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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Extended forty-fifth session Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 10-25 September 2023

Item 7A of the Provisional Agenda:
State of conservation of the properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Summary

In accordance with Section IV B, paragraphs 190-191 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the Committee shall review annually the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. This review shall include such monitoring procedures and expert missions as might be determined necessary by the Committee.

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of Reactive Monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language: http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/45COM/documents

All state of conservation reports will also be available through the World Heritage State of conservation Information System at the following Web address: http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc

<u>Decision required</u>: The Committee is requested to review the following state of conservation reports. The Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

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NATURAL PROPERTIES

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

1. Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras) (N 196)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

2. Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California (Mexico) (N 1182ter)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2005

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2019-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Imminent extinction of an endemic porpoise species (vaquita) and conservation status of a marine fish (totoaba)
- Insufficient capacity to control illegal fishing and trafficking activities
- Presence of unsustainable fishing practices that endanger non-target marine species

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> In progress

Corrective measures

Proposed for adoption in the draft decision below

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In Progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1182/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1182/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

April 2017: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2018: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Fishing/collecting aquatic resources
- Illegal activities (illegal fishing)
- Serious concerns about the imminent extinction of an endemic porpoise species (vaquita) and conservation status of a marine fish (totoaba)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1182/

Current conservation issues

On 3 March 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1182/documents/, reporting the following:

- Acoustic monitoring of the vaquita population in 2021 recorded 23 and 24 acoustic encounters in the Vaquita Refuge Area and the Zero Tolerance Area (ZTA), respectively. Visual surveys recorded eight vaquita observations including at least one calf;
- Around 100 pangas (fishing vessels) were observed within the ZTA during a 2021 survey;
- The State Party has complied with commitments under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in relation to the illegal trade of totoaba products. The State Party continues international cooperation, including customs information exchange between destination and transit countries for totoaba products, as well as issuance of notices through the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL);
- Surveillance and law enforcement through air, sea and land patrols and checkpoints has continued. During 2021, 21,556 inspections were carried out, resulting in the seizure of 15 vessels and 172 items of fishing gear;
- Penalties associated with illegal totoaba trade have been increased under national law and fisheries regulations have been strengthened, including the Plan of Zero Tolerance in the Vaquita Refuge Area and the establishment of the Intragovernmental Group on Sustainability in the Upper Gulf of California (GIS), amongst others;
- Recovery of abandoned fishing gear has continued. Between 1 September 2019 and 30 September 2021, 73,101 meters of fishing gear were removed from the Upper Gulf of California (Upper Gulf), with a progressively lower incidence of occurrence over time;
- Alternative fishing and shellfish aquaculture systems are in place. Further pilot programmes for other fisheries are planned in 2022;
- In 2018 and 2021, the Permanent Management Effectiveness Assessment System was implemented, incorporating elements of the IUCN Green List Global Standard and Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit, for the 12 serial components of the property. The results are variable, with some components effectively managed or partially effectively managed and two of the components (Cabo San Lucas and Islas Marías) deemed to be partly or largely under 'ineffective management';
- During the 2020 2021 fiscal year, \$41,369,551 MXN (approximately USD 2.2 Million) was made available for conservation activities in the property).

Throughout 2021-2023, UNESCO and the State Party, in consultation with IUCN, continued the dialogue on the development of the corrective measures and Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

On 24 and 25 February 2022, a Technical Workshop to develop the corrective measures and DSOCR was held with participation from the State Party, the World Heritage Centre, IUCN, and civil society.

On 23 April 2022, the State Party submitted an updated proposal for corrective measures and a DSOCR following the results of the Technical Workshop, which was reviewed by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre, discussed with the CITES Secretariat following CITES notification No. 2023/046, and then submitted to the State Party on 17 May 2023.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Noting that less than 10 vaquita individuals were observed in the 2021 surveys, the drastic decline of the vaquita population in recent years remains of critical concern with the species remaining on the brink of extinction. The confirmation that the small and sole remaining population is still breeding, with at least one calf observed, leaves hope that the extinction of the species could still be avoided if the remaining animals can be fully protected and the illegal use of gillnets in the ZTA and the Upper Gulf area effectively addressed.

The measures taken to monitor the population are welcomed and should be encouraged to continue in order to closely monitor the population trend. The cooperation between the State Party and the relevant

international institutions and States Parties that are transit and destination countries for illegal totoaba products, in particular the United States of America (USA) and China, including within the framework of the CITES, should also be welcomed, strongly encouraged and strengthened to effectively address the illegal totoaba bladder trade. The Compliance action plan of Mexico for Totoaba, assessed as adequate by the CITES Secretariat in April 2023 (CITES notification No. 2023/046), is particularly welcomed.

The ongoing inter-institutional surveillance and law enforcement efforts aimed at eliminating illegal fishing activities in the Upper Gulf and illegal trafficking of totoaba products are noted. However, the reported figures show that illegal fishing activities clearly continue, indicating that the considerable efforts in enforcement are not fully effective. Given the species is critically endangered, it is therefore recommended that the State Party assess how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement in order to halt all illegal fishing in the ZTA. This remains a crucial factor in avoiding the extinction of the vaguita.

The efforts to retrieve abandoned fishing gear, including through collaboration with civil society organizations, remains essential, and the diminishing number of abandoned nets retrieved from the property could be a positive sign, but might also be linked to the limited success of law enforcement. The State Party should ensure that these efforts are continued alongside increased surveillance and law enforcement to ensure that both abandoned and active gill nets are eliminated from the ZTA, and the area remains completely free of gill nets.

The development of alternative vaquita-safe fishing gear for a number of different fisheries within the Upper Gulf is positive and welcomed. However, given that gill net fishing in the ZTA continues, as evidenced from the information provided on vessel counts and seizures of vessels and gill nets, the State Party should be encouraged to rapidly expedite the deployment of viable alternatives in fisheries that currently rely on the use of illegal gill nets. Moreover, further information is required regarding the level of uptake of the alternative fishing gear across all fishing communities in the Upper Gulf in order to assess the effort to ensure these technologies are successfully implemented at the required scale.

The submission of a proposal for corrective measures and the DSOCR for the property following the technical workshop with UNESCO, IUCN and relevant experts, is noted with appreciation. It is recommended that the Committee approves the corrective measures. However, noting the need for further consultations with relevant stakeholders regarding international cooperation to combat illegal totoaba fishing and trafficking, the State Party should be encouraged to finalise and resubmit the DSOCR. once the necessary consultations with the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and key stakeholders have taken place.

The efforts of the State Party to evaluate the management effectiveness of the property, incorporating elements of the IUCN Green List Global Standard and the Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit, are appreciated. Noting the varied results across the different components of the property, targeted efforts are needed to strengthen the management, especially of the components evaluated as ineffective.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.2

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.56**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021).
- 3. <u>Reiterates its utmost concern</u> about the critical status of the vaquita, specifically recognized as part of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and endemic to the Gulf of California, and that illegal fishing of totoaba has continued in the Upper Gulf of California resulting in a threat of imminent extinction of the vaquita species;
- 4. <u>Takes note</u> of the confirmation that the small and sole remaining population is still breeding, and that an extinction could still be avoided if the remaining animals can be

- fully protected and the illegal use of gill nets in the Zero Tolerance Area (ZTA) and the Lower Gulf area effectively enforced;
- 5. <u>Welcomes</u> the measures taken to monitor the vaquita population in the property, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to continue these efforts;
- 6. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to implement the following corrective measures, developed by the State Party in close consultation with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN:
 - Strengthen law enforcement efficiency through increased surveillance and inspection, continuing and further strengthening inter-institutional cooperation in this field.
 - b) Introduce the necessary legislative changes to increase the penalties foreseen for illegal traffic, capture, possession, import and export of wildlife species, parts and products considered, threatened, endangered or specially protected and/or regulated under the national law, or by international treaties adopted by the State Party; and strengthen criminal prosecution procedures,
 - c) Further strengthen detection and elimination of illegal and derelict fishing gear found in the Vaquita Refuge and the ZTA, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, fishing communities and cooperatives;
 - d) Effectively implement the permanent ban on the use of gill nets (including the sale, manufacturing, or possession of all gill nets on land and at sea) in the Vaquita Refuge and the entire distribution range of the species;
 - e) Pursue at the highest level of government, the necessary and urgent cooperation with the identified destination and transit countries involved in the illegal trade of totoaba swim bladders, through the implementation of the decisions made by Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and through other existing international mechanisms, such as INTERPOL:
 - f) Ensure the large scale roll out of alternative fishing gear systems which do not cause entanglement of vaquita and other protected species already developed by the National Aquaculture and Fishing Commission (CONAPESCA) / National Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INAPESCA) in the Upper Gulf of California by providing appropriate incentives and accompanying measures; and develop and promote sustainable fisheries based on environmentally friendly fishing gear throughout the entire property;
- 7. <u>Also welcomes</u> the cooperation between the State Party with the relevant international institutions and States Parties to combat illegal trafficking of totoaba products, including within the framework of CITES, and <u>strongly recommends</u> that the State Party of Mexico, together with the States Parties of transit and destination countries, take urgent action in line with all CITES decisions to effectively address the illegal totoaba bladder trade;
- 8. <u>Notes</u> the continued surveillance and law enforcement efforts aimed at eliminating illegal fishing activities and illegal trafficking of totoaba products but <u>notes with concern</u> that illegal fishing activities continue and <u>reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to further strengthen these efforts based on a critical assessment of the efficiency of the current efforts on how to improve them;
- 9. <u>Further welcomes</u> the ongoing retrieval of abandoned fishing gear, including through collaboration with civil society organizations, and <u>urges</u> the State Party to continue these efforts alongside surveillance and law enforcement to ensure that the ZTA is completely free of gill nets;

- 10. <u>Noting</u> that alternative vaquita-safe fishing gear is already available for a number of fisheries, <u>requests</u> the State Party to expedite the production and deployment of alternative gear and provide information on the uptake of alternative gear across all fishing communities of the Upper Gulf of California;
- 11. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the State Party's efforts to develop the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) through ongoing dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to finalise and submit the DSOCR following the necessary consultations with key stakeholders, for adoption by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session:
- 12. <u>Also notes with appreciation</u> the efforts of the State Party to evaluate the management effectiveness of the property, and <u>also requests</u> the State Party to undertake targeted efforts address the management weaknesses, especially of the components currently evaluated as ineffective;
- 13. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session:
- 14. <u>Decides</u> to retain Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California (Mexico) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

AFRICA

3.	Manovo Gounda St. Floris National Park (Central African Republic) (N 475)
See	Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
4.	Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Côte d'Ivoire/Guinea) (N 155bis)
See	Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
	e : the following reports on the World Heritage properties of the Democratic Republic ne Congo need to be read in conjunction with Item 9 below.
5.	Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 136)
See	Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
6.	Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 137)
See	Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
7.	Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 718)
See	Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
8.	Virunga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 136)
See	Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

9. General Decision on the World Heritage properties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

10. Lake Turkana National Parks (Kenya) (N 801bis)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

11. Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar) (N 1257)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2007

Criteria (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2010-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Illegal logging of precious wood species (ebony and rosewood) and its secondary impacts; poaching of endangered lemurs were identified as threats for the site's integrity

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4344

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4344

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4344

Previous Committee Decisions see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1257/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 2000-2021) Total amount approved: USD 155,000

For details, see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1257/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 1,890,000 from the United Nations Foundation and the Nordic World Heritage Foundation; USD 1,039,000 from the Government of Norway (2014-2016)

Previous monitoring missions

May 2011, September-October 2015: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Encroachment
- Fire
- Hunting and poaching of endangered species, including lemurs
- Artisanal mining
- Illegal logging of precious wood species (ebony and rosewood)

- Weak governance and law enforcement to prevent the illegal logging end export of precious wood species
- Need to strengthen the engagement of and benefit-sharing with local communities

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1257/

Current conservation issues

On 11 March 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, a summary of which is available at http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1257/documents/. The full report provides the following information:

- The COVID-19 pandemic led to considerable socio-economic challenges and delayed some activities, but efforts were made to mobilize funding and continue the monitoring, patrolling and community support activities;
- The production of Development and Management Plans for each of the six components of the property was delayed by the pandemic but they are planned to be updated by end of June 2022 and will highlight the locations that require rehabilitation. These Plans are expected to inform the updated timetable for the implementation of corrective measures as well as informing management objectives and costed action plans for a 5-year period. The Plans will include an evaluation of the impacts from mining and the ecological restoration activities. The plans will also inform the preparation of an Integrated Management Plan, which will be presented to IUCN for approval;
- A zero-tolerance policy on the logging and export of rosewood and ebony is maintained;
- Progress has been made in implementing the decisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) concerning ebony (Diospyros spp.), palisander and rosewood (Dalbergia spp.), and this has been reported to the 25th meeting of the Plants Committee and 74th meeting of the Standing Committee of CITES. Updates include zero reported export of precious wood from Madagascar since January 2019, continued surveillance and law enforcement. A plan was to verify all stockpiles of rosewood and ebony and propose ways to address them was also submitted;
- Deforestation rate in 2021 exceeded 0.07% according to satellite imagery, mostly occurring in Andohahela National Park due to illegal settlements, followed by Marojejy National Park. 350 ha of new primary forest clearing was reported across the whole property in 2021;
- Several projects are underway or planned in the different components of the property, including Andohahela and Marojejy National Parks to address deforestation and forest degradation through reforestation activities and ecological monitoring;
- Ecological restoration on 894 ha of degraded land achieved in 2021 through active and passive means.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Taking into account the significant negative impact of the pandemic on the property due to deteriorating socio-economic situation and reduced management capacity, the State Party's comprehensive report and efforts to continue the monitoring, patrolling and conservation activities through the challenges are appreciated.

