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World Heritage Convention

45 COM

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

Paris, 31 July 2023

Original: English

**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>

Decision required: 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)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (vii)(viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1996-2007, 2011-present

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

- Illegal logging
- Illegal occupation
- Lack of clarity regarding land tenure
- Reduced capacity of the State Party
- General deterioration of law and order and the security situation in the region

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6236>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6236>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/623>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 8 (from 1982-2015)

Total amount approved: USD 223,628

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 80,000 (in addition to approximately USD 100,000 of in-kind technical assistance) under the management effectiveness assessment project “Enhancing our Heritage”

Previous monitoring missions

November 1995 and October 2000: IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; 2003, 2006 and 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; October 2017: Advisory mission facilitated by the World Heritage Centre

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community
- Illegal activities (settlements, livestock grazing and agricultural encroachment, drug trafficking, logging, commercial fishing, poaching and wildlife trade)
- Invasive/alien terrestrial species
- Land conversion (deforestation and forest degradation)
- Legal framework (lawlessness and lack of law enforcement)
- Livestock farming / grazing of domesticated animals

- Management systems/ management plan (lack of clarity of the boundaries of the property, lack of clarity regarding land tenure and access to natural resources)
- Water infrastructure (potential impacts from hydroelectric development projects Patuca I, II and III)
- Overlap with important archaeological sites implying a need to harmonize management of cultural and natural heritage

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/>

Current conservation issues

On 25 March 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/196/documents>, providing the following information:

- Measures to address illegal activities in the property include road inspections, seizure of wildlife products, byproducts and firearms, neutralization of poaching sites, aerial monitoring of illegal construction, and SMART patrols;
- Indigenous territorial governance has been strengthened, including through development of a Life Plan of the Las Marías Pech Tribe Council, progress towards cooperative agreements and increasing capacity towards integrated management measures
- The land titling process for territories of indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples was expected to be completed in the cultural zone of the property in 2022;
- Progress is reported on the implementation of corrective measures to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). Forest cover, post-agricultural land recovery, jaguar population monitoring results are reported as well as progress towards community forestry management, reducing threats within the core zone, establishing buffer zone usage rights through family usufruct contracts, and integrated management with indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities. Due to financial constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, management effectiveness assessments were not carried out;
- The State Party recognizes that a Significant Boundary Modification (SBM) is a priority to achieve the DSOCR. However, in part due to tropical storms and COVID-19, no formal consultations regarding this process have been carried out, despite initial stakeholder dialogue;
- The Patuca III Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP) is currently undergoing operational testing. Several associated civil infrastructure works are completed or ongoing. Environmental mitigation measures for its operation have been undertaken. Compliance and progress on each of the 108 established measures are presented in a report (ICMA) from June 2021;
- No progress has been made towards the development of Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the requested Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the HPP, however the ToRs were expected to be completed in 2022;?
- Other projects, such as scarlet macaw species conservation, hiring and training of rangers and a deforestation alert system, among other initiatives were undertaken during 2020/21.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party should be commended for the continued inter-institutional efforts to address illegal activity in the property, including poaching and illegal settlement. It is noted with appreciation that measures have continued to strengthen indigenous territorial governance alongside conservation projects to restore the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

It is of concern that the expected completion of the land titling process giving property rights to indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples in the cultural zone was further delayed by 2 years to 2022, and it is recommended that the Committee requests to complete the process within the newly proposed timeframe.

Progress is noted on several fronts towards achieving the targets of the DSOCR, in terms of recovery of degraded land within the core zone, extent of forest under sustainable management through community contracts, extent of land in the cultural zone titled to indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, and progress to strengthen the reserve management committee as an inclusive decision-making body in the property. However, challenges appear to remain in maintaining coverage of broadleaf forest,

assigning management responsibilities and use rights to residents within the buffer zone, as well as carrying out management effectiveness assessments to monitor the protection and management of the property. It is recommended that the Committee again urge the State Party, as well as the governmental and non-governmental partners, to reach the targets set out in the corrective measures and to achieve the DSOCR, including through improved collaborations, financial and technical resources.

The State Party's commitment to advance the preparation of an SBM of the property is welcomed. Whilst the challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and tropical storms are acknowledged, it is regrettable that there has, as yet, been no formal consultation with indigenous and Afro-Honduran territorial councils. As a crucial step towards achieving the DSOCR, the State Party should be urged to finalise the SBM proposal as a matter of priority, in consultation with indigenous representatives, including by securing technical and financial resources as well building capacity to integrate the necessary consultation processes.

It is regrettable that construction of the Patuca III HPP is now essentially completed, and operational testing has already commenced, without a thorough assessment of the current and potential impacts of the project on the OUV of the property through the SEA requested by the Committee. Noting that the project is now at an advanced stage, the State Party should be requested to develop a study to identify and monitor the actual and potential impacts of the HPP on the OUV of the property, with a view to putting in place the necessary measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on the property's OUV, especially since still only three out of 108 existing mitigation measures, as outlined in the ICMA, are focused on longer term mitigation of environmental impacts.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.1

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.55** adopted at its 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*
3. *Welcomes the strengthening of indigenous territorial governance, and biodiversity conservation measures to restore the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and notes with satisfaction the ongoing inter-institutional efforts to address illegal activity in the property, including poaching and illegal settlement;*
4. *Expresses concern that the expected completion of the land titling process in the cultural zone of the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve has been further delayed to 2022 and urges the State Party to complete the process within the newly proposed timeframe ;*
5. *Notes the State Party's progress to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), however, notes with concern that many challenges remain, and also urges the State Party and its partners to ensure the corrective measures are expeditiously and fully implemented, through improved collaboration and resourcing;*
6. *Reiterates its request to the State Party to secure the necessary technical and financial resources required for the consultation processes, especially with indigenous and Afro-Honduran territorial councils, to submit a proposal for a Significant Boundary Modification as a crucial step towards achieving the DSOCR, and in particular to fully consider the archaeological heritage of the property and corresponding actors;*
7. *Regrets that the Patuca III Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP) is already in operational testing without the current and potential impacts of the project on the OUV of the property having been thoroughly assessed through a Strategic Environmental Assessment;*

8. *Requests the State Party to urgently develop a study to identify and monitor any actual and potential impacts of the HPP on the OUV of the property, and to adopt an adaptive management approach, including through development and implementation of necessary measures to mitigate any adverse impacts on the OUV;*
9. *Also requests 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 in 2024;*
10. ***Decides to retain Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

AFRICA

3. Manovo Gounda St. Floris National Park (Central African Republic) (N 475)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1988

Criteria (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1997-present

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

- Illegal grazing
- Uncontrolled poaching by heavily armed groups and the subsequent loss of up to 80% of the Park's wildlife due to the deteriorating security situation
- Halt to tourism

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Not yet identified

Corrective measures identified

Adopted in 2009 and revised in 2019, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7463>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted in 2019, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7463>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 2001-2012)

Total amount approved: USD 225,488

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: USD 1,250,000 from the Government of Norway from 2021 to 2024

Previous monitoring missions

May 2001, April 2009 and March/April 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Insecurity and porosity of borders
- Poaching
- Artisanal mining
- Transboundary transhumance and illegal grazing
- Illegal fishing
- Illegal occupation of the property
- Lack of protection and management measures
- Petroleum exploration activities

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/>

Current conservation issues

On 10 March 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, and on 27 March 2023, an updated report. These reports are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/475/documents/>. In addition, the State Party provided further information

to the World Heritage Centre through online exchanges on 20 June 2023. The reports include the following:

- Intensive poaching, illegal gold mining and international transhumance facilitated by porous borders due to the unstable security context continue to threaten the values, integrity and the protection and management system of the property. However, significant progress has been made towards a gradual return to stability with the redeployment of State presence throughout the country;
- The efforts of the State Party, supported by its partner the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and several projects financed mainly by UNESCO (by substantial funding from Norway), the European Union, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Lion Recovery Fund, are helping to improve the property's state of conservation, through better management of transhumance pressure, the strengthening of community resilience and good governance approaches. A 2022 - 2024 action plan has been drawn up, aimed at progressing towards removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
- This plan calls for the securing of an 11,000 km² priority zone, 63% of the property's surface area, by the end of 2024, as well as a conservation zone serving as a buffer zone, which is still relatively rich in wildlife. To date, implementation of the plan has enabled the securing of 6,534 km², or 37% of the property's surface area, to which a buffer zone of 3,687 km² has been added. This core area is subject to regular aerial and pedestrian surveillance coordinated by an operational control room and the presence in the field of 32 eco-surveillants and 12 eco-guards;
- In 2022, 48 transhumance regulators were deployed to limit the impact of transhumant livestock by raising awareness and directing transhumants to areas outside the priority and buffer zones;
- Substantial investments have been made to reinforce operational capacities for the surveillance and management of the property, including the rehabilitation of infrastructure (airstrips and trails, bungalows, Koumbala control post), and the acquisition of equipment (vehicle, motorcycles, navigation and data collection equipment, among others);
- In 2021 and 2022, bio-monitoring efforts in the priority conservation zone and buffer zone respectively recorded a total of 3,695 and 5,527 wildlife sightings of around 35 species of which the savannah elephant, giraffe, lion, leopard, spotted hyena, hippopotamus, Buffon and Defassa cob, buffalo, bongo, Derby eland and crocodile, among others. A data collection campaign to carry out a wildlife inventory of the entire property is ongoing since December 2022;
- Income-generating activities (IGA) have been launched in the villages around the property;
- The option to bypass the property from the south was adopted for the implementation of the rehabilitation project of the Ndélé-Birao National Road 8 by the State Party on 2 July 2020, safeguarding the integrity of the Park. The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) of the project is being finalized.
- In the framework of the development of the Master Territorial Development Scheme (SDAT), a meeting was organized in Bangui in 2021 proposing the organization of a field mission with the Ministry of Geology and Mines to solve problems related to petroleum and mining activities in and near the property. Petroleum exploration activities in Block A have been suspended since 2012;
- An influx of illegal armed gold miners and a proliferation of extraction wells is occurring in the Gordil – Nda corridor to the east of the property. This illegal artisanal exploitation is monitored by aerial surveillance, which allows the army to take repressive action.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The continued efforts of the State Party and its partners to improve the stability of the country, address threats to the property and implement corrective measures are appreciated. The establishment of an action plan, the delimitation of a priority conservation zone and the resumption of monitoring operations with the setting up of an operations control room and the strengthening of its operating capacity, the deployment of monitoring agents and transhumance regulators as well as efforts to raise awareness among transhumants to respect this priority zone constitute an important step forward. The progress made towards the objective of securing a priority conservation zone covering 63% of the property, with 37% already secured, is particularly encouraging. The projects and measures put in place to strengthen the management of the property, increase community involvement and promote sustainable

development, with the support of international donors, are welcomed. It is recommended that the Committee thank the Government of Norway for its significant funding through the World Heritage Centre, which has enabled the resumption of monitoring and management operations at the property with the aim of avoiding the loss of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), as well as other financial partners who support the State Party in its ongoing efforts.

