Selatan Resort, and the Gili Lawa Resort, in addition to the diving sites that were already being regulated. The online booking system is created jointly with the Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism Authority in 2020 and both stakeholders keep advancing the system following the condition and the local urgencies in Labuan Bajo.

The system creation had also gained inputs from the local stakeholders continuously. Komodo National Park believes that these efforts will align with the park's management plan and will reinforce the tourist management system currently operating in the park sustainably. Both the tourism carrying capacity and the online booking system will support the urgency of the Komodo National Park to greatly distribute the number of tourists to the nearby tourism destinations in Labuan Bajo and the greater Flores Island.

Thus, infrastructures improvement becomes pivotal to allow tourists visiting the park sustainably and to safeguard the OUV in the property. A recent study conducted by the Komodo National Park concludes that the new infrastructures would sustainably support approximately 1,000 tourists in a day. In addition, to preserve the wildlife in Loh Buaya Resort, tourists were no longer allowed to directly interact with the wildlife in the newly improved buildings/facilities.

The Government of Indonesia has finalized the revision of the EIA document for the project in a collaboration with world heritage and environmental experts, from universities and international NGOs (the Komodo Survival Program Foundation and WCS Indonesia Program), as well as governmental agencies, including the Komodo National Park, Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing.

A summary of the impacts identified by the team is shown in the table below:

Impact Criteria	No impact assessed on OUV	Negligible impact assessed on OUV	Minor impact assessed on OUV	Moderate impact assessed on OUV	Major impact assessed on OUV
Values described under criterion (vii)/OUV					
1. Mangrove Ecosystem					
2. Sea grass & Coral Reef					
3. White sandy beaches					
4. Deciduous Monsoon and Quasy-mountane forest ecosystem					
5. Savanna ecosystem					
Values described under criterion (x)/OUV					

Impact Criteria	No impact assessed on OUV	Negligible impact assessed on OUV	Minor impact assessed on OUV	Moderate impact assessed on OUV	Major impact assessed on OUV
1. Komodo dragons					
(a) Population					
(b) Behavior					
(c) Reproductive activities					
(d) Minimal of thermal resources					
2. Terrestrial mammals					
3. Avifauna					
4. Marine fauna & Flora: Dolphins & Sea turtles					
Non OUV					
Impact Criteria on Non OUV	No impact assessed	Negligible impact assessed	Minor impact assessed	Moderate impact assessed	Major impact assessed
5. Herpetofauna					
6. Social Impact: <i>Increasing Multiplier Effect on Local Economy</i>				POSITIVE IMPACT	

The complete document of EIA REVISION KOMODO NATIONAL PARK: Tourism Infrastructure Development in Loh Buaya – Rinca Island and its Environmental Management Plan is attached in **Annex 3a and 3b**.

In this regard, the Indonesian Government also confirmed that there are five concession have been issued to three private tourism companies within the utilization zones in KNP (in 2014, 2015 and 2020 respectively), each for a period of 55 years and requiring a 55-year management plan (RPPA), 5-year management year (RKL) and a 1-year management plan (RKT). Tourism facilities proposed across various locations including, for example, guest houses, a cafeteria, a viewing deck, swimming pools, staff accommodation, etc.

Related to this, the Government of Indonesia has regulation with the precautionary principle: 1) only 10% of the concessions area will be allowed for tourism facility development; 2) the companies are mandated to provide documents of Environment Management Plan and Environment Impact Assessment before construction, obtain the community's consent and conduct intensive socializations before starting the constructions, create a community beneficiaries plan for the local community; and 3) the Komodo NP authority has a full right and responsibility to supervise in every stage of construction and operational process.

Since there are multiple concession under consideration within the property, the Government Indonesia is currently initiating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), as a pre-requisite to the development and to ensure that any development proposed within the ITMP will not have any negative impact on the OUV of the property.

6. **Also urges** the State Party to halt all tourism infrastructure projects in and around the property that have the potential to impact on its OUV until the revised EIA is submitted and reviewed by IUCN;

Response:

The Government of Indonesia is committed to fulfilling the spirit and recommendation of the World Heritage Convention. As a state party, Indonesia has introduced relevant policies, regulations and programs, and has implemented them in accordance with the convention to ensure that our heritage is conserved.

Regarding the infrastructure projects surrounding the property of Loh Buaya, efforts have been in place to ensure that those projects will not infringe or disturb any natural area within the national park, as well as to ensure they will not extend beyond the boundaries of the existing infrastructure. Additionally, the Government of Indonesia has been continuously improving and renovating the site to mitigate any negative impact on the OUV due to the increasing numbers of tourists (over 220,000 visits in 2019). These efforts have resulted in an improvement of infrastructure in Loh Buaya (including the construction of elevated decks) and will prevent any possible interaction between visitors and Komodo dragons in the future.

7. **Further requests** the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess the impact of ongoing development on the OUV of the property and review its state of conservation;

Response:

The Government of Indonesia have invited a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Komodo National Park, which took place from 1 to 7 March 2022. The mission, including Mr Amran Hamzah and Ms Katherine Zischka representing IUCN and Mr Hans Dencker Thulstrup representing the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, visited the Komodo National Park World Heritage property in response to the World Heritage Committee request (Decision 44 COM 7B.93), to address the following: assess the status of existing and planned tourism infrastructure developments within and around the World Heritage property including on Rinca and Padar Islands; review progress towards the revision of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the tourism infrastructure on Rinca Island; the Integrated Tourism Master Plan for Labuan Bajo Flores (ITMP); the status of the Komodo dragon; progress towards strengthening marine management; and any other relevant issues that may negatively affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

The mission held meetings with government stakeholders in Jakarta and with government, business, civil society and local community stakeholders in the town of Labuan Bajo on Flores Island, which is the access point to Komodo National Park (KNP). From Labuan Bajo, the mission undertook a field visit via speedboat to the three larger islands in KNP: Komodo, Rinca and Padar. The mission observed various pressures and potential threats.

In general, missions give positive feedback to efforts that undertaken by the state party. The confirmation that no relocation of the local communities on Komodo Island will be undertaken is positive. Noting the concerns expressed by third parties regarding reported mass-tourism developments in KNP and the potential relocation of the community on Komodo Island. It is positive that the Komodo dragon population has remained stable in recent years.

8. **Also notes with concern** the lack of operational equipment and technical capacity to manage the property's marine area, and requests furthermore the State Party to urgently strengthen marine management and law enforcement capacities in the property, with a specific emphasis on controlling illegal fishing activities and boat anchoring, and to allocate a sufficient budget for marine research, monitoring, education, and compliance with marine regulations;

Response:

A. The Protection of the Property

The Government of Indonesia is fully committed to strengthening the protection and surveillance efforts continuously and consistently with the aid of the interprofessional collaboration amongst the law enforcement agencies, such as: the West Manggarai Policemen, the Indonesian National Marines, and the Directorate General of Law Enforcement Ministry of Environment and Forestry Republic of Indonesia in the form of joint patrols ever year. In addition, the Komodo National Park also collaborates with marine tourism forum stakeholders, including Labuan Bajo Flores Tourism Authority, diving operators, boat operators, and the tourism community to manage fasts reports and responses to protect the area.



Figure: Park's joint patrol