Nevertheless, the environmental consequences are severe with the rate of illegal logging of precious woods and poaching of lemurs remaining high. Moreover, it is deeply concerning that the deforestation rate spiked to a record high of 0.07% in 2021 to a level far exceeding figures reported since 2009 and the indicator threshold of the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). The area of primary forest cleared and illegal logging for precious wood raise great concern and counteracts the restoration efforts. While the targeted projects to address these forest losses through reforestation and ecological monitoring are positive, greater emphasis is needed on prevention. In addition to governance, control and enforcement measures, it should include efforts to promote local sustainable development which directly affects management effectiveness as evidenced by the impacts of the pandemic.

At its 74th meeting in March 2022, the CITES Standing Committee adopted recommendations pertaining to Malagasy ebonies (*Diospyros spp.*) and palisanders and rosewoods (*Dalbergia spp.*), including a proposal for renewal of Decision 18.96 at the 19th Conference of the Parties (CITES CoP19; November 2022). The reaffirmation of the zero-tolerance policy on the logging and export of rosewood and ebony is noted. It is hoped that the State Party will continue to fully implement the CITES decisions concerning these precious wood species.

Noting that addressing the issue of stockpiles has been outstanding since the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger more than a decade ago, the reported activities to prepare an inventory and marking of the 'officially controlled' stockpiles for domestic use, using the proceeds for restoration activities is welcome. However, it needs to be recalled again that the quantity of 'officially controlled' stockpiles are much smaller than the 'uncontrolled declared wood' stockpiles and the 'non-compliant and undeclared' stockpiles, and that as long as this issue is not addressed, it will be hard to control the illegal trade and the illegal logging of precious woods. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate once again its previous requests to urgently find a lasting solution to eliminate all such stocks.

It is regrettable that no further information is provided on the five-year Action Plan on illegal mining at Ranomafana National Park which the State Party announced in 2017. The on-going effort to renew the Development and Management Plans for each component of the property, while delayed by the impacts of the pandemic, is appreciated as well as the planned development on an integrated management plan for the entire property. It is noted that they will integrate an evaluation of the current situation regarding logging and mining, and to inform future actions including the implementation of corrective measures. As such, the State Party should ensure relevant stakeholders including local communities are consulted and involved in the creation of the plans. It should be reiterated that the draft Development and Management Plans and the draft Integrated Management Plan (IMP) are to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before they are approved and adopted.

In conclusion, while significant efforts have been undertaken to address the management challenges of the property and start addressing the key issue of the illegal stockpiles, the threats to the property continue and appear to have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is thus a need to further intensify efforts to implement the corrective measures and strengthen ways to prevent further forest loss. It is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

On 5 and 6 February 2022, Madagascar was hit by the intense tropical cyclone Batsirai, less than two weeks after being impacted by tropical storm Ana. Two of the six components of the property, Ranomafana and Andringitra National Parks, suffered significant damages. The State Party through the UNESCO Antenna in Madagascar has received support from the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.11

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.48</u>, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the continued efforts made by the State Party to monitor, patrol and support conservation of the property during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- 4. Notes with deep concern that the deforestation rate in the property increased significantly to a record high of 0.07%, exceeding the 0.01% limit according to the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), the further loss of primary forest across all components of the property, and an increase in reports of illegal logging for precious wood species;
- 5. <u>Notes</u> the efforts underway and planned to address forest loss through ecological monitoring activities and reforestation and <u>requests</u> the State Party to further strengthen

- its efforts in the fight against illegal logging and trade of rosewood, complemented with efforts to promote local sustainable development;
- 6. <u>Welcomes</u> the planned renewal of Development and Management Plans for each of the six components of the property, which will assess the current situation regarding logging and mining and will inform future activities including the implementation of corrective measures and its five-year costed Action Plan, and which will lead to the production of an Integrated Management Plan (IMP), and therefore <u>strongly encourages</u> the State Party to ensure that a fully consultative process with relevant stakeholders, including local communities, is followed in the development of the Plans:
- 7. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to submit the draft Development and Management Plans for the six components of the property and the draft IMP as soon as practicable to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before their adoption;
- 8. While noting the reaffirmation of the zero-tolerance policy on the logging and export of rosewood and ebony, reiterates its request to the State Party to find a lasting solution aimed at eliminating all stocks of precious woods and halting all illegal logging and trafficking of precious woods, including through the full implementation of the decisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) concerning ebony (Diospyros spp.), palisander and rosewood (Dalbergia spp.);
- Also welcomes the reported activities to prepare an inventory and marking of the 'official controlled stockpiles' of seized logs and to valorise them on the national market, using the proceeds for restoration activities, but <u>recalls</u> that the official controlled stockpiles are quite small compared to the 'uncontrolled, but declared stockpiles' and the undeclared illegal stockpiles;
- 10. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission in order to assess the progress made in the implementation of the corrective measures in achieving the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and to update the corrective measures and the timeline for their implementation in support of the eventual removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
- 11. <u>Final requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 12. <u>Decides</u> to retain the Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

12. Aïr and Ténéré Natural Reserves (Niger) (N 573)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1991

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1992-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

The region having recently suffered from military conflict and civil disturbance, the Government of Niger requested the Director-General of UNESCO to launch an appeal for the protection of the site

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> In progress

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/325

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 8 (from 1999-2019) Total amount approved: USD 202,316

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 300,000 foreseen from the contribution of the Government of Norway to the World Heritage Fund.

Previous monitorina missions

May 2005 and February 2015: IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Political instability and civil strife (issue resolved)
- Poverty
- Management constraints (lack of human and logistical means)
- Ostrich poaching and other species
- Soil erosion
- Demographic pressure
- · Livestock pressure
- Pressure on forestry resources
- Gold panning
- Illegal activities (increase in poaching threats and timber harvesting)
- Proliferation of the invasive exotic species (Prosopis juliflora)
- Insecurity

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573/

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/573//documents/, which contains the following elements:

 The implementation of the corrective measures continues, in particular with the structuring of the management of the property, the protection and ecological monitoring of the characteristic species of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the fight against the main threats weighing on the property;

- The development and management plan, the emergency surveillance plan, the strategy to combat invasive alien species and the proposal of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) are being finalized with international assistance funds. Additional financial resources are needed for their implementation, and an international assistance request was submitted on 28 October 2021;
- Collaboration with valley chiefs and local communities continues;
- The abundance of illegal activities is decreasing thanks to monitoring, awareness-raising and the
 involvement of local actors. The patrols make it possible to control illegal gold panning in the
 property, which is mainly developing outside the property. Only three offenses related to logging
 have been reported;
- The State Party will assign forestry officers to strengthen the management staff of the property;
- 30 ha invaded by the species *Prosopis juliflora* have been restored;
- Four ecological monitoring missions have been carried out and confirm the presence of Dama and Dorcas gazelles and Barbary sheep. The addax has not been observed in the property for more than 20 years. The cheetah and the spotted hyena have not been observed but their presence is reported by members of the local communities. About fifty species of birds have been observed but the numbers of Nubian bustards are decreasing sharply;
- A conservation and reintroduction strategy has been developed for the red-necked ostrich;
- The State Party has not granted any exploration or mining permits within or in the immediate surroundings of the property. Exploration and exploitation permits for gold, uranium and oil have been granted at more than 100 km from the property, and have been subject to regulatory procedures and regular monitoring of operations by the competent authorities under the Environmental and Social Management Plans.

Following the state of conservation report, the State Party submitted a draft DSOCR on 9 March 2022, and the 2022-2024 Development and Management Plan on 14 April 2022.

Analysis and conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party continues its efforts to operationalize the management body of the property, to collaborate with the local authorities to improve surveillance and awareness for the protection of the property and to combat the main threats to the property. It is recommended to congratulate the State Party on the finalization of the 2022-2024 Development and Management Plan (PAG), which provides an in-depth analysis of the state of conservation of the property and the main threats, and recommends emergency measures. The World Heritage Centre is currently in discussion with the State Party and the NGO Wild Africa Conservation to support the implementation of the PAG with funding from the Government of Norway.

Noting that the property has been inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger for 30 years, the development of a draft DSOCR is welcomed. The draft is currently being studied by IUCN and it is recommended that the State Party finalize the DSOCR as soon as the comments from IUCN are transmitted by the World Heritage Centre so that the Committee can adopt it at its next session.

The report does not provide information regarding the status of the development of the surveillance contingency plan and the strategy to combat invasive alien species, funded through international assistance, and whether these documents are being finalized or have been integrated into the PAG. Actions to control the *Prosopis juliflora* species and desertification are carried out but no details are provided. It is recommended to coordinate these actions with the PAG. Furthermore, in 2021 the World Heritage Centre did not receive the request for International Assistance mentioned by the State Party in the annual report submitted.

Despite the Committee's requests, the information provided regarding illegal activities is not precise enough to assess the state of conservation of the property. It is recommended to reiterate the request to provide maps showing the location of the main threats, as well as indications of their severity and extent. This information is partly detailed in the PAG and must be synthesized and shared. Regular patrols and reduced sighting of illegal activities are positive, however detailed information on patrol efforts and the area covered is not provided. While the annual report mentions only three offenses related to logging, the PAG mentions many illegal activities in the property, including artisanal gold panning and poaching. The commitment of the State Party to assign additional forest officers is

welcomed and it is also recommended to strengthen the collaboration with the chiefs of the valleys and to urgently implement the actions detailed in the PAG.

The ecological monitoring missions have reconfirmed the presence of certain antelope species without, however, specifying the state of their populations; and several emblematic species characteristics of the OUV were not observed. Noting that some species remain critically endangered, such as the dama gazelle for which the property contains one of the four remaining populations, the State Party is encouraged to urgently implement surveillance and ecological monitoring actions presented in the PAG to ensure the effective management and recovery of these species, in consultation with the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Antelope Specialist Group, as appropriate. While noting the assertion by the State Party that the exploration or exploitation permits for gold, uranium and oil are located more than 100 km from the property and have been subject to regulatory procedures and regular monitoring of operations by the competent authorities, the PAG documentation includes a map showing several permits on the south-eastern limit of the property. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to provide more information regarding the nature and status of these permits.

Finally, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.12

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44COM 7A.48**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Takes note</u> of the efforts made by the State Party to implement the corrective measures, and requests it to continue their implementation;
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the finalization and quality of the 2022-2024 Development and Management Plan (PAG), and <u>requests</u> the State Party to urgently implement the actions detailed therein, and to provide clarifications concerning its financing, the partnership mentioned with a non-governmental organization and the link with the emergency surveillance plan as well as the strategy for the fight against invasive alien species (IAS);
- 5. <u>Thanks</u> the donors supporting the conservation of the property, in particular the Government of Norway for its support in the implementation of the PAG through the World Heritage Centre:
- 6. Once again regrets that the report does not provide detailed information on poaching, illegal gold panning and excessive logging in and around the property, as well as on the actions implemented to combat these threats, and reiterates its request that the State Party provide maps showing the location of the main threats identified, as well as indications of their severity and extent, and of the control actions carried out, partially available in the PAG;
- 7. <u>Notes with satisfaction</u> the State Party's commitment to assign additional forestry officers and <u>requests</u> it to recruit sufficient staff and strengthen collaboration with the valley chiefs to ensure the effective management of the property and implement the PAG;
- 8. <u>Welcomes</u> the proposed Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and <u>requests</u> the State Party to finalize it based on the recommendations of IUCN and to transmit it to the World Heritage Centre for adoption at the 46th session;

- 9. <u>Takes note</u> of the actions taken to combat the proliferation of the Prosopis juliflora species and mitigate desertification, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to provide details on these actions and include them in the PAG for the property;
- 10. Reiterates its concern that some flagship species of the OUV remain highly threatened or endangered, and <u>urges</u> the State Party to develop a monitoring and recovery plan for the signature antelope species in consultation with the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Antelope Specialist Group and implement the actions detailed in the PAG:
- 11. While noting the assertion by the State Party that the exploration and exploitation permits for gold, uranium and oil are located more than 100 km from the property and have been subject to regulatory procedures and regular monitoring of operations by the competent authorities, reiterates its concern about the proliferation of exploration and exploitation permits, noting in particular the permits located at the south-eastern limit of the property. It thus requests the State Party to provide more information concerning the nature and status of these permits and to ensure that the impacts of exploitation projects on the OUV of the property are assessed within the framework of environmental and social impact assessments (ESIA), in accordance with the new Guidance and Toolkit on Impact Assessment in a World Heritage context;
- 12. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 13. <u>Decides</u> to retain Air and Ténéré Natural Reserves (Niger) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- 13. Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) (N 153)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

14. Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) (N 199bis)