Despite this significant progress, the persistence of intensive poaching, illegal gold mining and international transhumance remains a matter of concern. The State Party is encouraged to continue to strengthen control and law enforcement measures against these illegal activities and pursue advocacy for the implementation of existing regional agreements on combating poaching and other cross-border criminal activities, as well as those relating to peace, reconciliation and social cohesion. Furthermore, the information shared does not allow for a precise assessment of the level and location of threats to the property, and it is important to assess the damage caused by these activities, particularly in the priority area, and to undertake the necessary restoration activities.

The confirmation of the presence of a relict population of the flagship species mentioned above is very encouraging. The wildlife inventory underway throughout the property since 2022 should make it possible to assess more precisely the size of relict wildlife populations and their spatial occupation, and to establish wildlife indicators to develop the desired state of conservation with a view to removing the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

Recalling the Committee's decision in 2019 to grant the State Party a four-year deadline to demonstrate whether it is possible to restore the integrity of the property, and to collect additional data on the state of the fauna to enable an assessment of a possible regeneration of the OUV, it is recommended that a World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission be planned as from 2025, once more of the property's priority area is made secure and the wildlife inventory data on the extent of the property is available, with the aim to confirm that OUV remains recoverable and to establish DSOCR indicators and a realistic timetable for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Confirmation that petroleum exploration activities have been suspended since 2012 and the proposal to organize a field mission with the concerned ministry to definitively clarify the situation of petroleum Block A and exploration Blocks I, II, III and ensure that no permit overlaps the property is noted. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to avoid any petroleum and mining exploration activities within the boundaries of the property, in accordance with national legislation and the World Heritage status of the property. Furthermore, the influx of illegal armed gold miners and the proliferation of extraction wells in the Gordil – Nda corridor to the east of the property is extremely worrying and it is recommended that the State Party provide information on this threat and its potential impacts on the property and efforts undertaken to contain it.

Concerning the rehabilitation of Ndélé-Birao National Road 8, the positive decision by the State Party to bypass the property from the south, in response to the Committee's decision, is noted. It is recommended that the State Party, with the support of its partners, finalize the ESIA of this project to assess its potential impacts on the OUV of the property, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, before approving the project, in accordance with paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

Finally, it is recommended that the Committee maintain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger and continue to apply the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.3

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **43 COM 7A.5** and **44 COM 7A.39**, adopted respectively at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*
3. *Recalling in particular its decision in 2019 to grant four years to the State Party to demonstrate whether it is possible to restore the integrity of the property and to collect*

additional data on the state of fauna to allow an assessment of whether regeneration of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is still achievable,

4. Welcomes the significant progress made by the State Party and its partners in implementing the recommendations of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission and the decisions of the World Heritage Committee, in particular the reinforced surveillance within the delimited priority conservation area (hard core), efforts to better control transhumance, limit poaching and inventory the residual fauna of the property;
5. Notes with satisfaction the confirmation of the presence of a relict population of flagship species such as the savannah elephant, giraffe, lion, Derby eland and bongo, nurturing the hope that a regeneration of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is still possible, and calls on the State Party and its partners to continue their efforts to monitor and secure the property;
6. Noting that a data collection campaign has been underway since December 2022 to carry out a faunal inventory of the property, reiterates its request to the State Party to transmit updated data on the state of the fauna to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible for review by IUCN;
7. Thanks the European Union, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Lion Recovery Fund for their support in preserving the values of the property and in particular the Government of Norway for its significant funding through the World Heritage Centre, which has enabled monitoring and management operations in the property with the aim of avoiding the loss of its OUV, and encourages States Parties to the Convention and public and private donors to support the efforts of the State Party and the partner Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) for the effective management of the property and the implementation of the emergency plan;
8. Notes with concern the persistence of intensive poaching, illegal gold mining and international transhumance, and urges the State Party to strengthen control and law enforcement measures against these illegal activities and to continue advocacy for the implementation of existing regional agreements on the fight against poaching and other cross-border criminal activities, as well as those relating to peace, reconciliation and social cohesion;
9. Also requests the State Party to assess the negative impacts caused by the various past and ongoing illegal activities, particularly in the priority conservation area, and to undertake the necessary restoration activities to allow the recovery of wildlife populations;
10. Takes note of the confirmation of the suspension of petroleum exploration activities since 2012 and the State Party's proposal to organize a field mission including representatives of the Ministry of Geology and Mines to definitively clarify the situation of petroleum Block A and exploration Blocks I, II, III, and again reiterates its request to the State Party to avoid any petroleum and mining exploration activities within the boundaries of the property, in accordance with national legislation and the World Heritage status of the property;
11. Notes with concern the influx of illegal armed gold miners and the proliferation of extraction wells in the Gordil – Nda corridor to the east of the property and requests the State Party to provide detailed information on this threat and its potential impacts on the property;

12. *Commends* the State Party for the decision to bypass the property from the south for the realization of the Ndélé-Birao National Road 8 rehabilitation project, and *requests* the State Party, with the support of its partners, to finalize the environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) of the project in accordance with the new Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, before approving the project, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
13. *Requests* 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. ***Decides to continue the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism for the property;***
15. ***Also decides to retain Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park (Central African Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

4. Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Côte d'Ivoire/Guinea) (N 155bis)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

Note : the following reports on the World Heritage properties of the Democratic Republic of the Congo need to be read in conjunction with Item 9 below.

5. Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 136)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1980

Criteria (vii)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1984-1992, 1996-present

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

- Increased poaching
- Pressure linked to the civil war, thereby threatening the flagship species of the property

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

Corrective measures identified

Adopted in 2010, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4082>

Revised in 2016, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6652>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/136/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 14 (from 1980-2018)

Total amount approved: USD 353,270

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/136/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 937,000 from the United Nations Foundation, the Governments of Italy, Belgium and Spain and the Rapid Response Facility; USD 200,000 from the Government of Norway in 2020-2021.

Previous monitoring missions

2006, 2010 and 2016: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Armed conflict and political instability
- Poaching by nationals and transborder armed groups
- Inappropriate management capabilities to address the poaching crisis (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/136/>

Current conservation issues

On 8 April 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/136/documents>, which provides the following information:

- The numbers of certain species characteristic of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property have stabilized, in particular the elephant, thanks to the professionalization of the fight against poaching, the operationalization of the ecological monitoring system and a strengthening of the collaboration between the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN), the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), African Parks (AP), the local communities and the provincial authorities. The inventories carried out in 2021 reveal in particular the presence of 65 individuals of Kordofan Giraffe and approximately 902 elephants in the property;
- The subspecies of the northern white rhinoceros has not been observed in the property since 2008 and assessments were carried out by AP in 2018 and 2021 on the suitability of an introduction of the subspecies of the southern white rhinoceros. A consultation framework is proposed with UNESCO and IUCN to analyze the feasibility of this introduction;
- Poaching for bushmeat, illegal fishing, bushfires, the arrival of transhumant herders and artisanal mining remain the main management challenges. They mainly affect the hunting grounds adjacent to the property;
- A business plan for the property, financed mainly by the European Union and USAID, sets the management guidelines for the period 2022-2026. The creation of a 2 km buffer zone around the property is envisaged in the definition of the Land Use Plan (LUP) but the process is slowed down by negotiations on the relocation of artisanal mining sites existing in the hunting domains that surround the property;
- Sustainable socio-economic activities are implemented for the benefit of local communities with particular emphasis on sustainable agriculture, access to basic social services, increased availability and access to renewable energy;
- Transborder cooperation continued with South Sudan for concerted and efficient management of the Garamba-Lantoto landscape and the forthcoming signature of a protocol agreement between the two States Parties will formalise this cooperation;
- Progress is noted in the achievement of the indicators of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) as well as in the implementation of the corrective measures, and a joint reactive monitoring mission is requested to assess the conservation efforts of the State Party and its partners.

On 17 February 2023, ICCN informed UNESCO of the introduction process of 76 individuals of southern white rhinoceros to the property from South Africa. On 21 February 2023, the World Heritage Centre invited the State Party, through ICCN, to submit the comprehensive study mentioned in its correspondence for examination by IUCN as soon as possible. At the time of writing the present report, no response has been received from the State Party. During a visit to the World Heritage Centre on 12 June 2023, the Director-General of ICCN confirmed that a first group of 16 rhinoceros had just been translocated to the property on 10 June 2023.

The State Party is also considering submitting a new nomination for the property to better reflect its Outstanding Universal Value.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The information provided in response to Decision **44 COM 7A.41** and on the implementation of the corrective measures, notably the strengthening of management and monitoring capacities, strengthened multi-stakeholder collaboration and the development of income-generating activities for the benefit of local communities are welcomed, and the State Party is encouraged to continue its actions for the effective protection and management of the property.

The results of the ecological monitoring confirm a temporary stabilization in the numbers of Kordofan giraffes (65) and elephants (902), and an increase in hippos (2655) and buffaloes (8446). However, these populations remain extremely limited compared to the situation at the time of inscription of the property. The elephant population in the property was estimated at more than 11,000 individuals before the start of the conflict in 1996 and at 1,191 individuals during the last census in 2017. The high level of poaching for commercial and subsistence purposes in the hunting grounds adjacent to the property remains of concern. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to continue efforts to control poaching in order to promote optimal conditions for wildlife restoration. Recalling that the northern white rhinoceros subspecies is most likely extinct within the property, the consideration of introducing 76 individuals of the southern white rhinoceros to replace the northern white rhinoceros based on the findings of the risk assessment conducted by AP in 2021 is noted. However, considering the ongoing efforts to study the feasibility of in vitro reproduction of the northern subspecies on the basis of genetic material preserved on the last surviving individuals in captivity, such an introduction must be subject to consensus within the scientific and conservation community. It is noted that the State Party and its partners have begun implementation of a white rhinoceros introduction programme in the property with the translocation of a first group of 16 individuals of the southern white rhinoceros subspecies in June 2023, and that a second risk-benefit analysis was carried out in 2021 following that of 2018, which concluded that the benefits of white rhinoceros introduction outweighed the risks. While noting that the southern white rhinoceros could potentially fulfill the ecological functions of the northern white rhinoceros in the Garamba ecosystem, it is unclear to what extent the long-term management of the subspecies in the property as well as the risks that may be associated with such an introduction have been taken into account, notably the security situation in the property area and the persistence of poaching, disease, competition with other herbivorous species and veterinary considerations. It is recommended that the State Party submit the 2018 and 2021 risk-benefit assessment reports to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, and consult with the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) African Rhino Specialist Group prior to any rhinoceros translocation operations, in line with IUCN SSC best practice principles.

The report on progress towards achieving the Desired state of conservation indicators for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) as proposed by the 2016 mission is noted. However, the State Party has not yet submitted the final version of the DSOCR, with clear indicators for the recovery of the key wildlife populations based on recent inventory data available from aerial surveys and the monitoring system, as well as the recommendations of the June 2022 regional workshop held in Kinshasa on support for the process of removing natural properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in the French-speaking countries of Africa, in order to identify a feasible timetable for the eventual removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is therefore recommended that the State Party submit this document as soon as possible.

The existence of a business plan guiding management actions for the period 2022-2026 and the financing of its implementation thanks to support of the European Union and USAID are positive. However, the constraints linked to the relocation of the existing artisanal mining sites in the hunting grounds are noted, and the limited progress for the definition of a LUP and the creation of a functional buffer zone of 2km around the property are of great concern. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to expedite the finalization of the LUP and the creation of the

buffer zone in line with the sustainable development strategy of the Park, the ministerial decree of 2019 prohibiting artisanal mining in the hunting grounds, the strategy for the relocation of refugee camps outside the Park, and any other strategic document.

The continued cooperation with South Sudan, through the conduct of a technical assessment mission for the establishment of a bilateral cooperation framework for the enhanced management of the Garamba-Lantoto landscape is welcomed. It is imperative that the Memorandum of Understanding between the two States Parties be formalized and implemented as soon as possible in order to effectively control illegal transborder activities such as poaching and trade in wildlife products.

Furthermore, the willingness of the State Party to receive a joint UNESCO/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to analyze the progress made with a view to possible removal from the Danger List is noted.

The proposal to re-nominate the property is noted. Indeed, the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for the property inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1980 places considerable emphasis on the presence of the last population of the northern white rhinoceros, now considered probably extinct in the wild. A new nomination would examine the justification for the original inscription under criterion (x), taking into account both the likely extinction of a key species, but also the wider range of species of high conservation value that were not recognized at the time of listing. This could potentially enable the definition of an updated DSOCR for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

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

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.5

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44COM 7A.41** adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*
3. *Welcomes the significant progress made by the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature (ICCN) and the partner African Parks in close collaboration with the provincial political-administrative and military authorities and the local communities in the implementation of the corrective measures of the 2016 joint Reactive Monitoring mission and previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee, and encourages the State Party to pursue, with the support of its partners, its actions for the effective protection and management of the property;*
4. *Notes the results of the 2021 ecological monitoring, which show a temporary stabilization in the numbers of Kordofan giraffes and elephants and an increase in the population of hippopotamuses and buffaloes, but recalls that the populations remain very small compared to the situation at the time of the inscription of the property, is concerned about the high level of poaching for bushmeat for commercial and subsistence purposes in the hunting grounds and reiterates its request to the State Party to continue efforts to control poaching in order to promote optimal conditions for wildlife restoration, and to submit to the World Heritage Centre the strategy and the Action Plan for the conservation of giraffe in the property, for review by IUCN;*
5. *Reiterating its deepest concern about the probable extinction of the northern white rhinoceros subspecies within the property due to the absence of evidence of presence since 2008, notes the launching of the implementation of an introduction programme of white rhinoceros in the property with the translocation of a first group of 16 individuals of the subspecies of southern white rhinoceros in June 2023, and urges the State Party to:*

- a) *Submit to the World Heritage Centre the risk assessment reports carried out in 2018 and 2021 on the introduction of southern white rhinoceros, as well as the indepth study carried out in accordance with IUCN's Guidelines, as soon as possible, for review by IUCN,*
 - b) *In collaboration with the World Heritage Centre, consult and take into consideration the advice of the African Rhino Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC AfrRSG) prior to the implementation of any translocations of southern white rhinoceros to the property,*
 - c) *Implement rigorous long-term management of the risks that may be associated with the introduction of the southern white rhinoceros in the property, notably as concerns the security of the individuals, disease, competition with other herbivorous species, and veterinary considerations, to ensure the survival of translocated individuals in accordance with the advice of the IUCN SSC AfrRSG;*
6. *Commends the State Party for the validation of the business plan for the property which guides the management actions for the period 2022-2026 and thanks the European Union and USAID for their financial contribution for the implementation of the said plan;*
 7. *Notes with concern the constraints related to the relocation of existing artisanal mining sites in hunting grounds and the limited progress in defining a Land Use Plan (LUP) and creating a functional buffer zone of 2km around the property, and reiterates its long-standing request to accelerate the finalization of the LUP and the creation of the buffer zone in line with the Park's sustainable development strategy, the 2019 ministerial decree prohibiting artisanal exploitation in the hunting areas, and the strategy for relocating refugee camps outside the Park;*
 8. *Welcomes the continuation of transboundary cooperation with South Sudan, as recommended by the Committee, with a view to establishing a bilateral cooperation framework for the enhanced management of the Garamba-Lantoto landscape and again invites the two States Parties to expedite the formalization of the Memorandum of Understanding in order to reduce illegal transborder activities such as poaching and trade in wildlife products;*
 9. *Takes note of the information on the progress made by the State Party towards achieving the indicators as proposed by the 2016 mission and reiterates again its request to the State Party to finalize these indicators on the basis of the recent inventory data available, as well as the recommendations of the regional workshop on support for the process of removing natural properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in French-speaking African countries of June 2022 in Kinshasa, and to submit the final version of the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) to the World Heritage Centre, for adoption by the World Heritage Committee;*
 10. *Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to review the implementation of the corrective measures, and progress made to achieve the indicators as proposed by the 2016 mission, the present state of conservation of the property, the finalization of the DSO CR, as well as the status and proposed plans for the introduction of the southern white rhinoceros to replace the northern white rhinoceros, possibly extinct in the wild, as a key attribute of Outstanding Universal Value;*
 11. *Also requests 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 points, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;

12. ***Decides to retain Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

6. Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 137)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1980

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1997-present

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

- Adverse refugee impact
- Intermittent presence of armed militias and settlers at the property
- Increased poaching
- Deforestation

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

A draft was developed during the 2017 Reactive Monitoring mission (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/137/documents>), but the biological indicators still need to be quantified based on the results of a census of large mammals available at late 2018.

Corrective measures identified

Adopted in 2017, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6954>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted in 2017, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6954>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/137/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 9 (from 1980-2021)

Total amount approved: USD 170,025

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/137/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 1,003,900 from the United Nations Foundation (UNF), and the Governments of Italy and Belgium, and by the Rapid Response Facility (RRF), USD 300,000 from the Government of Norway (2021-2022)

Previous monitoring missions

1996-2006: several World Heritage Centre missions in the framework of the DRC Programme; December 2009 and April/May 2017: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Presence of armed groups, lack of security and political instability rendering a large part of the property inaccessible to the guards
- Attribution of mining permits inside the property (issue resolved)
- Poaching by armed military groups
- Bush meat hunting
- Villages in the ecological corridor between the highland and lowland sectors of the park
- Illegal mining and deforestation

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/137/>

Current conservation issues

On 8 April 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/137/documents/> and reporting the following:

- Ongoing collaboration between the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN), the armed forces of the DRC (FARDC), state services and local population has resulted in a positive lull in insecurity. From 2018-2021, four warlords and their accomplices were arrested and 50 of the 54 armed groups operating in and around the property evacuated. The remaining four are in the process of joining the disarmament programme;
- In 2021, no artisanal mining sites were active in the property. Of the 24 mining sites identified, 19 were abandoned and 5 active sites were closed during surveillance patrols;
- One case of baby chimpanzee trafficking was observed in the Kasese sector. The trafficker was arrested and transferred to the legal authorities. Activities to strengthen measures to combat wildlife trafficking included strengthening intelligence teams to record real time information on poaching and great ape trafficking, community awareness raising on conservation laws and regulations, and capacity building. With the relative lull in the property,, an increase in the gorilla population in the high-altitude sector was recorded from 168 individuals in 2020 to 174 in 2021;
- Surveys of 61% of the property show significant populations of key species remain present in the property, with estimates for gorillas (1,775 individuals) and chimpanzees (2,987 individuals);
- In 2021, anti-poaching and law enforcement efforts included 2,099 patrols covering 10,034 km, three joint ICCN-PNKB/FARDC patrols at high altitude (Tshivanga sector) aimed at removing all armed groups in the Lemera-Katasomwa axis, and arrest, prosecution and sentencing of poachers and rebels;
- Capacity building for eco-guards continued on matters including human rights and field data collection, and the deployment of well-equipped teams in all stations of the property;
- A rehabilitation plan has been developed for the ecological corridor between the highland and lowland sectors of the property, including an evaluation system with indicators and a proposed budget. Actions to address encroachment include the regular involvement of government and local communities including the Batwa in decision-making meetings, as well as capacity building, the continuation of participatory demarcation of park boundaries, strengthening surveillance patrols, law enforcement, and strengthening of sensitization and awareness-raising activities for local communities;
- In 2021, surveillance patrols covered 61% of the property, meeting the minimum 60% area threshold in the corrective measures;
- Support for the socio-economic development of local communities included farming, microcredit and agriculture, but could only be implemented around the highland sector due to funding limitations;
- Actions to implement the 2019 Bukavu Dialogue with the indigenous Batwa community included increased support for schooling; the identification, mapping and securing of land for the Batwa; mapping of villages bordering the property; establishment of a consultation framework between IPs, ICCN, state services, local NGOs, traditional chiefs and local leaders to monitor the implementation of the Dialogue roadmap; COVID-19 related food support; and valorization of Batwa culture;
- The participatory demarcation of the boundaries was carried out in Kasirusiru-Tshivanga at the highland sector. An International Assistance grant from the World Heritage Fund was provided to map the villages inside the Nzovu and Mumbili sectors in low altitude to evaluate the human presence in these sectors of the property;
- Regarding sustainable financing, a study is in progress on the valuation of ecosystem services, as well as strengthening marketing of the property to engage new donors and partners.

In April 2022, the World Heritage Centre received two third-party reports by NGO Minority Rights Group (MRG) regarding alleged human rights abuses towards the Batwa community including by ICCN and FARDC staff. On 22 April 2022, the World Heritage Centre transmitted the information to the State Party.

On 1 June 2022, the State Party transmitted a summary report of findings and recommendations of a “Commission of Inquiry into alleged violations by ICCN staff at Kahuzi-Biega National Park” established by the ICCN Director General in response to the allegations and composed of technical ICCN staff, coordinated by the Director in charge of human rights, key conservation partners in South Kivu, the principal author of the MRG report, and an independent human rights expert responsible for ensuring that the Commission's work complied with human rights standards. The report conclusions document a number of incidents but does not confirm the alleged systematic use of violence towards the indigenous Batwa.