ASIA-PACIFIC

15	Tropical	Rainforest	Heritage of	f Sumatra	(Indonesia)	(N 1167)
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See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

16. East Rennell (Solomon Islands) (N 854)

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

17.	Everglades National Park	(United States	of America)	(N 76)
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CULTURAL PROPERTIES

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

18. City of Potosi (Bolivia, Plurinational State of) (C 420)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

19. Fortifications on the Caribbean Side of Panama: Portobelo-San Lorenzo (Panama) (C 135)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1980

Criteria (i)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2012-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Fragile state of the property and accelerated degradation by environmental factors, lack of maintenance and limited conservation planning
- Erosion
- Lack of established boundaries and buffer zone
- Absence of a conservation and management plan
- Encroachments and urban pressure
- Tourism pressure (particularly at Portobelo)
- Insufficient legislation for the preservation of built heritage and regulations combining the two
 components of the property

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4763

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4763

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4763

Revised in 2019, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7558

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/135/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1980-1993) Total amount approved: USD 76,800

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/135/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

1993: technical mission; November 2001, March 2009, March 2010: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; February 2014: ICOMOS Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Erosion and siltation/ deposition
- Housing (encroachments and urban pressure)
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation (tourism pressure -particularly at Portobelo)
- Land conversion
- Management systems/ management plan (absence of a conservation and management plan)
- Fragile state of the property and accelerated degradation by environmental factors, lack of maintenance and limited conservation planning
- Legal framework
- Lack of established boundaries and buffer zones

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/135/

Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2022

On 1 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/135/documents, which provides information on the implementation of the corrective measures and progress achieved in 2021 as follows:

- Within the framework of the project financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), several works and projects have been undertaken, among them the restoration project for San Lorenzo Castle, the conservation project for San Jeronimo and San Fernando Fortifications (Portobelo), the conservation project of Santiago Fortifications (Battery and hilltop stronghold) and Old Santiago Fortification (Portobelo) and the visitor centre and natural trails in the Protected Forest of San Lorenzo;
- The integral Management Plan is expected to be tendered in 2022. In the first quarter of 2022, the Ministry of Culture will initiate the international public tender process for the selection and award of the consultancy to the contractor company. The Community Development Plan for Portobelo has been completed and will provide an important input to the Management Plan;
- A formal request for a Minor Boundary Modification (MBM) has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 31 January 2022;
- In June 2021, the Inter-Institutional Commission of Portobelo and San Lorenzo, an interinstitutional communication office, was opened with the aim of providing information on the progress of projects;
- Through the Inter-Agency Committee for the Territorial and Urban Development Plan of Portobelo, other projects and actions aiming at improving the quality of life of the residents of Portobelo include the development of a water treatment plan, the sanitary sewerage and drinking water distribution network and the Unique Methodology for Regularization and Mass Titling of Portobelo by the National Authority for Land Titling (ANATI) and the Municipality of Colón;
- The Ministry of Housing, in coordination with other agencies, completed the final draft of the new Land Management Plan for the town of Portobelo, which will include new urban regulations and greater protection for historical monuments, including their buffer zones, and the new area for urban expansion. Implementation is expected during the first half of 2022;
- Actions and projects planned for 2022 include containment works on the slopes of Portobelo; intervention plans for Santiago Battery and Santiago de la Gloria Castle (Portobelo); consolidation works in San Jerónimo and San Fernando Forts (Portobelo) and San Lorenzo, and a project for the improvement of the road to access San Lorenzo Castle;
- The timeframe for the execution of the corrective measures (2019-2023) is not suitable, since a series of events has affected budgetary performance, among them the transition from the National Cultural Institute to the Ministry of Culture, the COVID-19 pandemic, and two hurricanes that occurred in 2020, which have redirected resources. The State Party is working on an updated timeframe and is negotiating with the IADB for an extension of the loan; the draft timeframe under discussion is set to be extended until mid-2025.

 On 17 March 2022, the State Party submitted additional information on the visitor centre and on the consolidation, conservation and restoration works in some of the fortifications in Portobelo and San Lorenzo.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The proposed MBM for the establishment of a buffer zone at the property will be examined by the World Heritage Committee under Item 8 of the agenda (Document WHC/23/45.COM/8B).

The financial contribution provided by the IADB has allowed progress in the consolidation, conservation and restoration works and projects undertaken in San Lorenzo and Portobelo. The State Party has expressed its commitment to the implementation of the corrective measures to remove the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The reasons put forward to extend the foreseen timeframe can be considered acceptable, but it becomes peremptory that a roadmap and timeframe to reach the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) be agreed between the State Party and the IADB.

The opening of the Inter-Institutional Commission of Portobelo and San Lorenzo constitutes an important step to ensure open public access to information on the progress of projects. The Community Development Plan for Portobelo is a key step to ensure community inclusion and participation in the management system. The programmes and projects foreseen in the plan are adequate and in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, but it is regrettable that little progress has been made in the elaboration and adoption of the new integral Management Plan for both components of the serial property and their buffer zones. It is noted that the State Party states that the international tender process to decide the consultancy company will be launched soon and that the Management Plan will be completed in 2022. The objectives and specific plans to be included within the integral Management Plan are adequate, although it is advised that specific considerations on the real or potential impact of climate change are included in the sections related to risk management.

The works and projects undertaken to improve the quality of life in Portobelo are commendable. The final draft of the new Land Management Plan for the town of Portobelo is welcomed, since it will allow the implementation of urban regulations, controlling urban expansion and avoiding encroachments that might threat the integrity of the town's heritage elements. It is expected that the Plan be implemented as planned and that the State Party submit the document to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The current consolidation and restoration works at San Lorenzo Castle seem to be carried out with high standards and in compliance with appropriate consolidation and restoration criteria so as to not pose adverse impacts on the castle's authenticity and integrity. It also is noted that this project is only aimed at covering 40% of all existing structures (the remaining 60% will remain for future phases of intervention).

As for the visitor centre at the entrance of San Lorenzo Castle area, it is commendable that the State Party intends to halt the entrance of private vehicles into the protected area and to offer the visitor different attractions besides the Castle, also via the provision of natural trails in the Protected Forest of San Lorenzo. The visitor centre is located inside the Cultural Zone (terrestrial sub zone of 35 ha.) declared by the zoning through the Management Plan of the Protected Forest and Protected Landscape of San Lorenzo (created by the Ministry of Environment's Resolution DAPVS-0001-2017). However, the overall design and height are rather discordant and disproportionate in relation to its wider setting and surrounding natural landscape. Therefore, it is very likely to pose a significant and permanent adverse impact on its buffer zone and wider setting. In Panama, there are examples of 'watch tower like' visitor centres which have been designed to blend in with their natural surroundings. Perhaps, several other design options could have been considered prior to commencing the actual construction works. Even though its construction has already started, and considering that the State Party reports that work on terms of reference for draft regulations to include Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) in World Heritage properties and in national heritage assets is in progress, it would be advisable that the State Party carry out a HIA as soon as possible, in order to fully assess the project's overall impacts and to apply any corrective and/or compensatory measures necessary. Furthermore, the lack of a proper management plan for the property makes it not possible to discern if the visitor centre has been conceived as part of an Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) oriented management plan for this component. Previous Committee decisions have noted with regret that no Management Plan was yet in place.

The progress achieved in the conservation and restoration works and projects is noted, but it becomes apparent that the state of conservation of the property's components is still fragile and that most of the

factors that justified its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2012 are still present. Once the extension of the loan is agreed with the IADB, a roadmap and timeframe for actions to be undertaken in the next future would be necessary.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.19

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.
- 2. Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.36, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Acknowledging</u> the important contribution of the project funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) for the conservation and management of the property, <u>takes note</u> of the commitment expressed by the State Party to implement the full set of corrective measures;
- 4. Also takes note that the original timeframe to reach the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) is no longer suitable, and requests the State Party to provide regular updates to the World Heritage Centre on progress in the negotiation with the IADB to extend the loan until 2025, and to update the roadmap and timeframe for achieving the DSOCR;
- 5. <u>Further takes note</u> of the State Party's submission of a proposal for the establishment of a buffer zone for the property as a Minor Boundary Modification for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its current 45th session under Agenda Item 8;
- 6. <u>Welcomes</u> the completion of the Community Development Plan of Portobelo, but <u>regrets</u> that little progress has been made in the elaboration of the new integral Management Plan for the serial property and its buffer zones, and <u>also requests</u> the State Party to strengthen the efforts that would allow for the plan's completion in 2022 and to submit the document once finalised to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 7. <u>Also welcomes</u> the works and projects to improve the quality of life of the residents of the town of Portobelo and the completion of the new Land Management Plan, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to submit the plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 8. <u>Further welcomes</u> the works and projects oriented towards the consolidation, conservation and restoration of the elements that make up the two components of the serial property and those related to the visitor centre and natural trails in San Lorenzo, and <u>notes</u> the State Party's submission of the documentation for these works and projects to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Welcomes furthermore</u> that steps to include Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in World Heritage properties are in progress, and <u>requests furthermore</u> that a HIA for the visitor centre be carried out as soon as possible and the results submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 10. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 11. <u>Decides</u> to retain the Fortifications on the Caribbean Side of Panama: Portobelo-San Lorenzo (Panama) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

20.	Chan Chan	Archaeological Zone	(Peru) (C 366)
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See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

21. Coro and its Port (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of) (C 658)

AFRICA

22. Old Towns of Djenné (Mali) (C 116rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1988

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Serious deterioration of materials in the historic town and continued decay at the archaeological sites
- Inappropriate interventions
- Erosion of the architectural coherence of the town
- Lack of enforcement and implementation of regulatory and planning tools

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> In progress

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6678

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/116/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 7 (from 1981-2020) Total amount approved: USD 115,119

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/116/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 110,000 (Italian Funds-in-Trust); USD 23,100 (Croisi Europe); USD 86,900 (European Commission); USD 83,147. (Netherlands Funds-in-Trust); USD 71,090 (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation); 75,000 Euros (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation);

Previous monitoring missions

2002, 2005: World Heritage Centre missions; 2006: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; 2014, 2016: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; April 2017: UNESCO Expert mission to assess the state of conservation of Mali's World Heritage properties

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- No management and conservation plan
- Pressure from urban development
- · Deterioration of dwellings
- Waste disposal problems
- · Encroachments on the archaeological sites
- · Instable security situation

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/116/

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation, (available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/116/documents/), providing the following information:

Concerning the archaeological sites of Djenné-Djeno, Hambarkétolo, Kaniana and Tonomba:

- The individual title deeds of 2019 are referenced on notice boards to raise awareness about heritage safeguarding;
- Site visits with security forces have reduced looting, and the town hall authorities plan to improve monitoring;
- Measures are being taken against the illegal occupation of the Kaniana site;
- Protective fencing is being installed as a test in areas with a high presence of artefacts;
- Site mapping is being prepared;

Concerning the old fabric of the town:

- The community has rehabilitated monumental houses at its own expense;
- District advisors are raising awareness among the population via local radio broadcasts;
- A maintenance manual for houses is being implemented;
- The redefinition of the boundaries of the buffer zones and the installation of signs has resulted in better protection of the property;
- Construction in the buffer zone has been reduced and modifications to the old earthen buildings with modern materials are prohibited;
- Illegal construction on the edges of the sites has been noted;
- New constructions in the ancient fabric are harmoniously integrated;
- To prevent the illegal occupation of the riverbanks, lots for residential use and social housing have been distributed;
- The difficulties in setting up material banks illustrate the climate change that impacts the
 production of rice bran and the plasticity of the land for banco, which is extracted far from the
 town;
- Awareness-raising among the local community on its role in the management of the property is being pursued;
- Work on the inventory of the houses continues;
- The European Union project has helped to promote the purchase of local materials for the benefit of the local economy;
- The 2018-2022 conservation and management plan of the property will require an evaluation to better integrate the corrective measures.

Several difficulties were identified:

- Lack of space in the ancient fabric of the town;
- The use of houses for animal husbandry;
- Difficulties in ensuring the maintenance of the houses of the most vulnerable;
- The sealing of banco houses with cement;
- The collapse of abandoned houses;
- The proliferation of tin and sheet metal sheds;
- The disorderly use of signs without authorization;
- The construction of solid houses.

The work on the development of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) carried out since 2022 will be finalized during 2023.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's report notes the continuity of the efforts made over several years to maintain constant management and conservation of the property, accompanied by a growing mobilization of the local community through neighbourhood councillors and a responsiveness of the more sensitized population. In a context of persistent insecurity in the central region of Mali, this observation applies to the protection of the archaeological sites as well as to the ancient fabric of the town, and it should be recognized that this is also due to the site's management team, whose long-term commitment greatly benefits the achievement of positive impacts.

The information provided on the four archaeological sites is appreciated insofar as it allows for an appreciation of both the efforts and the many persistent difficulties in protecting, monitoring and securing them against looting or illegal occupation. The State Party is to be commended for this, but the still unresolved problem of insufficient technical and financial resources for monitoring and awareness-raising, as well as for the overall management and conservation needs of the property, remains a concern that the State Party should endeavour to address.

Noting that the management and conservation plan for the property expired in 2022 and will need to be updated, the Committee should request the State Party to submit the proposed updated management plan to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies.