In May 2023, the World Heritage Centre received an information regarding the death of an ecoguard in an armed confrontation in the property.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is encouraging that the on-going collaboration between ICCN, FARDC and local population and authorities is reported to have maintained the lull in the security situation, that the majority of armed groups operating in or around the property have been removed and that surveillance coverage has again met the 60% area threshold of the corrective measures. The on-going patrol coverage and closure of remaining active artisanal mining sites constitutes a positive step towards effectively managing the mining threat in the property in the longer term. The delineation of the property boundaries has continued, although no detailed information is provided to evaluate to what extent this corrective measure has been completed.

Regarding efforts to address encroachment, the development of a rehabilitation plan for the ecological corridor following its evacuation in recent years is positive. Whilst no information regarding the impacts of encroachment on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property was provided, it is recommended that the rehabilitation plan be finalised and implemented as soon as possible in full consultation with relevant stakeholders. The reported workshops, capacity building and regular involvement of all relevant stakeholders in government processes are also noted. Positive progress continues and all efforts should be continued to complete the corrective measures.. Whilst noting the brief update of wildlife data, it is recalled that the wildlife inventory data completed in 2018 is crucial for the evaluation of the OUV of the property and to finalize the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). Therefore, recalling Decisions **42 COM 7A.48**, **43 COM 7A.8** and **44 COM 7A.43**, the Committee should request the State Party to prepare DSOCR indicators based on this information, in order to finalize the DSOCR based on the draft proposed by the 2017 mission as soon as possible, and set out the actions needed to achieve the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is important to make clear that the quoted population number for Grauer's gorilla remains extremely low, as the population was estimated to be close to 10,000 individuals before the inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The allegations of human rights abuses by ICCN staff and FARDC soldiers towards indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) during law enforcement operations are of utmost concern despite the reported training of rangers on human rights.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN also note the recommendations of the “Commission of Inquiry into alleged violations by ICCN staff at Kahuzi-Biega National Park”, including recommendation at site level, the need to identify and sanction the perpetrators of the confirmed violent incidents, to establish a joint and independent human rights monitoring and protection unit in the property, to ensure a full application of human rights and strengthen the cooperation with civil society organisations working on human rights, the organizations of indigenous communities as well as local authorities, and at the level of ICCN to develop clearer rules of engagement for surveillance operations and guidance on the application and enforcement of human rights. In this regard, Decision **44 COM 7A.46** is also recalled, and it is recommended the State Party, together with its donors and implementation partners, be requested to urgently implement strong and effective measures to ensure that the rights of IPLCs are fully respected in all management decisions. This includes the establishment and implementation of a code of conduct, provision of training on human rights issues for all patrol units including appropriate law enforcement techniques regarding the use of force and firearms, and to ensure law enforcement operations are conducted in a way that fully respects the rights of IPLCs in line with relevant international norms and supported by fully transparent governance and effective procedures to ensure implementation and accountability. See also the DRC General Decision under Item 7A.9.

The reported progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2019 Bukavu Dialogue to address relations with the Batwa indigenous communities is encouraging. However, it is noted that serious concerns continue to be raised by IPLCs, including by the Batwa regarding a lack of consultation on the

aforementioned Commission and requesting the urgent establishment of a joint commission to address land allocation. The implementation should therefore remain a matter of priority.

It is recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger and continue the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.6

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **42 COM 7A.48**, **43 COM 7A.8**, **44 COM 7A.43** and **44 COM 7A.46** adopted at its 42nd (Bahrain, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively,
3. Deplores the continued violence and further loss of life of protected area staff killed in the line of duty, and offers its most sincere condolences to their families and to all the staff of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN);
4. Welcomes the continued improvement in the security situation and that the ongoing collaboration between the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN), the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and local population and authorities has resulted in the removal of the majority of armed groups operating within and in the vicinity of the property;
5. Notes with significant concern the new and continuing allegations of serious human rights violations towards indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) linked to law enforcement operations and also takes note of the findings of the “Commission of Inquiry into alleged violations by ICCN staff at Kahuzi-Biega National Park” set up by the State Party to investigate the raised issues;
6. Requests the State Party to implement all the recommendations of the report of the Commission of Inquiry, as well as any additional measures necessary to further ensure all conservation activities fully respect human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including by, but not limited to, establishing a national code of conduct for eco-guards and an effective and transparent grievance mechanism for human rights abuses, and by training all law enforcement staff on human rights issues, as well as ensuring an equitably governed consultative process with participation and decision making of all rightsholders and stakeholders, consistent with relevant international norms and the Policy on the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into World Heritage Processes(2015);
7. Welcomes the reported progress on the implementation of the 2019 Bukavu Dialogue recommendations, and urges the State Party to accelerate the continued implementation of the Dialogue recommendations in full consultation with all relevant stakeholders;
8. Notes with appreciation the continued progress towards achieving the corrective measures for the property including maintaining patrol coverage of the property and addressing artisanal mining and poaching, and requests the State Party to expeditiously implement all corrective measures as updated by the 2017 mission;
9. Recalling its concern regarding the increased pressure of encroachment on the property, notes with appreciation that a rehabilitation plan for the ecological corridor has been developed and requests the State Party to submit further details of the plan, and to

ensure its implementation takes into consideration any impacts of encroachment on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and actions required to ensure the recovery and regeneration of natural vegetation, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders;

10. ***Recalling*** the importance of wildlife to the OUV of the property, ***remains concerned*** about the low populations of key wildlife species, in particular the population of Grauer's gorilla, compared to the time of inscription and ***reiterates its requests*** to the State Party to submit the results of the 2018 or more recent wildlife inventory to the World Heritage Centre, and to finalize, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, indicators for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) based on the draft proposed by the 2017 mission and on the wildlife data;
11. ***Requests*** 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. ***Decides*** to continue the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism for the property;
13. ***Also decides*** to retain Kahuzi-Biega National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

7. Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 718)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1996

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1997-present

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

- Impact of the conflict: looting of the infrastructures, poaching of elephants
- Presence of gold mining sites inside the property

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Indicators adopted in 2009 and revised in 2014, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5983>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted in 2009 and revised in 2014, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5983>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/718/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1993-2012)

Total amount approved: USD 103,400

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/718/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 1,450,000, from the United Nations Foundation (UNF), Government of Belgium, the Rapid Response Facility (RRF) and the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPF), USD 550,000 from the Government of Norway (2020- 2022)

Previous monitoring missions

1996 and 2006: UNESCO World Heritage Centre monitoring missions; 2009 and 2014: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Intensive poaching of large mammals, in particular elephants
- Mining activities inside the property
- Uncontrolled migration into the villages located within the property
- Illegal timber exploitation in the Ituri Forest, which might affect the property in the near future
- Planned rehabilitation of the National Road RN4 crossing the property, for which no proper Environmental Impact Assessment was conducted

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/718/>

Current conservation issues

On 8 April 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/718/documents/>. A progress report was further submitted by the management authority in February 2023 in the framework of a technical project. These reports include the following:

- Efforts to remove armed groups and illegal miners from the property continue. In 2021, 175 law enforcement patrols grouped into three large-scale operations covered more than 12,700 km (almost 37% of the property). A total of 202 people were removed, and 84 arrests linked mainly to poaching and illegal mining were made of which 28 cases involving 57 arrested persons are pending court hearings. A ranger's position was installed at the closed illegal gold mining site of Bapela. A large-scale awareness raising campaign was organized in other illegal mining sites, urging miners to vacate the area before being forcefully removed. However, some semi-industrial mining operations are being conducted, including by foreign companies in the possession of mining titles issued illegally by the mining regulatory authorities (CAMI). The Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) is continuing its high-level lobbying to have these permits invalidated;
- Pressure from artisanal and semi-industrial mining activities in the property is increasing and facilitating other illegal activities. The persistent and even increasing insecurity is hampering the efforts to control illegal mining and is leading to increased migration into the property. New access roads are being opened by these semi-industrial mining operations, facilitating access into the property and enabling illegal logging, agricultural invasions, poaching and the establishment of illegal settlements;
- To combat illegal trafficking of natural resources, in particular poaching of Okapi, intelligence is gathered combined with awareness raising activities. Four checkpoints are active on the National Road 4 (RN4) crossing the property to check vehicle traffic for bushmeat and other illegal products;
- 58 new rangers were recruited, and a new rapid intervention unit is being created, equipped, and trained. A military officer of the special army Corps responsible for security of the National Parks and relevant protected areas (CorPPN) is now permanently stationed at the property and facilitating cooperation with the military operating in the region;
- The construction of the necessary infrastructure to enable effective protection and management of the property continued with the construction of offices and the acquisition of vehicles;
- Income generating activities are being supported in the villages through the community conservation governance board (Conseil de Gouvernance de Conservation Communautaire). Eight local stays and passages control committees (Comités de contrôle des séjours et des passages) were re-trained on guidelines for access to natural resources in demarcated agricultural zones in the property;

- Discussions are underway with the traditional authorities to demarcate the western boundary of the property. These discussions are hampered by the presence of a mining company inside the property in this area;
- Re-stocking the Okapi breeding station by capturing some specimens in the property has been delayed;
- Discussions are underway with several donors to substantially increase funding for the management of the property.

The existence of semi-industrial mining sites was confirmed by a UNESCO project evaluation mission that visited the property in 2022.

On 14 April 2023, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party requesting additional information on the status of artisanal and semi-industrial mining activities in the property and the measures taken to address this issue. At the time of writing of this report, no reply was received from the State Party.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The continuous and increasing pressure from illegal mining in the property coupled with persistent insecurity remains of utmost concern. Through the World Heritage Centre and financial support of the Norwegian government, efforts to demarcate the property and resolve conflicts related to the use of natural resources are underway (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/974/>). This work has documented the existence of several mining exploration and exploitation concessions including active semi-industrial mining operations issued by the mining regulatory authority (CAMI) inside the property based on its claim that the national park boundary differs from that of the inscribed property and ICCN maps, and that the concessions are therefore not located within the national park. While artisanal mining has been a threat to the property for a long time, the emergence of semi-industrial mining operations is a new and extremely concerning development, which is in violation of the protected area legislation and in contradiction to the commitments made by the DRC authorities in the 2011 Kinshasa Declaration. These larger semi-industrial mining operations are associated with deforestation, river pollution and environmental damage inside the property, and also facilitate access and attract further migrants into the property, leading to illegal settlements, agricultural encroachments, illegal logging, and increased poaching pressure.

The expansion of mining and the associated increase of illegal activities is jeopardizing the integrity of the property and therefore directly affecting its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Noting also that efforts to set up a commission with CAMI to resolve the issue of the concessions issued within the property have so far not led to any concrete results, it is of utmost importance that illegal mining is addressed urgently by the State Party at the highest level in line with the commitments made in 2011 and that all mining permits issued within the property are revoked by the mining authorities, that the mining sites inside the property are closed and restored, and access roads to these mining sites blocked.

The presence of semi-industrial mining operations within the property also complicates the aforementioned efforts to clarify the western boundaries of the property with the traditional and local authorities.

While the efforts to strengthen the law enforcement capacity in the property through the recruitment of additional rangers, arrest and prosecution of illegal hunters and miners, and the establishment of a second rapid intervention team is welcomed, it is concerning that patrol coverage is continuing a downward trend in recent years, decreasing from 52% in 2016, 47% in 2019 to 37% in 2021, which is well below the 60% corrective measure threshold. It is hoped that the additional recruitment of rangers will make it possible to progressively increase the coverage once again and that discussions with different donors will result in increased funding for the property.

The intention to populate the okapi breeding station is noted, but it is reiterated that no action should be undertaken to initiate such an initiative before the security situation is stable. It is also recommended again that the State Party, as part of the update of the Integrated Management Plan (PAG), develop an integrated *in-situ* and *ex-situ* okapi conservation strategy and engage best practice expert guidance, such as through the IUCN Species Survival Commission Giraffe and Okapi Specialist Group.

It is regrettable that the report provides no assessment of progress towards meeting the indicators defined in the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and that it has again not addressed previous Committee concerns and

requests. No data are provided, for example concerning the number of residents in the property and the villages located along the RN4, to assess the impacts of the increase in populations on land-use within the property. It is also regrettable that no information is provided on the update of the PAG and the formalization of the Central Integral Conservation Zone. It is clear from the information provided on the implementation of the corrective measures that the management of the property remains challenging in light of persistent insecurity and the increasing threats of mining and associated illegal resource use. It would therefore be important to provide the previously collected SMART data in order to enable an assessment of the impacts of illegal activities on the OUV of the property and data concerning progress accomplished with regard to the indicators defined in the DSOCR.

Given the increasing threats to the OUV of the property, in particular as a result of the increased pressure from mining and the emergence of semi-industrial mining operations inside the property, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint UNESCO/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property.

It is furthermore recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger and continue the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.7

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **43 COM 7A.9** and **44 COM 7A.43**, adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively,*
3. *Welcomes the efforts undertaken by the State Party to further strengthen the surveillance of the property but reiterates once more its concern regarding the persistent insecurity in the region, which limits surveillance coverage and effective management of the property, also reiterates its request to the State Party to implement all the corrective measures in order to restore the integrity of the property and calls upon donors to provide the necessary financial support;*
4. *Expresses its utmost concern about the continuous and increasing pressure from illegal mining in the property, including the emergence of semi-industrial mining operations approved by the mining regulatory authorities within the boundaries of the property, in contradiction to the protected area legislation, coupled with persistent insecurity, which results in large-scale deforestation and environmental damage, and also facilitates access to the property and attracts further migrants into the property leading to further illegal settlements, agricultural invasions, illegal logging and increased poaching pressure, and considers that the expansion of mining and associated illegal activities is jeopardizing the integrity of the property and therefore directly affecting its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);*
5. *Recalls the commitments made by the State Party as part of the 2011 Kinshasa Declaration, in particular to enforce the conservation laws and mining code, which forbid any mining in protected areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and urges the State Party to urgently address the issues of illegal mining at the highest level, to revoke all mining permits attributed within the property, close all mining sites inside the property and access roads to them and initiate restoration activities in the degraded areas;*
6. *Regrets again that no information was provided on the updating of the Integrated Management Plan (PAG) for the property and the formalization of the Central Integral Conservation Zone and urges again the State Party to expedite these processes to integrate provisions relating to the different zones of the property, including the*

subsistence zones, the Central Integral Conservation Zone and forestry concessions for local communities, and ensure immediate implementation;

7. *Notes again the intention to repopulate the okapi breeding station and also urges again the State Party to postpone any plans to capture okapi from the wild until the security situation is stable and to develop an integrated in-situ/ex-situ conservation strategy as part of the PAG for the long-term sustainability of okapi within the property, consulting best practice expert guidance, such as the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Giraffe and Okapi Specialist Group;*
8. *Also welcomes the continued efforts for the participatory demarcation process of the western boundary of the property including through the support provided by the World Heritage Centre with funding from the Government of Norway, and requests the State Party to finalize the full demarcation of the property boundaries;*
9. *Requests again the State Party to provide further details on:*
 - a) *The number of residents within the villages located inside the property in order to assess the impacts of population increases on land-use in the property,*
 - b) *The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) data to enable an assessment of the impact of illegal activities on the OUV of the property,*
 - c) *Data concerning progress accomplished with regard to the indicators defined in the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);*
10. *Also requests the State Party to invite a joint UNESCO/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess its state of conservation, the status of increased threats and impacts from semi-industrial mining, implementation of the corrective measures, and the progress towards achieving the DSOCR;*
11. *Further requests 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. ***Decides to continue to apply the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism for the property;***
13. ***Also decides to retain Okapi Wildlife Reserve (Democratic Republic of the Congo) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

8. Virunga National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (N 136)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

Current conservation issues

On 8 April 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the State of Conservation of the five properties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/193020>.

Unfortunately, the report did not include any specific information in response to Decision **44 COM 7A.46**.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is regrettable that the State Party did not provide any specific information in response to Decision **44 COM 7A.46**, which raises several important general issues related to the state of conservation of the properties in DRC and the implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration, adopted in 2011. An in-depth analysis of these issues is therefore not possible, and it is recommended that the Committee reiterates the points raised in its Decision **44 COM 7A.46**.

Regarding the overall security situation in the five properties of the DRC, the individual state of conservation reports show that the security situation appears to have now normalized in Salonga National Park and improved in Kahuzi-Biega and Garamba National Parks. The situation remains challenging in Okapi Wildlife Reserve. However, the most concerning is the situation in Virunga National Park, which has again been the scene of heavy fighting since 2022. Large areas of the park are now again controlled by the rebel forces. This situation is having serious impacts on management activities such as patrolling, wildlife monitoring and enforcement, and has tragically resulted in further loss of life among park staff and in particular park rangers. More details are provided in the report on Virunga National Park (see Item 7A, sub-item n°8). It is recommended that the Committee again strongly condemn this violence, offer its sincere condolences to the families of the victims and ICCN staff, express its utmost concern regarding the continuing insecurity in and around Virunga National Park, Kahuzi-Biega National Park and Okapi Wildlife Reserve and urge the State Party to continue to strengthen the capacity of ICCN to continue to ensure the management of the properties in the current difficult security situation as well as the efforts to restore peace and stability in and around the properties.

The continued cooperation between the ICCN and the DRC military (FARDC) for the protection of the properties is considered essential, however allegations of human rights abuses linked directly to law enforcement operations are of deep concern. While the challenges of protecting World Heritage properties in a region characterized by ongoing armed conflict and the proliferation of armed groups engaging in activities that may threaten the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), such as the exploitation of natural resources or mining and wildlife trafficking, are acknowledged, it is essential that human rights are respected, and that human rights are never abused as a result of conservation interventions. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate again the importance of implementing strong measures to ensure that the rights of IPLCs are fully respected in all management decisions and actions. Measures already taken in Salonga National Park and Kahuzi-Biega National Park to establish a code of conduct for park rangers, provide rangers with training on human rights issues (also underway for Virunga National Park), as well as the establishment of a grievance mechanism for human rights abuses, are all welcomed, and such initiatives should be expanded urgently to all World Heritage properties in the DRC. The establishment of a specific entity in charge of human rights in the ICCN General Direction could catalyze good practice and sharing of experiences between the sites. It is recommended that the Committee recall once again the importance of management processes that are founded on rights-based approaches and ensuring full involvement of all rightsholders and stakeholders, in particular IPLCs, in line with the 2015 *Policy on World Heritage and Sustainable Development* and the *UNESCO Policy on Engaging with Indigenous Peoples*. The State Party is therefore requested to further strengthen on-going efforts by establishing and implementing a national code of conduct for eco-guards and a grievance mechanism for human rights abuses in all properties, as well as ensuring human rights issues are included in all regular training of law enforcement staff.

The news that the State Party included the two oil blocks overlapping with Virunga National Park in the new public tender process for oil blocks in 2022 is of utmost concern (see also report on Virunga National Park). At the time of writing of this report, it is unclear if these blocks have been attributed.

It needs to be recalled that one of these blocks had been opened up for oil exploration in the past but that the company involved finally relinquished the block in 2014 after public outcry and several investors

divesting from the company. Since then, the World Heritage Committee has consistently requested the State Party to revoke all oil concessions attributed by Presidential Decree and overlapping with Virunga and Salonga National Parks.

In addition, several semi-industrial gold mining operations are now active in the Okapi Wildlife Reserve (see report on Okapi Wildlife Reserve, Item 7A, sub-item n°7). Reportedly the companies involved were attributed mining licenses based on erroneous map used by the mining cadaster. It is therefore recommended that the Committee express its utmost concern on these new developments, reiterate its clear position concerning the incompatibility of mining, oil exploration and exploitation with World Heritage status and urge once again the State Party to cancel all concessions for oil blocks and mining concessions that overlap with World Heritage properties.

On 14 March 2023, the UNESCO Assistant-Director General for the Culture Sector informed the State Party on UNESCO's willingness to organise a national workshop on heritage protection in conflict zones in the DRC.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.9

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.46** adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*
3. *Regrets that the State Party did not submit a report on the implementation of this Decision, as requested by the Committee at its 44th extended session,*
4. *Notes with utmost concern the reports of alleged human rights abuses towards indigenous peoples and local communities during law enforcement operations and reiterates its requests to the State Party to take urgent measures to further strengthen efforts to address this issue, including by establishing and implementing a national code of conduct for eco-guards and a grievance mechanism for human rights abuses, and by training all staff on human rights issues as part of regular law enforcement training, as well as ensuring that management processes are founded on a rights-based approach that ensures full involvement of all stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in line with relevant international norms, the 2015 Policy on World Heritage and Sustainable Development;*
5. *While noting the improved security situation in Salonga, Kahuzi-Biega and Garamba National Parks, notes with concern the continued security challenges in Okapi Wildlife Reserve and expresses its utmost concern about the situation in Virunga National Park, which is again partly situated in the territory controlled by rebel groups and has been the scene of heavy fighting since 2022, resulting again in park staff being tragically killed in the line of duty, strongly condemns this violence once again, addresses its sincere condolences to the families of the victims and all staff of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) and urges the State Party to continue to strengthen the capacity of ICCN to continue to ensure the management of the properties in the current difficult security situation and to take all measures to restore peace and security in and around the properties;*
6. *While stressing the importance of ensuring a sustainable financing mechanism, also urges the State Party to ensure the sustainability of the "Okapi Fund for Conservation – FOCON" as the Trust Fund for protected areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), encourages the donor community, to continue to provide adequate financial and*

technical support to effectively respond to the management needs of the DRC World Heritage properties;