Concerning the ancient urban fabric, various factors such as lack of space, the use of houses for animal husbandry, the sealing of adobe houses with cement and the collapse of abandoned houses, are still points of concern, as are the disorderly use of signs without authorization and the construction of solid houses. However, the information that the town of Djenné has been able to mobilize its own funding to rehabilitate several monumental houses, coupled with the commitment and awareness of the various actors, can provide reassurance that the traditional and customary conservation mechanisms are still in place, and that the expectations previously placed on UNESCO to take charge of conservation measures have diminished. The work on the inventory of houses continues, and the State Party mentions abandoned houses in particular. The purpose of the inventory is to inform conservation and repair. It would be useful if a sample of this inventory could be submitted. Documentation is also needed for work undertaken on the rehabilitation and conservation of houses in order to record traditional methods and materials and thus contribute to the understanding of authenticity.

In this respect, it is commendable that a maintenance manual for houses will be produced, that decorative modifications with 'modern' materials will be banned, that new constructions will be harmoniously integrated into the ancient fabric, and that housing lots and social housing have been distributed.

However, in order to be able to appreciate all this information in more detail beyond the written statements in the State Party's report, it would be particularly beneficial if, in future, the State Party's reports were more fully illustrated with photographs and other materials. This seems all the more useful as for several years a reactive monitoring mission, as requested by the Committee, has not been able to visit the property to assess its state of conservation and the progress made in the implementation of corrective measures.

It is noted that the development of the DSOCR is being finalized. This finalization is accompanied by a programme of capacity building and remote and on-site support, led by the organization CRAterre-ENSAG (Grenoble/France), in partnership with the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage (DNPC), targeting all three Malian properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger ('Tomb of Askia', 'Timbuktu' and 'Ancient towns of Djenné'). This programme is implemented within the framework of the World Heritage Centre "Strategy to develop the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in the Africa region 2021-2025", and is financially supported by the Government of Norway. This work is welcomed in the current context of insecurity in central and northern Mali, and will further orient the property towards a state of conservation favouring its removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

In the meantime, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.22

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.1**, adopted at its 44th extended session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Appreciates</u> the efforts made by the State Party to maintain constant management and conservation of the property, as well as the mobilization and responsiveness of the local communities, both for the protection of the archaeological sites and for the ancient fabric of the town;
- 4. <u>Also appreciates</u> the measures taken at the four archaeological sites for their protection, monitoring and security against looting or illegal occupation, but <u>requests</u> the State Party to resolve the persistent problem of insufficient technical and financial means of the Cultural Mission of Djenné for the overall management and conservation needs of the property;
- 5. <u>Notes</u> that the management and conservation plan of the property expired in 2022, and requests the State Party to submit the updated draft management plan to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies;
- 6. Expresses its concern about the various observations made regarding the ancient fabric of the town, such as the lack of space, the use of houses for animal husbandry, the sealing of banco houses with cement and the collapse of abandoned houses, the disorderly use of unauthorized signs and the construction of solid houses, but welcomes the fact that the town of Djenné has mobilized its own funding to rehabilitate several monumental houses, promoting traditional and customary conservation mechanisms, and encourages the State Party to continue to raise awareness among all actors to maintain this momentum;
- 7. <u>Welcomes</u> the continued work on the inventory of houses, with particular emphasis on abandoned houses, <u>notes</u> that the purpose of the inventory was to inform conservation and repair, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to submit a sample of the inventory and identify its scope;
- 8. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to ensure that the rehabilitation and conservation work of the houses is recorded and documented, in particular with regard to the use of traditional methods and materials, as part of the authenticity of the property;
- 9. <u>Takes note</u> that a guide for the maintenance of the houses will be drafted, that decorative modifications with 'modern' materials are forbidden, and that housing lots and social housing have been distributed to the most vulnerable;
- 10. Requests the State Party, in order to better appreciate in more detail all the information provided in its reports, to include, in future, more illustrations with photographs and other materials, especially as a reactive monitoring mission has still not been able to visit the property to assess its state of conservation and the progress made in the implementation of corrective measures;
- 11. <u>Expresses its appreciation</u> that a programme of capacity building and remote and field assistance, supported by the World Heritage Fund, for the development of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in

Danger (DSOCR) for each of the three Malian properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, is being finalized;

- 12. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 13. <u>Decides</u> to retain Old Towns of Djenné (Mali) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

23. Timbuktu (Mali) (C 119rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

24. Tomb of Askia (Mali) (C 1139)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2004

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2012-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Occupation of Gao city by armed groups
- Inability to ensure daily management in the protection and conservation of the property
- Risk of collapse of the property

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> In progress

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6623

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1139/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 2000-2018) Total amount approved: USD 79,822

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1139/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: UNESCO Emergency Fund: USD 40,000; Action Plan for the rehabilitation of cultural heritage and the safeguarding of ancient manuscripts in Mali: USD 50,000; USD 500,000 funded by the International Alliance for the Protection of heritage in conflict areas (ALIPH) for the rehabilitation of the property; African World Heritage Fund: USD 15,000 for the documentation and development of the historical burial grounds of the Tomb of Askia necropolis in Gao.

Previous monitoring missions

May 2012: Emergency UNESCO mission to Bamako; October and December 2012: World Heritage Centre monitoring missions to Bamako; February 2014: UNESCO assessment mission to Gao; April 2017: UNESCO Expert mission to assess the state of conservation of Mali's World Heritage properties.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of site management
- Armed conflict

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1139/

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property (available at http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1139/documents/), providing the following information:

- Despite persistent insecurity, the state of conservation of the property is improving progressively.
 The involvement of local communities, particularly youth and women, in the management, restoration and maintenance have been decisive in the progress made;
- The "Project for the Rehabilitation of the Tomb of Askia", financed by the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Zones (ALIPH) and operationally launched on 10 March 2020, is underway despite an administrative delay encountered;
- Implemented by the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage, CRAterre, the Cultural Mission of Gao and the auditing firm 'Pyramis', in collaboration with local communities, the project includes the following activities (ongoing or already completed):
 - o Consolidation of the physical structures of the property,
 - Training of masons and guides,
 - Development of the ablutions area,
 - Rehabilitation of the electrical installation.
 - Construction of latrines,
 - Rehabilitation of the fence,
 - Replacement of metal doors with wooden ones,
 - Planting and regeneration of hasu plants in the courtyard of the Tomb of Askia and supplying the site with hasu poles,
 - Production of booklets and a conservation manual,
 - Provision of computer equipment and materials to the Cultural Mission of Gao;
- The reduction of the height of the enclosure wall is proposed to improve the visibility of the property;
- In 2021, other activities included Management Committee consultations on the liberation of the buffer zone, radio broadcasts on animal roaming within the property, and guided tours for school children;
- The project to develop parking areas in front of the main gate of the property and behind the asphalt road has been abandoned;
- It is proposed to fence off the buffer zone with a low wall and to intensify information and awareness-raising activities around the site;
- A project for the documentation and development of the historic graves of the Necropolis, financed by the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), was scheduled to start in February 2022;
- The National Blue Shield Committee has been established and presented in a brochure on African National Committees produced in partnership with the German Committee;

- The Management and Conservation Plan for the Tomb of Askia (2018-2022) has come to an end and the need for its evaluation is mentioned;
- The security situation is identified as the main threat to the property, despite the progress made by the State Party's defense and security forces.

The work on the development of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) carried out since 2022 will be finalized during 2023.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party report on the property suggests that the conservation and effective and sustainable management of the property is progressing well and with promise. Indeed, it appears that the ALIPH-funded rehabilitation project has been able to trigger a significant dynamic mobilization by the State Party and especially at the local community level to address several aspects dedicated to the conservation and promotion of the property. These include the structural and physical consolidation of the building, developments within the property itself as well as in the buffer zone, the planting and regeneration of hasu plants, the provision of equipment and computer material to the Cultural Mission of Gao, communication, consultation and awareness-raising efforts, and the involvement of local communities, in particular young people, and women, in the various actions. The State Party is strongly encouraged to continue along these lines, while ensuring that the implementation of the project, for which the 'Pyramis' auditing firm was hired to provide support following the administrative delay, is speeded up.

The State Party is also to be congratulated for having set up a National Blue Shield Committee and for having succeeded in mobilizing additional funds for the documentation and development of the historic graves of the necropolis, through funding from the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF). The previous request that the State Party ensure coordination with the different partners and donors of the projects developed for the mobilization of funds should be recalled, in order to ensure greater coherence between the actions and to provide for the establishment of a system of consultation between these partners for effective monitoring.

The abandonment of the project to develop car parks in front of the main gate of the property and behind the asphalt road, as well as the plans to improve the visibility of the property by reducing the height of its boundary wall, are welcomed, demonstrating the attention given to the property beyond the building itself. However, with regard to the proposed construction of low walls to enclose the buffer zone, it is recommended that the Committee invite the State Party to submit more details, including signage and monitoring of the urban planning standards to be applied, in order to better understand the contribution of the project to the preservation of the site.

Noting that the management and conservation plan for the property expired in 2022 and will need to be updated, the State Party should be requested to submit the draft updated management plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Overall, all 10 corrective measures are now underway or even finalized, although financial means, outside of current funding, for conservation and sustainable management remain precarious. It should also be recalled that these corrective measures were adopted by the Committee in 2016, but without a Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) having been developed.

It is therefore noted with appreciation that the development of the DSOCR is being finalized. This initiative, consisting of a capacity building and remote and field assistance programme, is led by CRAterre-ENSAG (Grenoble/France) and a national consultant in partnership with the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage (DNPC) targeting all three of the Malian properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger ('Tomb of Askia', 'Timbuktu' and 'Ancient Towns of Djenné'). It is implemented within the framework of the World Heritage Centre "Strategy for developing the desired state of conservation with a view to the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in the Africa region 2021-2025", and is financially supported by the Government of Norway in several African countries. This process is therefore welcomed. It is hoped that the development of the DSOCR and the positive evolution noted for the implementation of the corrective measures will lead to the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in the short term.

In the meantime, it is recommended that the Committee decide to retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and to continue to apply the reinforced monitoring mechanism for the property.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.24

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.3**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Expresses its satisfaction</u> that the "Project for the Rehabilitation of the Tomb of Askia", financed by the International Alliance for Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH), has enabled a significant dynamic mobilization by the State Party and the local community for the effective conservation, management and promotion of the property through a series of measures on the property and its buffer zone, and <u>strongly encourages</u> the State Party to continue in this direction, while ensuring an acceleration of the implementation of the project to overcome the administrative delays encountered;
- 4. <u>Also appreciates</u> the establishment of a National Blue Shield Committee and for having succeeded in mobilizing additional funds for the documentation and development of the historic graves of the Necropolis from the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), and reiterates its request to the State Party to coordinate with the different partners and donors the projects developed for the mobilization of funds, in order to ensure greater coherence between the actions and to foresee the establishment of a system of consultation between these partners for an effective follow-up;
- 5. <u>Thanks</u> the State Party for having informed it of its decision to abandon the project to develop car parks in front of the main gate of the property and behind the asphalt road;
- 6. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the plans to improve the visibility of the property by reducing the height of the enclosing wall;
- 7. <u>Welcomes</u> the efforts made also in the buffer zone, notably for a project to build low walls to fence off the buffer zone, <u>invites</u> however the State Party to submit more details, notably concerning signage and monitoring of urban planning standards to be applied, to the World Heritage Centre in order to better understand the contribution of the project to the preservation of the site;
- 8. <u>Notes</u> that the management and conservation plan of the property expired in 2022 and requests the State Party to submit the updated draft management plan to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Notes with satisfaction</u> that the 10 corrective measures are now all being implemented but <u>urges</u> the State Party to ensure the durability of the technical and financial means for the sustainable conservation and management of the property;
- 10. <u>Expresses its appreciation</u> that a capacity building and remote and field assistance programme, supported by the World Heritage Fund, for the development of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) for all three Malian properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, is currently being finalized;
- 11. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;

12.	<u>Decides</u> to continue the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism for
	the property;

13. Decides to retain runip of Askia liviani on the List of World Hentade in Da	ali) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.	des to retain Tomb of Askia (Ma	13. Decides to	13.
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25. Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda) (C 1022)

ARAB STATES

26. Abu Mena (Egypt) (C 90)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2001-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- A land-reclamation programme and irrigation scheme with no appropriate drainage mechanism for the agricultural development of the region has caused a dramatic rise in the water table
- The destruction of numerous cisterns, disseminated around the property, has entailed the collapse
 of several overlying structures. Huge underground cavities have opened in the north-western region
 of the property
- A large, banked road has been built to enable movement within the property

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1279</u>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1279

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1279 but outdated and needs to be revised

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2001-2014) Total amount approved: USD 7,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

2002: Expert mission; 2005, 2009 and 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; 2018: UNESCO and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Water (rain/water table): Rise of the underground water table level and ensuing damage to the structures)
- Housing: Impact on structures due to earth trembling and other forms of damage likely to result from the use of heavy earth-moving equipment (works completed)
- Housing: Encroachments within the property and inappropriate recent constructions
- Management systems/management plan: Lack of conservation plan, defining short-, medium-, and long-term objectives and establishing technical parameters (materials, techniques, etc.)
- Management systems/management plan: Need for a management plan to include research, presentation and interpretation, the role of stakeholders (e.g., the Mar Mena community), staffing, sponsorship, visitor facilities, access, etc.
- Governance: Lack of engagement with local communities and other stakeholders
- Management activities: Failure to implement corrective measures

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/

Current conservation issues

On 1 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/documents/. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions, in the recommendations of the 2012 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission and the 2018 joint UNESCO/Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Advisory mission, as well as towards achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), is presented in the report, as follows:

- A Management Plan has been drafted for 2022-27 and submitted for review as an Annex;
- A minor boundary modification proposal has been provided as an Annex;
- A Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) was drafted following consultation with stakeholders and submitted as an Annex;
- The state of conservation of the property is being monitored and priorities established for a conservation works schedule;
- Conservation work is being carried out for the Mar Mena Tomb, Baptistry, Great Basilica, Church
 of the Martyr, façade of the hotels, the southern and eastern basilica extensions, and the healing
 room. Activities include propping of unstable walls, rebuilding of collapsed walls and weeding;
- A site survey was carried out and recording and photographic documentation are being undertaken across the site, including documentation of restoration work;
- The Groundwater Level Reduction Project (GLRP) continues with geotechnical studies to manage the risk of land subsidence that might result around the Abu Mena Tomb, as well as new drainage wells and monitoring;
- A feasibility study has been prepared to enable the GLRP to transition to solar energy;
- An Abu Mena Steering Committee was established for the management of the property and, in particular, for the implementation of the Management Plan. It consists of the representatives of the relevant government institutions and other key stakeholders.