7. *Strongly regrets that the State Party has included in the public auction of oil blocks in 2022 two oil blocks overlapping with Virunga National Park, notes with utmost concern the semi-industrial mining activities in Okapi Wildlife Reserve, reiterates its clear position concerning the incompatibility of mining, oil exploration and exploitation with World Heritage status and urges once again the State Party to cancel all concessions for oil blocks and mining concessions that overlap with World Heritage properties;*
8. *Notes with appreciation the proposal of UNESCO to organise with the State Party a national workshop in the DRC to discuss challenges and provide recommendations on how to ensure the management and protection of heritage in conflict zones;*
9. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, a detailed report on the implementation of the Kinshasa Declaration, the security situation in the properties, the measures taken to address human rights abuses and the actions undertaken to cancel all oil exploration and exploitation and mining concessions that encroach on World Heritage properties, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session.*

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1997

Criteria (viii)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2018-present

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

2018: Potential irreversible loss of the property's OUV caused by impacts of various development projects on the Omo River (Kuraz irrigation project, Gibe III dam) on water and nutrient flow into Lake Turkana; 2021: Poaching and encroachment leading to steep decline and local extinctions of wildlife populations.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
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/801/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 2000-2001)

Total amount approved: USD 35,300

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/801/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

USD 250,000 from the Norwegian government (2021-present)

Previous monitoring missions

March 2012 and April 2015: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; March 2020: World Heritage Centre Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Impacts of the Gibe III dam on the Omo River in Ethiopia affecting water and nutrient flow into Lake Turkana
- Other current and planned hydro-electric developments and associated large-scale irrigation projects in the Omo region
- Cumulative impacts from multiple developments on the Omo River
- Oil exploration
- Wildlife population decline and pressure from poaching and livestock grazing
- Impacts of the Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor Project (LAPSSET) in Northern Kenya
- Management capacity of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and National Museums of Kenya (NMK)
- Redesigning the boundaries of the property

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/801/>

Current conservation issues

On 5 April 2022 the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/801/documents/> and reporting the following:

- A significant drop in tourism revenue was recorded due to the COVID-19 pandemic but financial resources have continued to be secured for operation and management of the property. An oversight of the three components of the property is maintained by the Regional Director and under the command of the Warden Sibiloi. Park staff numbers have increased and multi-agency operations to control livestock encroachment into the property have been periodically undertaken;
- A strategy to address the challenges affecting the management of the property, including declining wildlife species and populations has been developed through an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Omo River-Lake Turkana Basin;
- The Inter-Ministerial Committee is also reviewing other matters concerning the property including the boundaries of the property and the bilateral engagements with the State Party of Ethiopia for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Efforts to engage with the State Party of Ethiopia are reported to have been unsuccessful so far;
- The State party submitted to the World Heritage Centre, a request for funding to support the development and implementation corrective measures and the finalization of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);;
- Lake water levels in Kenya's Great Rift Valley including Lake Turkana have been rising in recent years, leading to the production of a scoping report in 2021 titled "Rising Water Levels in Kenya's Rift Valley Lakes, Turkwel Gorge Dam and Lake Victoria" to assess the socio-economic and ecological impacts and make recommendations on required actions. The report, available online at <https://carrzeeorg.files.wordpress.com/2021/11/kenyarisingwatermenr-scoping-report-latest-5-07-21.pdf>, identifies key interventions including community sensitization, hydrological monitoring, supporting fisheries, securing and protecting riparian lands;
- An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) dated June 2020 for "Foundation Stage of the South Lokichar Development for Upstream Oil Production in South Lokichar" is provided.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party's continued effort to manage the property through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic is appreciated. Recalling that the implementation of the Management Plan has been difficult in the past due to financial and human resource constraints, long-term sustained allocation of resources is required, and an update on the previous Committee request to develop an operational plan and monitoring and evaluation system is still pending. It is also important to further step-up efforts to find a long-term solution with local communities over resource use in the property through community

engagement interventions based on consultation and agreement, integrated in the workplans as recommended by the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission.

The establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Omo River-Lake Turkana Basin is noted. It is recommended that the strategy reported to have been developed to address the challenges facing the property is submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN, and the State Party also provide further details regarding the proposed timeline and process for the Inter-Ministerial Committee to review the other conservation matters, including the decline in wildlife.

It is regrettable that there has not been successful engagement with results between the two States Parties, and that the State Party of Ethiopia has failed to provide updates on all planned and current development projects in the Turkana Basin including the EIA for the Kuraz Sugar Development Project and the series of dams on the Omo River noted by the 2020 mission, including the Gibe IV (Koysa, under construction) and the planned Gibe V. Lake Turkana being strongly dependent on the Omo River for water inflow, these projects and lack of information on potential downstream impacts on the property are of serious concern. Recalling that the SEA to assess the cumulative impacts of the multiple developments in the Omo-Turkana Basin on the property's OUV has been pending since 2014 and that the delay may now limit the future options for mitigating negative impacts on the OUV, especially in the light of the continued dam constructions, irrigation projects, and other developments in the basin.

The Committee should urge the States Parties of Kenya and Ethiopia to set up a realistic plan and timeframe to develop the SEA and identify urgently needed mitigation and monitoring measures. There is a pressing concern that failure to mitigate the cumulative impacts of these developments combined with the pressures from poaching, livestock encroachment and illegal fishing could lead to an erosion and eventual loss of the OUV of the property. The workshop requested by the Committee in Decision **44 COM 7A.47** to discuss the impacts of developments in the Lake Turkana Basin and to develop the DSOCR could also agree on the finalization of the SEA. Coordination with UNESCO's Strategy on DSOCR for Africa is encouraged.

The ESIA for the South Lokichar oil production is for the construction and operation of facilities needed to extract and process crude oil from three oil fields in South Lokichar. It focuses on the identified area of influence as defined by various parameters including water quality and quantity, and it is noted that it does not extend to Lake Turkana or any component of the property. There is however, no update provided on the SEA for the Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor Program, which includes the Lamu-Lokichar Crude Oil Pipeline, but also other major developments near the lake such as a resort city. Recalling that the Committee requested the State Party to complete and submit the SEA as soon as possible for review by the Advisory Bodies and that no further components of LAPSSET be implemented until the review has taken place, it is concerning that the SEA has still not been provided.

It is appreciated that the Government of Norway is providing financial support for the development of the DSOCR. Further support to assist with the implementation of some urgent actions to address the current conservation and management challenges in the property, making use of the budget provided by Norway to support natural World Heritage sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger is also under discussion between the State Party and the World Heritage Centre. .

Limited information is provided on the progress achieved in implementing the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations. As requested previously by the Committee, there is a need for substantial effort to implement the mission recommendations that include developing a site-specific Biodiversity Action Plan; seeking peaceful resolution with communities over resource use; conducting a scientific study on livestock grazing and encroachment; establishing long-term monitoring system for hydrological and limnological data; developing a national overarching master plan for development; and creating a buffer zone around the property.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.10

The World Heritage Committee,

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

2. Recalling Decisions **38 COM 7B.90**, **39 COM 7B.4**, **40 COM 7B.80**, **42 COM 7B.92** and **44 COM 7A.47**, adopted at its 38th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 42nd (Manama, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively,
3. Appreciates the State Party's continued effort to manage and resource the property through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and reiterates its request to the State Party to guarantee adequate and sustainable resourcing to protect the property and to develop an operation plan as well as a monitoring and evaluation system to implement the Management Plan focused on the preservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and including a co-management system agreed with local communities on resource use;
4. Reiterates again its deep regret over the continued lack of a consolidated response by the States Parties of Kenya and Ethiopia to the Committee's past decisions and urges again the State Party of Ethiopia to provide an urgent update on all planned and current development projects in the Turkana Basin, which could negatively affect the property, and to submit the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Kuraz Sugar Development Project, the Gibe IV (Koysha) dam under construction and the planned Gibe V dam for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
5. Recalling that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to assess the cumulative impacts from developments in the Omo-Turkana Basin is crucial to plan for the protection of the property's OUV and has been pending since 2014, also reiterates its request to the State Party of Kenya to convene as soon as possible, a workshop with participation from the State Party of Ethiopia, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, to discuss the cumulative impacts of developments in the Omo-Turkana Basin on the property, including a realistic plan and timeframe for the SEA, to identify urgently needed mitigation measures and to finalize the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), in consideration of the broader UNESCO DSOCR Strategy for Africa and thanks Norway for financially supporting the process to develop the DSOCR for the property;
6. Notes with utmost concern that failure to mitigate the cumulative impacts of the developments in the Omo-Turkana basin, combined with the pressures from poaching, livestock encroachment and illegal fishing could lead to an erosion and eventual loss of the OUV of the property;
7. Requests the State Party of Kenya to submit details regarding the progress and timeline for review by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Omo River-Lake Turkana Basin of the various state of conservation matters pertaining to the property, and to also submit a copy of the strategy reporting to address the challenges facing the property, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
8. Regrets that no update on the revision of the SEA for the Lamu Port-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor Program is provided, and therefore reiterates its request to the State Party to complete as soon as possible the revised SEA, taking into account both individual and cumulative impacts that the Program and its projects may have on the OUV of the property, as well as on Lamu Old Town World Heritage property, and that no further components of LAPSSET be implemented until the SEA is completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
9. Also requests the State Party of Kenya to provide an update on the progress in implementing all of the recommendations of the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission, in particular to:

- a) *Develop a site-specific Biodiversity Action Plan to restore wildlife populations in the property back to levels present at the time of inscription of the property,*
 - b) *Conduct a comprehensive scientific study to assess the current impacts of grazing and develop a viable grazing pressure reduction strategy, based on grazing capacities, to address encroachment,*
 - c) *Establish a co-management system with local communities that stipulates clear regulations regarding use of resources in the property and potentially provides payment for environmental services to local communities;*
 - d) *Establish a long-term monitoring system for the collection and analysis of hydrological and limnological data in Lake Turkana to assess the ecological changes to the lake system and the related impact on the OUV of the property,*
 - e) *Develop a national overarching Master Plan for development in and adjacent to Lake Turkana to avoid any negative impacts on the lake system and OUV of the property,*
 - f) *Create a buffer zone to the property, possibly covering the whole lake and other critical terrestrial areas with complementary legal and/or customary restrictions on its use and development;*
10. *Further requests 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. ***Decides to retain Lake Turkana National Parks (Kenya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

13. Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) (N 153)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1981

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2007-present

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

- Poaching
- Livestock grazing
- Dam construction project at Sambangalou

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4087>

Revised (finalization of indicators) in 2015, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6232>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6232>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6232>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 9 (from 1982-2017)

Total amount approved: USD 206,799

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 250 000 from the Government of Norway (2021-2022)