Finally, the State Party states that it would welcome a Reactive Monitoring mission to Abu Mena to review the progress towards the DSOCR in preparation for removing the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Progress is being made in response to previous Committee Decisions, towards the DSOCR and in the implementation of the corrective measures set.

The minor boundary modification has been reviewed by ICOMOS and will be examined by the World Heritage Committee under Item 8 of the agenda (Document WHC/23/45.COM/8B).

ICOMOS has provided advice and comments on the Management Plan in the form of a Technical Review. The early sections describing values and attributes and the management system are useful, particularly in light of Abu Mena being an early inscription without a detailed nomination file (inscribed in 1979). Feedback has been provided on how later sections of the draft might be revised to ensure that its implementation supports objectives for the property's conservation.

The Management Plan does not include a Conservation Plan, which is necessary given the serious state of conservation at the property. It is noted that conservation work is already being carried out to address the most urgent issues, although some of this seems to be only temporary in nature, e.g., metal props supporting collapsing walls. It is not clear what permanent measures and long-term maintenance are planned. The State Party has submitted a request for International Assistance under the World Heritage Fund, in order to support the implementation of a training programme in the preparation of a conservation plan for the site. This will be an important step in developing conservation strategies for the property as well as short- medium- and long-term actions. The Management Plan does not contain the expected information on visitor management or sustainable development, and it is unclear if plans currently exist or if they need to be developed.

Following a pilot phase, the GLRP continues to show progress and monitoring has been set in place. Geotechnical studies were carried out to manage the risk of the Abu Mena tomb cracking during the dewatering process. The State Party has decided to take slower but less invasive measures to avoid this, which is commended.

With regard to the DSOCR, the Committee adopted in 2007 corrective measures that included the following: a) consolidate structures; b) lower water table, establish a monitoring system and prepare a Conservation Plan; c) prepare and implement a Management Plan. While all measures are being addressed, they are not yet all completed and, therefore, the future conservation of the property is not yet guaranteed. For this reason, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

In addition, the timeframe for the corrective measures was originally scheduled for completion by 2010 and a revised timeframe has not yet been agreed. The State Party predicts that it will have completed all actions necessary for reaching the DSOCR by June 2023, although the request to revise the Management Plan means that it may not be ready for full implementation by then. It is therefore proposed that the new timeframe for the corrective measures is by end of 2024.

Finally, regarding the State Party's indication that it would welcome a Reactive Monitoring mission with a view to removing the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies consider that such a Reactive Monitoring mission may be organized once a draft Conservation Plan has been prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review. and the State Party considers that the corrective measures have all been implemented.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.26

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.5**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the efforts undertaken towards improving the state of conservation of the property, and <u>urges</u> the State Party to continue its work on the corrective measures adopted at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007);
- 4. <u>Notes</u> the invitation from the State Party for a World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property;
- 5. <u>Requests</u> that the Management Plan be revised in light of the ICOMOS Technical Review, with particular attention given to ensuring that conservation planning is completed, as well as developing plans for visitor management and sustainable development;
- 6. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session:
- 7. <u>Decides</u> to retain Abu Mena (Egypt) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Note: the following reports on the World Heritage properties of Iraq need to be read in conjunction with Item 30 below.

27. Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (Iraq) (C 1130)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2003

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2003-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Nearby construction of a dam entailing partial flooding and seepage
- Armed conflict

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (2003)

Total amount approved: USD 50,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted (for World Heritage properties of Iraq):

- USD 6,000 from the Italian Funds-in-Trust
- USD 1.5 million by the Government of Japan (for cultural heritage, including World Heritage)
- USD 154,000 by the Government of Norway (for cultural heritage, including World Heritage)
- EUR 300,000 by the Government of Italy (for cultural heritage, including World Heritage)
- USD 35,000 by the Government of the Netherlands (for cultural heritage, including World Heritage)
- USD 100,000 Heritage Emergency Fund support for Iraqi World Heritage properties.
- USD 35,782 from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust (for Strengthening capacities in state of conservation reporting on properties inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger)
- USD 50,000 from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust (Strengthening capacities for the documentation and conservation of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger in Iraq)

Previous monitoring missions

November 2002: UNESCO mission for the Makhool Dam project; June 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; March/April 2022: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Deliberate destruction of heritage
- · Management activities
- Managements systems/management plan
- Water infrastructure (dam building project)

- Flooding (Partial flooding and seepage)
- · Fragile mud brick structures
- Absence of a comprehensive conservation and management plan
- · Destruction and damage due to the armed conflict

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/documents. Additional information was submitted on 4 March 2023. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in those reports, as follows:

- The construction of Makhool dam would have a severe impact on the property, and on other archaeological sites in the vicinity, if its construction proceeds as planned. The Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources sought to undertake studies in order to arrive at suitable mitigation measures to ensure the safeguarding of the property;
- An agreement was signed between the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH), the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the American University of Iraq Sulaimani (AUIS) to identify archaeological sites that would be threatened by the Makhool dam, document the damage resulting from conflict at the property, strengthen capacities in archaeological investigation and documentation, and develop a master management plan to mitigate the potential damage that would result from the construction of the dam;
- In updated information transmitted in March 2023, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that all works related to the construction of Makhoul Dam have been stopped;
- Cleaning, conservation and renovation works have been carried out on some parts of the property to mitigate the risks posed by weathering, water damage and destruction due to armed conflict;
- An overview of the history and damage sustained, and proposed conservation actions to be carried out, have been provided for the following structures:
 - The structure of the Ziggurat continues to deteriorate, despite the backfilling of the trench in 2018, as decayed cavities remain and continue to expand at the top of the Ziggurat,
 - As a temporary stabilisation measure, the Centre of Archaeology and Heritage at AUIS, added new iron supports to the second arch of the Tabira Gate to avoid collapse, but additional work is crucial to conserve the other arches which are also on the verge of collapse,
 - The rehabilitation of the Walter Andrae Palace has proceeded in the framework of the agreement between SBAH and the University of Munich, and following recommendations of technical review. It will become the residence archaeological expeditions,
 - Parts of the 'Masnah' (buttress) have been eroded and there is uncertainty on whether the foundations still exist as they are submerged in the river. The State Party highlights that collapse of the cliff on the eastern riverbank poses an imminent threat to the property,
 - Outline of conservation actions were also provided for several monuments, including the Royal Cemetery and the Parthian Palace;
- Moreover, closure of the Tigris River branch, adjacent to Sherqat Castle, is under consideration
 to allow for excavation of the archaeological areas believed to be a submerged Assyrian harbour.
 However, the State Party is concerned that this closure would also cause significant damage to
 the entire property during the flood season.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property from 28 March to 1 April 2022. A copy of the mission report is also available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1130/documents.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The information provided by the State Party concerning the cessation of Makhool Dam is reassuring, given that upon inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, this project was considered as a

major threat to the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), justifying its concurrent inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2003. The Committee's previous decisions requested relocation or cancellation of the project.

During the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, the State Party stressed its intention to explore the execution of mitigation measures to ensure protection of the property and other archaeological sites from flooding. However, on the basis of the limited technical and topographic documentation on the environmental impact of the dam, and on the level of water in the future reservoir, it was not possible to define precisely to what degree the property will be impacted or whether and how it might be protected. Further specific studies would have been necessary to map and assess comprehensively the impact of the dam and to allow consideration of the viability of possible designed measures in ensuring the effective protection of the property's OUV and all its attributes.

Beyond the construction of a structure to protect the site from flooding (e.g., retaining walls, embankments, dikes, etc.), it is to be recalled that the property is very fragile, primarily having earthen constructions. The property has been suffering from water seepage and environmental degradation for some time, which has been accelerating its deterioration. Hence, in addition to the threat of flooding in the event of the dam's construction, the mission considered that several other threats should be taken into consideration when assessing the effectiveness of protective measures, including the potential increase in water seepage, salt infiltration, the creation of a new micro-climate, and the potential impact of any new large constructions on the property's OUV. Accordingly, a number of additional in-depth technical studies were identified by the mission as necessary urgent actions to be undertaken.

In terms of the current state of conservation of the property, the State Party has begun to address remedial and repair work to mitigate the impact of threats, including those resulting from weathering and water damage.

The 2022 mission recommended a number of necessary actions, including the preparation of an overall comprehensive conservation plan for the property in full consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, carrying out regular maintenance activities, submitting a detailed report on all planned and ongoing interventions carried out and their priority while noting that all interventions must be integrated into the comprehensive conservation plan for the property, undertaking a number of protection measures at the property, as well as the elaboration of a management system and preparation of a Management Plan. As previously recommended, only urgent stabilisation work should be undertaken in cases where collapse or further damage is imminent, and according to the principle of minimal intervention.

The State Party has been regularly consulting with the world Heritage Centre, particularly with regard to the rehabilitation project for the Walter Andrae Palace, which was reviewed by ICOMOS. It is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to pursue consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and to continue to inform on any future plans for major restoration or new construction which may affect the OUV of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, before making any decisions which would be difficult to reverse.

The World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with ICOMOS, has supported the State Party in the elaboration of the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV), through an online technical workshop funded by the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust project to strengthen capacities of properties in Iraq inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

With the cessation of the Makhool Dam project, and in light of the outcomes of the 2022 mission, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to initiate the elaboration the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and the necessary corrective measures, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.27

The World Heritage Committee,

Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.

- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.6**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
- 3. Taking into account Decision 45 COM 7A.30 on World Heritage properties in Iraq,
- 4. <u>Commends</u> the decision by the State Party to halt any further construction of Makhool Dam, given its potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to ensure the permanent cancellation or relocation of the project;
- 5. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the efforts of the State Party in providing an informative report, with indications on the damages incurred and planned conservation works at the property, as well as in seeking partnerships and support for documentation, protection and conservation;
- 6. <u>Takes note</u> of the conclusions and recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission and <u>requests</u> the State party to implement its recommendations, with particular regard to:
 - a) Preparation of an overall comprehensive conservation plan for the property in full consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies,
 - b) Carrying out regular maintenance activities, following testing in a pilot area and monitoring over a certain period,
 - c) Submitting a detailed report on all planned and ongoing interventions carried out and their priority to the World Heritage Centre, noting that all interventions must be integrated into the comprehensive conservation plan for the property,
 - d) Undertaking site protection measures, including the prevention of uncontrolled access, as well as installing a fence and proper signage that does not negatively impact the OUV of the property,
 - e) Elaboration of a management system and preparation of a Management Plan that defines and protects the attributes of OUV;
- 7. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to pursue consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to prioritise urgent maintenance and stabilisation actions for damaged and deteriorated components, while <u>recalling</u> that emergency stabilisation work should only be undertaken in cases where collapse or further damage is imminent and according to the principle of minimal intervention, <u>reiterates its request</u> to the State Party that all interventions be addressed within the framework of the overall comprehensive conservation plan for the property, which should be prepared as a matter of priority;
- 8. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to continue to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information on all future works that may have an impact on the OUV of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 9. <u>Takes note with satisfaction</u> the cooperation undertaken by the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS towards the development of the retrospective Statement of OUV for the property;
- Further requests the State Party to initiate the elaboration the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, and the necessary corrective measures, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and advisory Bodies;

- 11. <u>Reiterates its appeal</u> to all States Parties to cooperate in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural heritage coming from Iraq as per the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2199 of February 2015, 2253 of December 2015 and 2347 of March 2017;
- 12. <u>Calls again</u> on all Member States of UNESCO to support emergency safeguarding measures, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
- 13. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session:
- 14. <u>Decides</u> to retain Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (Iraq) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- 28. Hatra (Iraq) (C 277rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

29. Samarra Archaeological City (Iraq) (C 276 rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

30. General Decision on the World Heritage properties of Iraq

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

31. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan) (C 148 rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

32. Rachid Karami International Fair-Tripoli (Lebanon) (C 1702)

Property inscribed during the 18th extraordinary session of the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2023). No reporting is required on this property at this session of the World Heritage Committee.