Previous monitoring missions

2001, 2007 and 2010: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; 2011: IUCN mission; 2015: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Poaching, capture and relocation of wildlife
- Drying up of ponds and invasive species
- Illegal logging
- Livestock grazing
- Road construction project
- Potential dam construction
- Potential mining exploration and exploitation
- Loss of chimpanzee habitat
- Bush fires

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/>

Current conservation issues

On 23 March 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/documents/>. Additional information was provided on 23 January 2023 in the framework of the implementation of a project funded by the generous contribution of the Government of Norway in support of the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The reports include the following information:

- The partnership with the NGO Panthera and the installation of camera traps in approximately 30% of the property enabled the observation in 2021 of 45 species of mammals including species of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), except for the elephant, which is in a critical situation within the property;
- A 2016-2021 comparative study has confirmed the relict presence of a small number of chimpanzees in the impact zone of the Petowal Mining Company (PMC);
- A biannual emergency plan to prevent the extinction of the last population of the lycaon in West Africa is being launched in partnership with IUCN's Save Our Species programme;
- Surveillance has been considerably strengthened (145 additional agents, three mobile brigades, two new surveillance posts, 321 km of surveillance trails rehabilitated, a ULM acquired). Surveillance missions in the Park's eastern zone have helped reduce the impact of illegal gold mining;
- Analyses carried out on water samples near the Mako mine demonstrate its compliance with standards except in its levels of manganese, ammonium and sulphate in the groundwater, and its levels of iron and suspended matter in surface waters;
- A soil and water testing laboratory has been installed in the Park premises, and a mobile laboratory has been set up to identify pollutants in the property;
- Control measures against the invasive species *Mimosa pigra* are planned and funded in partnership with the US Forest Service and Niokolodge in three infested ponds;
- The Mansadala quarry remains open to finalize National Road N°8 (RN8). Various faunistic species are present for which protection and restoration measures are implemented;

- Funding for the Sambangalou dam has been secured and as part of the construction work, the Gambia River Basin Development Organization (OMVG) has requested the support of the IUCN Regional Office for Central and West Africa (Central and West Africa Programme (PACO)) to carry out an evaluation of all the studies linked to the impact of the dam and the modification of the hydrological regime of the Gambia River (studies on the biodiversity of the PNNK and the chimpanzees in particular, and the Adaptive Environmental Flow Strategy (SADE)). In addition, water level gauges have been installed in the Simenti, Kountadala and Nianaka ponds for hydraulic monitoring in order to have reference benchmarks;
- The State Party has not provided the necessary environmental approval for the launch of the Barrick Gold project and an ESIA was conducted;
- Awareness-raising sessions for livestock breeders are held in the villages on the outskirts of the property concerning the dangers of cattle roaming, particularly those linked to the risk of transmitting zoonotic diseases;
- A traffic control system has been set up to limit the speed of traffic on this stretch of Route Nationale 7; 26 road signs have been erected to make users aware of the risks of colliding with wildlife, and 6 speed bumps installed to regulate vehicle speed;
- There has been no improvement in marking the boundaries of the property, due to the land dispute in the Mako sector and the sensitivity of the border with the Republic of Guinea.

On 27 April 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the round table consultation with technical and financial partners which took place in November 2021 with a view to strengthen the effective dialogue and collaboration of all stakeholders in the sustainable conservation of the property.

In June 2022, the State Party took part in a workshop to support the process of removing natural properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger in French-speaking Africa. In June 2023, a workshop is planned to follow up on the Desired state of conservation, in order to present progress in implementing corrective measures and achieving the DSOCR.

On August 27, 2022, the State Party sent the World Heritage Centre the additional studies carried out on the environment and biodiversity of the Niokolo Koba National Park in connection with the Sambangalou Hydroelectric Development Project (PAHS).

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party's continual efforts to implement corrective measures is positive. The means of surveillance have been strengthened considerably, notably with the significant increase in the number of agents, the creation of two control posts and the organization of the 2021 round table to reinforce conservation in the property, among others. Illegal gold mining is on the decline. It is recommended to congratulate the State Party on its significant efforts, to encourage it to continue its actions, and to request that it now provides further precise mapping information on the location of infractions and on the urgent measures requested to restore habitats degraded by illegal gold mining.

In addition, the rehabilitation of 321 km of tracks in the property in 2021, the organization of awareness-raising sessions to combat cattle roaming and the introduction of a road control system are positive developments. While noting that there has been no improvement in the marking of the property's boundaries, it is recommended that the Committee commends the State Party for the actions undertaken and requests it to continue implementing the corrective measures as updated by the 2015 Reactive Monitoring mission, the various recommendations made in the 2021 roundtable report, as well as the recommendations of the June 2022 and June 2023 workshops.

It is recommended to welcome the improvement of the ecological monitoring and to request the State Party to provide data on the state of conservation and population trends of all the species characteristic of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), notably with regard to the elephant and the lycaon.

Although the 2016-2021 comparative study of the fauna in the impact zone of the PMC demonstrates the presence of many species, in particular chimpanzees, the information provided is not sufficient to assess the size, trends and sustainability of the populations, and no mitigation measures seem to have been undertaken to limit the negative impacts of the mining operations.

Improvements in pollution monitoring, notably in the Gambia River, with the installation of a mobile laboratory and in Tambacounda are positive. Nevertheless, the results obtained from the analyses of groundwater and surface water in 2021 continue to show abnormally high concentrations of ammonium,

manganese, sulphate, iron and sediment loads respectively. It is recommended that urgent measures be taken to identify the cause of this pollution in order to limit it and that additional microbiological analyses be carried out.

Work to control the invasive species *Mimosa pigra* in the three heavily invaded ponds is welcomed, but beyond these cases, no information is provided on the invasive species and the associated control strategy.

Although the intended restoration and protection measures at the Mansadala quarry will limit the environmental impacts following its closure, it is worrying to note that this quarry remains open and it is recommended to stop its activity and restore the zone as soon as possible.

Noting that funding for the Sambangalou dam works has now been secured and that construction work has effectively begun on the site, the concerns previously expressed about the potential impacts of the dam on the OUV of the property remain valid. The technical support requested by the State Party from IUCN PACO through OMVG to carry out the evaluation of all the studies linked to the impact of the dam, in addition to the installation of limnometric scales in the ponds of Simenti, Kountadala and Nianaka for hydraulic monitoring in order to have reference situations on the evolution of the hydrological regime of the Gambia River are noted. A preliminary assessment of the additional studies carried out on the environment and biodiversity of the Niokolo-Koba National Park shows that the construction of the Sambangalou dam will cause a non-negligible change in the hydrological regime of the Gambia River, downstream of the dam, and that the dam's impacts on the ecosystems of the Niokolo-Koba Park, notably the distribution of large and medium-sized mammalian fauna, in particular elephant, Derby eland, buffalo, hippopotamus, lion, lycaon and chimpanzee, will be considerable. Bearing in mind that a detailed analysis of these studies by IUCN will be made available to the State Party at a later date, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to provide, on the one hand, the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) from which the additional studies derive and, on the other hand, the report of the working group responsible for producing the synthesis of the various studies concerning the analysis of potential impacts and the proposal of selected compensation measures, to ensure that a full assessment of the potential impacts on the OUV has been carried out in accordance with World Heritage impact assessments guidelines and best practices, and that the proposed mitigation measures, including any adjustments to project implementation, will effectively reduce these unavoidable residual impacts.

The ESIA provided for the Barrick Gold Corporation's mining project indicates numerous potential environmental threats including the decline in the quality and quantity of water, variation in the sediment regime of the Niokolo Koba River, the spread of pollutants, the destruction of pristine terrestrial and aquatic habitats of endangered species, like chimpanzees. Furthermore, the increase in traffic on the RN8, in the risk of poaching, and in the spread of invasive exotic species related to the flows of population also constitute worrying potential threats highlighted in the ESIA. Considering that this project could have direct, indirect and cumulative negative consequences on the ecological integrity and the OUV of the property, the State Party is requested not to pursue the project as currently proposed.

In view of the positive developments in the management of the property, the progressive improvement of the ecological monitoring system, and the efforts undertaken to preserve the integrity of the property despite ongoing development projects, it is recommended that the Committee requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.13

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.50, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
3. Takes note of the efforts made by the State Party to implement the corrective measures, notably those concerning the monitoring of certain key species for the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the monitoring of the property, and requests the State Party

to continue the implementation of these measures as updated by the 2015 Reactive Monitoring mission, the various recommendations formulated by the workshops of November 2021, June 2022 and June 2023, in support of the implementation of corrective measures and the achievement of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);

4. Welcomes the considerable increase in the means of surveillance brought to the property and the decline of illegal gold mining among the recorded offences during the past three years, requests the State Party to provide precise additional data and maps showing the location of the main offences and threats identified, as well as information on their severity and extent, and on the actions taken to combat them, and reiterates its request to the State Party to take urgent measures to restore habitats degraded by illegal gold mining;
5. Notes with satisfaction the progressive improvement of the ecological monitoring system and also requests the State Party to provide precise data on the state of conservation and the population trends of all the species characteristic of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), notably the elephant and the lycaon, in critical situation within the property;
6. Reiterates its deep concern at the persistence of threats endangering the population of 15 threatened chimpanzees present in the impact zone of the Petowal Mining Company and urges the State Party to continue the annual ecological monitoring of this population and the implementation of actions to mitigate the impact of the main threats to the conservation of the species;
7. Welcomes the controls carried out in relation to mining pollution and the installation of water and soil testing equipment at the property, but reiterates its utmost concern over high concentrations of ammonium, manganese and sulphate in the groundwater, and iron and heavy metals in the surface waters of the Gambia River, and further requests that water analyses be continued, that additional microbiological analyses be carried out, and that urgent measures be taken to identify the cause of this pollution and to control it permanently;
8. Notes with satisfaction the identification and planning of the fight against the invasive species *Mimosa pigra* in three ponds of the property, but further requests the State Party to provide additional information on the other invasive species throughout the property and to develop an associated control strategy;
9. Takes note of the protection and restoration measures planned at the time of the closure of the Mansadala quarry but reiterates once again its request to the State Party to immediately close this quarry given its negative impact on the OUV of the property;
10. Noting that the financing for the Sambangalou dam has now been secured and that construction work is already underway, reiterates its concern about the potential impacts of the dam on the OUV of the property, notably on the hydrological regime of the Gambia River, downstream of the dam and on the distribution of large and medium-sized mammalian fauna, as indicated by the preliminary analysis of the complementary studies carried out on the environment and biodiversity of the Niokolo-Koba National Park and requests the State Party to provide, on the one hand, the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) from which the complementary studies were derived, and on the other, the report of the working group responsible for producing the synthesis of the various studies on the analysis of potential impacts and the proposal of selected compensation measures retained for examination by IUCN, to ensure that a full assessment of the potential impacts on OUV has been carried out in accordance with World Heritage impact assessments guidelines and best practices, and that the

proposed mitigation measures, including any adjustments to project implementation, will effectively reduce these unavoidable residual impacts;