33. Archaeological Site of Cyrene (Libya) (C 190)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

34. Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna (Libya) (C 183)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

35. Archaeological Site of Sabratha (Libya) (C 184)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (iii)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

<u>Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Conflict situation prevailing in the country

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: June 2020: Netherlands Funds in Trust: USD 49,620 for Strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of corrective measures for Libyan World Heritage properties.

Previous monitoring missions

June 2000: World Heritage Centre mission; March 2003: World Heritage Centre mission; January 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing
- Invasive/alien terrestrial species
- Land conversion
- Management system/ management plan: absence of a management plan and a holistic conservation strategy
- Relative humidity
- Armed conflict
- Other Threats: Excessive vegetation growth; Impact of humidity and seawater salt on stone masonry

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/

Current conservation issues

On 3 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the executive summary of which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/documents/. Works and studies performed at the property during the year 2021 and progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented, as follows:

- Implementation of the second phase of the project supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) proceeded in March 2021. The project, which was carried out in cooperation with the Municipal Council of Sabratha, aimed at rehabilitating the area around the Roman Theatre. The work included the removal of the support blocks of the old metal fence as well as the old toilets building, clearing the area of the theatre and its surroundings from vegetation, replacement of the doors of backstage rooms, and restoration of the wooden floor of the stage. In addition, a new metal fence was installed (in some areas within the boundaries of the property), as well as new signage and new solar-powered lighting fixtures at the theatre and on the road leading to it, replacing the old fixtures;
- Through online capacity-building activities, members of the team from the United Kingdom have remotely supported activities carried out by the Department of Antiquities (DoA) in relation to surveying, digital documentation and data collection;
- A damage assessment study was carried out for the Roman Theatre, following the recommendations of the "Technical Meeting on World Heritage Sites in Libya", which was held at the UNESCO Headquarters on 5 and 6 March 2020. Fieldwork was carried out between 25 October 2020 and mid-August 2021, through collaboration between the DoA, Durham University, and the University of the West of England, and funding by Gerda Henkel Stiftung. The report, which also includes full documentation of the theatre with 3D modelling and basic photogrammetry, was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in March 2022 and ICOMOS has carried out a technical review;
- The State Party reiterates its invitation of a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to assess the state of conservation of the property and to provide advice.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party has extended its efforts to secure projects through various funding donors, including UNDP and Gerda Henkel Stiftung, and has been able to move forward with the implementation of some initiatives contributing to maintenance, renovation, and improved presentation of the site. In addition, activities comprised capacity building, documentation and assessment of damage resulting from armed conflict, which are all welcomed.

Regarding the project involving studies at the Roman Theatre, the report provides an excellent basis for further investigation. In line with the conclusions of ICOMOS' technical review, it is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to ensure that further investigation be carried out onsite by an experienced stone conservator and a local structural engineer in order to determine, with the local site management and the DoA, the areas for direct intervention and a sustainable monitoring and conservation strategy for the property. It remains crucial that consultation is undertaken with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS concerning the technical specifications and materials for conservation/restoration works at the Roman Theatre and other archaeological remains at the property before implementation. It is also recommended that the State Party continues to inform the Committee about any plans for restoration or new construction projects that may have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

A comprehensive strategy for managing and conserving the property remains an urgent necessity and it is crucial that the State Party is strongly encouraged to elaborate a Management Plan and seek technical and financial support to this end.

It remains essential that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission invited by the State Party and requested by the Committee at its previous sessions is undertaken as soon as conditions permit, to evaluate the state of conservation of the property. In the meantime, it is crucial that the State Party begins to develop the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and a set of corrective measures, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

Along the same line, it is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to continue consultations with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS concerning the definition of an appropriate buffer zone and submission of the minor boundary modification proposal in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines. It is also recommended that the State Party launch consultations with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS concerning the development of the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) for examination by the World Heritage Committee.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.35

The World Heritage Committee,

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.13**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021);
- 3. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the efforts undertaken by the State Party in securing projects and initiatives addressing a number of conservation issues and the improved presentation of the property;
- 4. Requests the State Party to continue its efforts in this regard, to keep the Committee informed on the evolution of the situation at the property and to inform it, through the World Heritage Centre, on any ongoing and future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 5. <u>Welcomes</u> the outcomes of the damage assessment of the Roman Theatre and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to carry out further investigation, involving an experienced stone conservator and a local structural engineer to determine, with the site management and the Department of Antiquities, the areas for direct intervention and a sustainable monitoring and conservation strategy for the property;
- 6. <u>Further encourages</u> the State Party to continue to consult the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies with regard to restoration materials and techniques planned to be used at the Roman Theatre and the other archaeological remains at the property before their application;
- 7. Reiterates its previous request to the State Party to initiate the process to develop a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- 8. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, to develop a draft Retrospective Statement of OUV, for examination by the World Heritage Committee;
- 9. Requests furthermore the State Party to continue the close consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for the elaboration of a Minor Boundary Modification proposal, and to submit it in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines:

- 10. <u>Continues to encourage</u> the State Party to pursue the development of a Management Plan for the property, and <u>invites</u> it to seek the necessary technical and financial support and allocate the resources required for its implementation;
- 11. <u>Continues to call</u> for an increased mobilization by the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
- 12. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the invitation by the State Party for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to evaluate its State of Conservation, and <u>encourages</u> it to take place as soon as conditions permit;
- 13. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 14. <u>Decides</u> to retain Archaeological Site of Sabratha (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

36. Old Town of Ghadamès (Libya) (C 362)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1986

Criteria (v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

<u>Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Conflict situation prevailing in the country

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7649

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7649

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7649

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/362/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/362/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

June 2020: Netherlands Funds in Trust: USD 49,620 for Strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of corrective measures for Libyan World Heritage properties

Previous monitoring missions

January 1998: UNESCO mission; March 2003: World Heritage Centre mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Armed conflict
- Water (Torrential rain)
- Fire (Wildfires)
- Human resources
- Financial resources
- Management systems/management plan

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/362/

Current conservation issues

On 27 January 2022 and 28 February 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports, the executive summaries of which are available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/362/documents/. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions, and in the implementation of corrective measures adopted by the Committee towards the achievement of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) is presented, as follows:

- A Minor Boundary Modification proposal has been submitted by the State Party, addressing the comments provided by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS during previous meetings, namely the inclusion of the palm tree groves within the boundaries of the property and the creation of a buffer zone;
- Restoration and maintenance works have been completed at all buildings within the property which were damaged by by the torrential rains of December 2017;
- With regard to addressing the damage caused to 6 buildings within the property by heavy rainfall
 in March 2019, documentation, planning, rehabilitation and recovery works have started and
 reached a 20% completion rate. In addition, following the fire of 2019, cleanup and rehabilitation
 works have been completed in the orchards of Mazigh Street, with the support of the local
 population;
- Progress on the implementation of other ongoing rehabilitation, restoration and maintenance
 projects within the property has been presented. The State Party also demonstrates efforts in
 addressing the issue of management of risks related to fires by the execution of a traditional
 firefighting system (water tanks) in the old town;
- Extensive cleaning, maintenance and monitoring works involving the city streets, squares, walls, water basins, street drainage, and irrigation canals have been regularly implemented within the perimeter of the property;
- The State Party is reviewing the draft Management Plan which has been previously submitted, taking into consideration the ICOMOS technical review, the adopted retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) and the newly proposed boundaries of the property with a buffer zone;
- Information concerning annual budgets allocated for the property since 2007 has been provided, showing a continued increase in the operational budget in 2021 and 2022, and in theestimate for 2023;
- Information concerning the status of human resources of the Ghadames City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA) within the site management mentions that there has been no change in the total number of permanent staff between 2013 and 2021, while an increase from 99 to 115 employees foreseen for 2022. Several training courses in various fields have been implemented, and cultural activities have been undertaken;
- Two Memoranda of Understanding were signed with 'Managing Libya's Cultural Heritage' (MaLiCH) project, and with the Higher Institute of Science and Technology Ghadames;
- A capacity building initiative was launched for 18 months targeting 8 employees of the site management team, funded by the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH Foundation). It is implemented in partnership with MaLiCH project, which is a collaboration between King's College London, Nile Palace NGO, Department of Antiquities (DoA), and GCPDA. Due to the positive results of this programme, it was agreed to have practical

applications within a pilot project at the 'Alaally building' within the property, comprising rehabilitation work and transforming the building into a Visitor Centre.

The State Party reiterates that the property is not facing any specific ascertained danger and requests its removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger and calls on the international community to provide more financial and technical support.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The important efforts of the State Party aimed at the implementation of various initiatives contributing to conservation and protection of the property are commendable. The information provided shows that substantial efforts have been oriented towards the implementation of corrective measures and the achievement of the DSOCR.

As such, several corrective measures related to the provision of sufficient and stable funding are being addressed. The State Party reports that although no capital budgets were approved for the year 2022, the operational budget has well improved in comparison with that of 2021, in addition to an increase in the budget for salaries, which enhanced the maintenance work of the property. The State Party also reports that projected budget up to 2023 will help achieve the DSOCR.

The repair works following the damage caused by heavy rains in 2017 and 2019, in addition to other maintenance and rehabilitation works, are progressing and some of them have been completed. The maintenance and cleaning of the Ain-Al-Faras basin and the irrigation canals, which are important for the maintenance of the palm tree groves, must be followed by the full functionalization of the irrigation system and preparation of risk preparedness and emergency backup plans. Similarly, the execution of a traditional firefighting system (water tanks) in the old town must be accompanied by a fire preparedness strategy which is implemented on the ground by all stakeholders involved.

One of the identified corrective measures relates to determining a long-term strategy to protect, conserve and maintain the irrigation system along with an emergency back-up plan, with an expected completion date in June 2023 according to the DSOCR framework adopted by the Committee. The State Party has informed about the ongoing process of revising the Management Plan taking into account the recommendations of ICOMOS' technical review. It is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to finalize the review as soon as possible, ensuring the inclusion of a risk preparedness plan as outlined in the DSOCR framework.

The capacity-building activities for the site management team are welcome, and the Committee may wish to request the State Party to keep it informed about the progress in this regard, including the implementation of the Visitor Centre project at the Alaally building.

The State Party also submitted a Minor Boundary Modification request, which will be examined by the World Heritage Committee under Item 8 of the agenda (Document WHC/23/45.COM/8B).

It is recommended that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission, requested by the Committee at its previous sessions and previously invited by the State Party, be undertaken as soon as conditions permit, in order to evaluate the state of conservation of the property. In the meantime, it is crucial that the State Party regularly informs the Committee on the evolution of the situation at the property and any new measures undertaken to implement the corrective measures to ensure its protection and conservation, as well as any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The Committee may wish to reiterate its call for increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party to pursue urgent conservation activities.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.36

The World Heritage Committee.

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,

- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.14** adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the important efforts made by the State Party to mobilize partners and undertake activities for the conservation of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), particularly those directed towards the implementation of corrective measures for the achievement of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as adopted by the Committee at its previous session, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to continue its efforts in this regard;
- 4. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to finalize the development of a management plan for the property, including a risk preparedness plan, taking into account the recommendations of ICOMOS' technical review;
- 5. <u>Welcomes</u> the ongoing capacity-building activities and <u>also requests</u> the State Party to keep the Committee informed about the progress in this regard, including the implementation of the Visitor Centre project at the Alaally building;
- 6. <u>Also welcomes</u> the elaboration and submission of the Minor Boundary Modification proposal, following consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies:
- 7. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the invitation from the State Party for the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission to be carried out as soon as conditions permit in order to assess the overall state of conservation of the property;
- 8. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to regularly inform the Committee on the evolution of the situation at the property and any new measures undertaken to implement the corrective measures, as well as any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 9. <u>Continues to call</u> for an increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, to implement the corrective measures that have been identified;
- 10. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 11. <u>Decides</u> to retain Old Town of Ghadamès (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

37. Rock-Art Sites of Tadrart Acacus (Libya) (C 287)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1985

Criteria (iii)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

<u>Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Conflict situation prevailing in the country

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/287/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/287/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: June 2020, Netherlands Funds in Trust: USD 49,620 for Strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of corrective measures for Libyan World Heritage properties.

Previous monitoring missions

January 2011: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Deliberate destruction of heritage
- Human Resources
- · Conflict situation prevailing in the country
- Illegal activities (vandalism)
- Management systems/ management plan: absence of a management plan

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/287/

Current conservation issues

The State Party did not submit the state of conservation report, which was requested by the World Heritage Committee at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021). No recent information on the state of conservation of the property is available.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Unfortunately, the State Party did not submit a report on the state of conservation of the property. Since there is no updated available information, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its previous requests to the State Party, including in relation to continuing its efforts for the conservation of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), developing a Management Plan, and providing information, through the World Heritage Centre, of any future major restoration or new construction projects that may have an impact on the OUV of the property, including more detailed information on the rehabilitation of the fort at Alawenat, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

It remains essential that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission, requested by the Committee at its previous sessions and previously invited by the State Party, be undertaken as soon as conditions permit, in order to evaluate the state of conservation of the property. In the meantime, it is crucial that

the State Party initiates the process to develop the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and a set of corrective measures, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

It is also recommended that the State Party initiates, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, the development of the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV), for its examination by the World Heritage Committee.

The Committee may wish to reiterate its call for increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party to pursue urgent conservation activities, and to cooperate in the fight against illicit trafficking of Libyan cultural property.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.37

The World Heritage Committee,

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.15**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Regrets</u> that the State Party did not submit its report on the state of conservation of the property, as requested by the Committee at its extended 44th session;
- <u>Urges again</u> the State Party to continue its efforts for the conservation of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), in close coordination with local communities and civil society;
- 5. <u>Invites</u> the State Party to continue to pursue the elaboration of a Management Plan for the property, seek the necessary technical and financial support for its completion, and allocate the necessary resources for its implementation;
- 6. Reiterates its request to the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed about the evolution of the situation at the property and of any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property, including the provision of detailed information on the rehabilitation of the fort at Alawenat, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 7. <u>Recalls</u> the need to invite the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property requested by the Committee, and <u>encourages</u> it to take place as soon as conditions permit;
- 8. <u>Also reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to initiate the process to develop a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Requests</u> the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, to develop a draft retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, for examination by the World Heritage Committee;

- 10. <u>Continues to call</u> for an increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
- 11. <u>Reiterates its appeal</u> to all States Parties to cooperate in fighting against the illicit trafficking of cultural property from Libya and engaging in the protection of cultural heritage in the context of armed conflict, as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347 of March 2017, the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property;
- 12. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 13. <u>Decides</u> to retain Rock-Art Sites of Tadrart Acacus (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- 38. Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (Palestine) (C 1565)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

39. Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir (Palestine) (C 1492)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

Note: the following reports on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic need to be read in conjunction with Item 45 below.

40. Ancient City of Aleppo (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 21)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

41. Ancient City of Bosra (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 22bis)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

42. Ancient City of Damascus (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 20bis)
See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
43. Ancient villages of Northern Syria (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 1348)
See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
44. Crac des chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 1229)
See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
45. Site of Palmyra (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 23bis)
See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
46. General Decision on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic
See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
47. Historic Town of Zabid (Yemen) (C 611)
See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add
48. Landmarks of the Ancient Kingdom of Saba, Marib (Yemen) (C 1700)
Property inscribed during the 18th extraordinary session of the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2023). No reporting is required on this property at this session of the World Heritage Committee.

49. Old City of Sana'a (Ye	emen) (C 385)
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See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

50. Old Walled City of Shibam (Yemen) (C 192)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

ASIA AND PACIFIC

51. Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley (Afghanistan) (C 208 rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

52. Minaret and Archaeological Remains of Jam (Afghanistan) (C 211 rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

53. Nan Madol: Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia (Micronesia (Federated States of)) (C 1503)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2016

Criteria (i)(iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Management system/Management Plan
- Management activities (Overgrowth of vegetation, Stonework collapse)
- Storms (Effects of storm surge)
- Erosion and siltation/ deposition

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> In progress

Corrective measures identified

In progress

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions: see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1503/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2017 to 2019)
Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1503/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: USD 120,000 for the preparation of a nomination file and the management plan for Nan Madol from the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust; USD 26,232 for technical support to Nan Madol, Micronesia (List of World Heritage in Danger) from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust.

Previous monitoring missions

January 2018: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Legal framework (Legislation LB392 not yet passed and implemented)
- Management systems/Management Plan (Not extensive enough; Lack of a risk preparedness strategy as well as of a comprehensive tourism strategy into the management plan)
- Erosion and siltation/deposition (Need to remove silt from the waterways without jeopardizing possible cultural layers on the sea floor)
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1503/

Current conservation issues

On 27 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1503/documents/. Further information was received on 4 May 2023, and the following bullet points report on all the information received and provide information on the actions undertaken to implement the Committee's previous decisions, as follows:

- Travel to Pohnpei was not possible from January 2020 due to border closures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many activities have been delayed by these restrictions, although work has progressed through virtual meetings;
- The State Party and the NGO Cultural Site Research and Management Foundation (CSRM) prepared a Master Plan for the Sustainable Conservation of the Nan Madol World Heritage Site in 2020. Progress with the completion and implementation of this Plan in 2021-2022 has been impacted by the inability to travel to Pohnpei;
- In relation to the state of conservation, managing the vegetation growth caused by the siltation of the canals has been an urgent priority and is a focus in the Master Plan, along with the management structure and the activation of networks. The United States Department of Agriculture has financed the involvement of an arborist to develop the vegetation management plan and conduct training. Urgent vegetation management actions and mangrove clearing along the main canals took place from late 2022 to January 2023;
- Grants have allowed the purchase of tools needed for vegetation management, training and directional signage. Training was delayed by COVID-19 restrictions, but videos to support virtual training have been prepared, and virtual trainings occurred in the fall of 2022 and early 2023;
- The Master Plan also contains a 'Sustainable Tourism Plan' and an 'Interpretation Plan Discussion Draft'. The Tourism Office of the Pohnpei State Department of Resources and Development is working on a Tourism Plan;
- The State Party has clarified that the previous draft Management Plan that was submitted with the nomination dossier was never finalised due to the need to develop governance for the property. An outline for a Management Plan was presented to stakeholders for comments in 2019 and 2020. The Pohnpei Governor's Task Force will finalise the Management Plan, which will be the basis for changes to the legal protection mechanisms for the property;
- The completion of the legal framework (legislation LB392) to establish the Nan Madol Trust and the framework for the management structure for the property has been delayed by COVID-19 travel restrictions. A workshop was planned for 2022, but it has not happened yet. Capacity building has been identified as a priority. Organisations with a continuing involvement include the US National Park Service, US Office of insular Affairs, US Department of Agriculture, International National Trust Organisation (INTO) and the Bahamas National Trust;
- An organisational chart has been developed with qualifications and duties for each position in the future management system, including the post of 'Property Manager'. The current plan is to fund the post from the visitor revenue;
- Noting the significant practical obstacles to documentation, the State Party advises that more
 precise visual models of the stonework and other attributes can be produced based on LiDAR
 survey conducted by the CSRM Foundation, and an example has been provided. Furthermore,
 satellite imagery will assist with monitoring of mangroves;
- Efforts to establish Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) processes require further discussions between national and State agencies to clearly assign responsibilities;

- Following ICOMOS' Technical Review, work has progressed on the designs and specifications for a Visitor Centre funded by the Government of Japan, including interpretation exhibits and panels;
- Construction of a tourism resort on Nahnningi Island, within the buffer zone of the property, has
 continued. ICOMOS had raised concerns about this project in its Technical Review of December
 2019, and further clarification on legal process from the State Party is still pending. The HIA
 process has commenced, but has been delayed by COVID-19 restrictions;
- The Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) has not yet been drafted.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party has provided updated information on a range of matters. Some progress has been made in relation to the actions requested in Decision **44 COM 7A.30**, although many have been delayed due to border and travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As before, the collaboration with the CSRM in these processes is noted, along with the financial and technical support from the US Forest Service, the US Department of State, and the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, amongst others.

The priorities for vegetation management, clearing of the canals to improve their hydrology, and a system for monitoring the health of the mangroves area are well-identified but need urgent implementation and resourcing. Progress to implement the strategies for the most urgent threats associated with vegetation growth on islets and other structures were delayed but took place in 2022 and 2023, following a virtual training programme. While the delays have been unavoidable, the rate of deterioration of Nan Madol continues to be of concern.

It is also noted with concern that the key components of the legal protection and management system are not yet in place, despite the State Party's efforts. The position of 'Property Manager', which will represent an essential first step, is not yet filled. The management system and draft legislation for the protection of the property are still pending, and it is recommended that the State Party be encouraged to finalise these processes, along with the key management documents, as matters of high priority. The tourism and interpretation plans submitted by the State Party are noted.

It is also noted that construction works for a tourism resort on Nahnningi Island have continued, although the State Party's report indicated that they were to be halted before an HIA was carried out. It is essential that the HIA is completed and reviewed prior to any further decision about this development, given that the ICOMOS Technical Review raised significant concerns about the impact of the development on archaeological material and found that there would be an impact on the integrity of the property due to its visibility, form and siting. This development issue demonstrates the urgent need for adequate legal protection for the property and its buffer zone, and the need for HIA to be incorporated as a component of the property's management system, all of which are points that have been raised in previous decisions of the Committee.

Finally, it is noted that the DSOCR for Nan Madol has yet to be drafted. In view of the above, it would be therefore appropriate for the property to remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.53

The World Heritage Committee,

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7A.30**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
- 3. <u>Notes</u> that progress to establish an effective management and protection system for the property and address the urgent pressures and threats affecting its state of conservation has been delayed by border and travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and welcomes the State Party's assurances that these can soon be addressed;

- 4. <u>Also welcomes</u> the information that funds will be provided by the US Department of State through its Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation Large Grants Program to support a two-year implementation programme;
- 5. <u>Notes with concern</u> however that, despite the efforts of the State Party and its partners, the processes affecting the state of conservation of the property have yet to be effectively addressed:
- 6. <u>Reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to continue its work on previously identified matters of high priority, including:
 - a) Continuing the implementation of the urgent vegetation management actions and clearing mangroves from the main canals, following the virtual training programmes,
 - b) Appointing and establishing a long-term commitment to the post of 'Property Manager',
 - c) Finalising and approving legislation LB392 to provide legal protection to the property and establish the Nan Madol Trust,
 - d) Finalising the Master Plan for the Sustainable Conservation of the Nan Madol World Heritage Site, the site Management Plan and the Sustainable Tourism Plan,
 - e) Establishing processes for Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) as part of the management system,
 - f) Submitting a draft Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their completion, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies:
- 7. <u>Notes with satisfaction</u> that work has commenced on the Nan Madol Visitor Centre with support from the Government of Japan, and in line with the findings of the ICOMOS Technical Review;
- 8. <u>Expresses concern</u> that the development of a proposed tourism resort on Nahnningi Island, within the buffer zone of the property has continued before an HIA was prepared, and that the issues raised in the 2019 ICOMOS Technical Review have yet to be addressed, and <u>further reiterates its request</u> that the State Party ensure that construction is halted and that an HIA is realised, in conformity with the new Guidance for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage context, developed in collaboration between the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre, and provided to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before work resumes;
- 9. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, in accordance with Paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, detailed information on any proposed and ongoing projects, including HIAs carried out according to the aforementioned Guidance, for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to the approval and/or implementation of any project;
- 10. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 11. <u>Decides</u> to retain Nan Madol: Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia (Micronesia (Federated States of)) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

54. Historic Centre of Shakhrisyabz (Uzbekistan) (C 885)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2000

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- Large-scale urban development projects carried out without informing the Committee or commissioning the necessary heritage impact assessments
- Demolition and rebuilding of traditional housing areas
- Irreversible changes to the original appearance of a large area within the historic centre
- Significant alteration of the setting of monuments and the overall historical town planning structure and its archaeological layers
- Absence of conservation and Management Plan

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u>
Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet identified

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Not yet identified

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/885/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1999 to 2018) Total amount approved: USD 15,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/885/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: 2016: USD 30,670 from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust project for the Application of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban landscape (2011 UNESCO HUL Recommendation) at the World Heritage properties in Uzbekistan; 2019: USD 43,115 from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust for building capacity in the conservation and management of World Heritage properties in Uzbekistan.

Previous monitoring missions

October 2002: Monitoring mission by an international expert; March 2006: UNESCO Tashkent/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; June 2014: UNESCO Tashkent fact-finding mission; March 2016: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2016: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2019: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS High-Level Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/management plan (Lack of a comprehensive conservation and management plan)
- Management activities
- Housing; Commercial development (Major interventions carried out, including demolition and rebuilding activities)
- Legal framework (Need to reinforce the national legal framework)
- Human resources (inadequate)
- Financial resources (inadequate)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/885/

Current conservation issues

On 1 February 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property and the "Restoration Plan – Proposal for a Regeneration Strategy", which contained information concerning the State Party's preferred option for the future actions at this property. The document contains a comprehensive set of data, visual materials concerning the urban morphology and buildings showing the historical evolution from 1928 till present, supported by archival records, drawings and satellite images. It also provides a revised figure concerning the scale of the demolitions and reconstructions conducted within the property from 2014 to 2016, which represent 31 ha of the 240-ha property, of which 17 ha are traditional *mahallas*, and 23 ha are in the buffer zones. The Restoration Plan argues that restoration works on monuments within the property are reversible, that their settings and spatial organization can be recovered, and that the evolving nature of heritage in urban context should be considered. The State Party also submitted an "Intermediate Report: Diagnosis & Options for a Regeneration Strategy", which is a more detailed account of the studies and reflection leading to the Restoration Plan.

The state of conservation report is available at http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/885/documents and provides the following information on the actions undertaken by the State Party in response to the previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee and recommendations of Reactive Monitoring missions:

- After a one-year delay due to the global pandemic situation, the State Party commissioned independent experts who have visited the property since 2019 and conducted research on monuments and urban structure and elaborated a Restoration Plan, taking into consideration the two options suggested by the Committee. This was done on the basis of the data analysed through the preparation of the Restoration Plan and by consulting with local and regional stakeholders, including the residents affected by past demolitions;
- The research and survey on urban structure, traditional dwellings and monuments were carried
 out together with the analysis of the historical evolution, which enabled a comparison of the
 situation before and after the demolitions;
- The analysis of the architectural typology of traditional domestic architecture allowed to identify urban patterns, which feed into the decisions made regarding the possible Restoration Plan;
- The proposal for the boundary modifications is also under elaboration, in line with the chosen option;
- A national, multidisciplinary team is currently working on the conservation strategy for the Ak-Saray tiles;
- The State Party took into consideration the recommendations of the 2016 and 2019 missions when carrying out the above-mentioned actions;
- The International Advisory Committee (IAC) for Uzbekistan was set up, and its inaugural meeting took place in September 2021. The first technical session, scheduled in 2022, took place in July 2022 to discuss, among others, the advice on the implementation of Committee decisions and previous mission recommendations.

On 28 March 2023, the State Party confirmed that the moratorium on construction has remained effective from 30 March 2019 and no new construction work has been engaged since then in Shakhrisyabz.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The Committee may recall that the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2016 due to large-scale demolition and reconstruction within the property. Two Reactive Monitoring missions took place in 2016, the latter of which concluded that "the key attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) have been damaged to such an extent, and for the most part irreversibly, that the property can no longer convey the OUV for which it was inscribed" (Decision 41 COM 7A.57, Paragraph 8) and should be considered for deletion from the World Heritage List in accordance with Paragraph 192 of the Operational Guidelines.

Nonetheless, at its 42nd session in 2018, the Committee decided not to proceed with the deletion at that stage and recommended that "the State Party should further explore options for the potential recovery of attributes and, if needed, consider, in consultation with ICOMOS, whether a significant boundary modification based on some of the monuments and the remaining urban areas might have the potential to justify OUV" (Decision **42 COM 7A.4**, Paragraph 12).

A January 2019 high-level mission proposed two possible options for the State Party to consider, which can be briefly summarised in Decision **43 COM 7A.44**, Paragraph 11, as follows:

- 1) Focus on a selection of monuments representing the Temurid period, or
- 2) Explore key elements of Temurid urbanism within the Historic Centre.

The mission indicated that it did not have sufficient information to explore either of these two options or to ascertain whether OUV might be justified. In Decision **43 COM 7A.44** (2019), the Committee endorsed the mission's recommendations and decided 'to allow the State Party two years to explore possible options for a significant boundary modification or a new nomination, and at the end of this period, to consider once again whether the property should be retained on the World Heritage List for a further period to allow time, if by then a clear direction of travel has been articulated, or to delete the property altogether'. The Decision also made it clear that, in exploring either option, the State Party should undertake further research and develop a restoration plan to allow for a thorough assessment of the potential for any preferred option to justify OUV.

In its 2020 report, the State Party indicated that it would prefer the second option and offered assurances of strong will and commitment at the local level, but no potential way forward for the property was submitted within the timeline set by the Committee, which the State Party attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. In view of these delays with the consideration of options, the Committee extended the deadline by one year and, in Decision **44 COM 7A.31**, requested the State Party to submit a report on the feasibility of the preferred option for consideration at its 45th session in 2022.

Given the crucial importance of the assessment work being undertaken and the very difficult questions raised by any form of reconstruction, it was recommended that the State Party seek upstream advice from ICOMOS to identify any potential for a significant boundary modification or a new nomination to justify OUV.

In its 2022 report, the State Party analyses the two options proposed in the Decision **43 COM 7A.44** as well as a third option for a way forward that it considers to be a modified approach to Option 2. This third option, entitled "Restoration Plan of Shakhrisyabz, Proposal for a Regeneration Strategy", covers both the monuments and aspects of Timurid urbanism and is composed of three parts:

- A detailed analysis of the damage inflicted by demolition, by unsympathetic restoration of monuments, and by inappropriate changes to the setting of monuments,
- An outline of proposed restoration projects for the monuments and their settings,
- Suggested changes to the central area of the property, where major demolitions took place and resulted in the creation of a new park: re-instating lost urban connections, re-building some of the housing fabric within the mahallas that had been demolished and slightly modifying the boundaries of the property.

Overall, the State Party's conclusion, as presented in this proposed third option, is that if the monuments and their settings are restored, if the central area is re-landscaped to recreate urban spatial links and reflects aspects of Timurid urbanism and garden design, and if the boundaries are refined to include the whole line of the defences, then the OUV for which the property was inscribed may be recovered, including its authenticity and integrity.

The Committee has already acknowledged (41 COM 7A.57, paras 8 and 9) that the OUV for which the property was inscribed is no longer conveyed by the surviving attributes and suggested that the State Party "explore possible options for a significant boundary modification or a new nomination" (43 COM 7A.44, para 13). Although the report analyses the two options and proposes a third one, what has been presented is neither a significant boundary modification nor a new nomination; instead, it is a proposal to recover attributes of OUV without either.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies agree with the State Party report that a nomination based just on the monuments alone, and excluding the *mahallas*, would lead to a fragmented boundary and a property that would be difficult to manage. They also consider that detailed evidence on Timurid urbanism is insufficient to allow Shakrisyabz to be seen as exceptional in that regard. Nonetheless, they consider that the idea of combining monuments and urbanism has merit, and that aligning boundaries

with the line of the city walls is sensible. While the overall approach of the option can be supported in terms of sustainable development, in the view of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, the proposal, if implemented, will not recover fully the attributes of OUV for which the property was inscribed. The idea of evolving urban areas and the need for cities to maintain their dynamism have been fully taken into account in that conclusion, but the demolitions undertaken went beyond the idea of any evolution or change that could be considered as balancing the evolving socio-cultural structures or socio-economic needs of the city with the protection of the city's OUV.

The approach presented by the State Party cannot be said to deliver an intact city or intact urban fabric, nor will it return the historic centre to its previous appearance, nor restore key aspects of Timurid planning. The demolitions within the city centre have permanently altered the relationship between the *mahallas* and between the monuments and the overall city structure. The report recognizes this and does not propose to reconstruct lost historical buildings but rather to re-establish lost urban connections with a view to recovering some of those attributes.

The main decision that the Committee must now take is whether the property should be retained on the World Heritage List for a further period, to allow time to explore an agreed, clear and realistic way forward, or whether the property should be deleted from the World Heritage List. In the view of the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, the proposal submitted by the State Party deserves to be explored further. It is thus suggested that the Committee should not delete the property from the World Heritage List at this stage, but instead encourage the State Party to explore the submission of a significant boundary modification, in line with Paragraph 166 of the Operational Guidelines, that sets out a new justification for criteria, based on an OUV that reflects a shift away from the integrity of an overall intact city and towards an ensemble of Timurid monuments with urban areas seen as their essential setting. Such a submission could include the proposed adjustments to the boundaries. Although at this stage, it cannot be said with certainty that such a proposed OUV could be justified, this approach appears worth pursuing.

To that effect, the Committee may wish to recommend that the State Party engage in a specific consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS on procedural questions related to any submission.

The detailed and thorough historical research, documentation and analytical work that has underpinned the current proposal should provide a sound basis to define a protection and management framework, as it has allowed a clear and quantifiable understanding of precisely which buildings have been demolished (some 18 ha), an acknowledgement of the detailed and extensive work that needs to be undertaken to reverse damaging conservation of the monuments and to create more sympathetic settings, and a sound basis for designing new houses within the *mahallas* that reflect local styles.

The Committee may also wish to urge the State Party to take the necessary time to develop substantive proposals for the renovation of the monuments in the context of detailed Conservation and Management Plans integrated with an overall Master Plan for the city, which should encompass urban planning regulations and architectural and urban design guidelines in line with the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) as well as considering the comprehensive analysis of cultural legislations in Uzbekistan, conducted with the support of the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust. The State Party should also be encouraged to submit full details of urgent conservation projects, as well as the strategy for the conservation of the Ak Saray tiles, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any work commences.

Finally, the Committee may wish to welcome the launch of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) in September 2021 for the World Heritage properties in Uzbekistan and the organisation of its first technical session in July 2022, for which the contribution of the late leading expert Dr Michael Jansen, should be deeply thanked. The Committee may also emphasize that this mechanism should continue advising the national authorities on the conservation of cultural heritage properties and the implementation of Committee decisions and previous mission recommendations, with a reviewed membership.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.54

The World Heritage Committee,

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A,
- 2. Recalling Decisions 40 COM 7B.48, 41 COM 7A.57, 42 COM 7A.4 and 44 COM 7A.31 adopted at its 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively, and also recalling Decision 43 COM 7A.44, adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019) session, in which the Committee decided "to allow the State Party two years to explore possible options for a significant boundary modification or a new nomination, and at the end of this period, to consider once again whether the property should be retained on the World Heritage List for a further period to allow time, if by then a clear direction of travel has been articulated, or to delete the property altogether", and that in exploring options, the State Party "should undertake further research and documentation and develop a restoration plan, in order to provide sufficient details to allow assessment of the potential for each option to justify [Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)], before any work is undertaken on a significant boundary modification in compliance with Paragraphs 165 and 166 of the Operational Guidelines or on a new nomination", and further encouraged the State Party to "request upstream support in relation to the potential for a significant boundary modification or a new nomination to justify OUV",
- 3. <u>Notes</u> the progress made by the State Party, in particular with comprehensive research supported by scientific documentation, analysis of historical sources, archival documents and satellite images as well as participatory research with the inhabitants of the mahallahs, <u>acknowledges</u> that the State Party has considered the two options suggested in Decision **43 COM 7A.44**:
- 4. Also notes the State Party's wish to explore an alternative option, as presented in the "Restoration Plan of Shakhrisyabz, Proposal for a Regeneration Strategy", which aims to restore the monuments and their settings, re-landscape the central area where major demolition was undertaken to recreate urban spatial links and introduce aspects of Timurid garden design, and slightly extend the boundaries to include the whole line of defences;
- 5. <u>Further notes</u> that the proposed option as presented by the abovementioned "Restoration Plan of Shakhrisyabz" is not for a new nomination nor a significant boundary modification but rather for a minor boundary modification in line with the existing OUV, based on the assumption that OUV, including its authenticity and integrity, will be recovered if the option is successfully implemented;
- 6. Recalls that, in its previous decisions, the Committee noted that the demolitions within the city centre have permanently altered the relationship between the mahallas and between the monuments and the overall city structure, and considers that, on the basis of what has been submitted, such an approach cannot be said to deliver the integrity of an intact city, intact urban fabric, nor can it return the historic centre to its previous appearance, nor restore key aspects of Timurid planning, nor fully recover the attributes of OUV for which the property was inscribed;
- 7. <u>Also recalls</u> Decision **43 COM 7A.44** and the need to decide whether the property should be retained on the World Heritage List for a further period to allow time to explore an agreed, clear way forward or whether the property should be deleted from the World Heritage List, and <u>also considers</u> that the proposal submitted by the State Party deserves

- to be explored further and that the property should be retained on the World Heritage List at this stage;
- 8. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to explore the submission of a significant boundary modification, in line with Paragraph 166 of the Operational Guidelines, to set out a new justification for criteria based on an OUV that would reflect a shift away from the integrity of an overall intact city and towards an ensemble of Timurid monuments, with the urban areas seen as their essential settings, but <u>notes</u> that, while such an approach would appear to be worth pursuing, it cannot be affirmed with certainty at this stage that such a proposed OUV could be justified;
- 9. <u>Strongly recommends</u> that the State Party engage in a specific consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS on procedural questions related to any submission;
- 10. <u>Welcomes</u> the detailed and thorough historical research and analytical work undertaken and <u>further considers</u> that this should provide a sound basis to define protection and management requirements for the property;
- 11. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to take the necessary time to define substantive proposals for the renovation of the monuments in the context of the development of detailed Conservation and Management Plans integrated with an overall Master Plan for the city in line with the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), which should encompass urban planning regulations and architectural and urban design guidelines and take into account the comprehensive analysis of cultural legislations in Uzbekistan conducted with the support of the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust;
- 12. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to submit full details of urgent conservation projects, as well as the strategy for the conservation of the Ak Saray tiles, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any work commences;
- 13. <u>Also welcomes</u> the creation of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) for cultural World Heritage properties in Uzbekistan and the organisation of its first technical session in July 2022, and <u>emphasizes</u> that such a mechanism with the support of its experts should advise the national authorities on the conservation of the cultural heritage properties and implementation of Committee decisions and previous mission recommendations:
- 14. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
- 15. <u>Decides</u> to retain Historic Centre of Shakhrisyabz (Uzbekistan) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

55. Historic Centre of Vienna (Austria) (C 1033)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

56. Roşia Montană Mining Landscape (Romania) (C 1552rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

57. Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (Serbia) (C 724 bis)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add

58. The Historic Centre of Odesa (Ukraine) (C 1703)

Property inscribed during the 18th extraordinary session of the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2023). No reporting is required on this property at this session of the World Heritage Committee.