11. *Also expresses its concern about the numerous major potential impacts highlighted by the ESIA of the Barrick Gold mining project on the OUV of the property and its peripheral zone, and takes note that the State Party has not provided an environmental approval for its launch;*
12. *Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, to assess the state of conservation of the property, including with regard to the above issues, the implementation of the updated corrective measures and recommendations of the 2015 Reactive Monitoring mission, and the progress made in achieving the indicators of the DSOCR;*
13. *Finally requests 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. ***Decides to retain Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

ASIA-PACIFIC

15. Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (Indonesia) (N 1167)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1993-2007, 2010-present

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

The property was re-inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, on the request of the State Party, due to concerns that the property's aquatic ecosystem continues to deteriorate, in particular as a result of:

- Alterations of the hydrological regime (quantity, timing, and distribution of Shark Slough inflows)
- Adjacent urban and agricultural growth (flood protection and water supply requirements that affect the property's resources by lowering water levels)
- Increased nutrient pollution from upstream agricultural activities
- Significant reduction of both marine and estuarine biodiversity in Florida Bay

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4348>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1062>

Updated, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4348>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1062>

Updated, see pages <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4348> and <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4958/>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

May 1999: World Heritage Centre mission; April 2006: IUCN participation in a technical workshop to identify benchmarks and corrective measures; January 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission;

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Water infrastructure (quantity and quality of water entering the property)
- Housing (urban encroachment)
- Surface water pollution and Pollution of marine waters (agricultural fertilizer pollution, mercury contamination of fish and wildlife)
- Storms (damage from hurricanes)
- Invasive / alien species or hyper-abundant species (exotic invasive plant and animal species)
- Climate change (including sea level rise)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/>

Current conservation issues

On 12 December 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/76/documents/>. On 5 October 2021, the State Party provided a letter responding to requests of the World Heritage Centre in line with Paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines. These documents report the following:

- Information is provided on 14 indicators of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), using the 2013 table format;
- Progress in implementing the corrective measures: several integrity and ecological indicators are improving or are already within their desired state of conservation, some are stable but a small number are showing signs of further deterioration. The corrective measures are not sufficient to deliver the volumes of clean water needed to achieve the DSOCR, recalling that additional restoration projects were announced in 2015;
- The Modified Water Deliveries (MWD), 'Canal-111 South Dade' (C-111), and Everglades Construction Project are operational, and the Combined Operational Plan (COP) is in use. The Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) and the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir are progressing, but their full benefits are not expected to be realized before 2030. The Tamiami Trail Next Steps (TTNS2) began in April 2021 and is expected to be completed in 2024;
- Around USD 1.5 billion of additional funding has been made available to accelerate critical restoration projects; the estimated time needed for completion ranges from 13 to 22 years, depending on funding;
- Water volumes in the property increased significantly during 2020 and 2021, resulting in longer flooding durations. Wading bird supercolony formation and wading bird nesting success was average to exceptional. Hypersalinity events were not as extreme as observed earlier, the frequency of algal blooms has lessened, seagrass has begun to recover since Hurricane Irma in 2017, and the American crocodile population appears to be increasing;
- Climate change and sea level rise are increasingly impacting the property, including through saltwater intrusion and the intensity of impacts is anticipated to increase in future. Roseate spoonbills have been abandoning historic nesting sites in the property in favour of locations elsewhere and the species has been removed from the list of integrity indicators. A new Resiliency and Sustainability team has been formed to strengthen climate change adaptation strategies;
- Invasive species are increasingly recognized as an important threat and are being addressed through the new Suppressing Looming Invasive Threats Harming Everglades Restoration (SLITHER) legislation and other interagency coordinated efforts. Over USD 5 million are expected to be spent on managing invasive species in 2021-2022, including for prevention, early detection and rapid response;
- The property has high concentrations of mercury, which enters the ecosystem through atmospheric deposition through emissions from coal-fired power plants;
- Two oil and gas permits considered earlier in the vicinity of the property have been resolved through the withdrawal of one application and the permanent protection of 8,000 ha of land and associated drilling rights in the Everglades Protection Area acquired by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD);
- At least 942 manatee deaths were recorded in Florida between January and September 2021, due largely to starvation following a decline in seagrass cover and red tide algal bloom caused by a naturally occurring toxic algae, *Karenia brevis*. These events are unlikely to occur in the property because of its location, the salinity level and boat traffic regulation in the park;
- The extension of SR 836 / Dolphin Expressway "will have substantial and unacceptable adverse impacts on the Greater Everglades wetland ecosystem". Everglades National Park and the US Department of Interior will work with the Miami-Dade Expressway authority to develop alternatives to lessen impacts on the property and to avoid impacts on sensitive wetlands currently being considered in the planning process of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The progress in implementing the corrective measures is strongly welcomed, as is the additional commitment of almost USD 1.5 billion to accelerate critical restoration projects toward achieving the DSOCR. It is noted that the State Party report provides a comprehensive and synthesised overview of the status of the DSOCR indicators.

Although there is a positive or sustainable trend for about one quarter of the sub-indicators since 2013, various sub-indicators have deteriorated, and in 2022, almost two thirds of the sub-indicators still remained below the restoration targets. This emphasizes the need to continue to strengthen current efforts to attain the DSOCR, including the implementation of the State of Florida's Restoration Strategies Project, and the CEPP with the EAA Reservoir project.

It is concerning that Roseate spoonbills have been removed as an integrity indicator after some have left their nesting sites inside the property due to sea level rise, considering that they were included as an indicator in the DSOCR by the State Party in 2015 (following the identification of indicators during the 2011 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission). It should be recalled that any proposal to amend a DSOCR adopted by the Committee must be submitted to the Committee for approval after review by the Advisory Bodies. Noting the likelihood of climate change further impacting the property in the future, it is recommended that current restoration efforts continue to be strengthened to increase the resilience of the property, and that a climate change adaptation strategy is developed for the property, building on adaptation and mitigation measures identified in the General Management Plan (GMP) and emerging climate change challenges, including sea level rise.

Given that invasive alien species remain a serious concern, the new legislation and additional resources to prevent, manage or eradicate these are welcomed. The reported high concentrations of mercury entering the food chain are concerning and should be addressed considering their potential impacts on top predators through bioaccumulation in the food chain.

Recalling that extractive activities are incompatible with World Heritage status, the prevention of oil and gas activities in the Everglades Protection Area upstream of the property through the acquisition of land and drilling rights is welcomed.

It is noted that the manatee population within the property was not affected by the 2021 mortalities in Florida.

It is of utmost concern that the US Department of Interior and the Environmental Protection Agency found that the proposed SR 836 / Dolphin Expressway extension would "have substantial and unacceptable adverse impacts on the Greater Everglades wetland ecosystem", noting particularly the sensitive wetlands being considered in the CERP. The State Party should be urged to find alternative locations that would avoid any negative impact on the property, and to assess any proposed development in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and submit the assessment to the World Heritage Centre for review by the IUCN prior to making any decision that would be difficult to reverse.

It is recalled that the 2011 mission concluded that it may take several decades for the property to reach the DSOCR and that the existing corrective measures should only be considered as the starting point for the restoration of the property. Considering the extended timeframe to achieve the DSOCR and the increasing impact of climate change and sea level rise, it is recommended, in line with the recommendations of the above mission, that the corrective measures adopted in Decision **30 COM 7A.14** (2006) and Decision **35 COM 7A.14** (2011) be re-assessed and updated to take into account recent progress, address observed challenges, and to consider potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value due to climate change.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.17

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.54 adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),

3. Welcomes the progress achieved in implementing the corrective measures, and notes with satisfaction that the Modified Water Deliveries (MWD), 'Canal-111 South Dade' (C-111), Everglades Construction Project, and the Combined Operational Plan (COP) are operational;
4. Commends the State Party for continuing to implement restoration projects in order to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and also notes with satisfaction the additional funding commitments of almost USD 1.5 billion;
5. Also welcomes the positive trend for some of the DSOCR indicators, but notes with concern that almost two thirds of the sub-indicators still remain below the restoration targets needed to achieve the DSOCR, and therefore requests the State Party to continue to strengthen current restoration efforts, including the State of Florida's Restoration Strategies Project, and the Central Everglades Planning Project (CEPP) with the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) Reservoir project;
6. Appreciates the new legislation and additional resources for the management of invasive alien species (IAS), and reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure a continued, long-term allocation of resources to control IAS within the property, and for the management strategy to emphasize prevention and early detection combined with rapid response measures;
7. Notes with concern the increasing impacts of climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including the climate change-induced shift of habitat of some species outside the property, and requests the State Party to strengthen current restoration efforts to increase the resilience of the property and to develop a climate change adaptation strategy for the property, building on adaptation and mitigation measures identified in the General Management Plan (GMP) and emerging climate change challenges including sea level rise;
8. Welcomes the purchase of approximately 8,000 ha of land and drilling rights in the Everglades Protection Area to permanently prevent oil, gas and mineral exploration and extraction in this area;
9. Expresses its utmost concern about the reported adverse impact of the planned extension of the SR 836 / Dolphin Expressway on the Greater Everglades wetland ecosystem and urges the State Party to identify alternatives that do not negatively impact on the OUV of the property, and to assess potential impacts of any proposed development on the OUV in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context prior to making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, and to submit the assessment to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
10. Requests the State Party to work with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to update the corrective measures, including a timeline for their implementation, and that the DSOCR be reassessed to take into account recent progress and challenges and to consider potential impacts on the OUV due to climate change and invasive species, and recalls that any changes to the corrective measures and the DSOCR should be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies and proposed to the Committee for approval;
11. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2024**, an updated report on the SR 836/Dolphin Expressway, and by **1 December 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 47th session;

12. **Decides to retain Everglades National Park (United States of America) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1987

Criteria (ii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2014-present

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

- Instability and imminent risk of collapse of the Cerro Rico's summit
- Lack of conservation policy of integral character which considers all the components of the property
- Deficiencies in conservation: special attention required for the restoration and upgrading of structures with residential use and the archaeological industrial heritage
- Potential degradation of the historic site by continued and uncontrolled mining operations in the Cerro Rico Mountain
- Inefficient enforcement of protective legislation
- Threatening impacts of climatic, geological or other environmental factors

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6969>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6969>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6969>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/420/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 5 (from 1988-2015)

Total amount approved: USD 83,777

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/420/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 10,000 for a World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS technical mission in 2005 financed by the Spanish Funds-in-Trust for World Heritage

Previous monitoring missions

May 1995 and November 2009: World Heritage Centre technical missions; November 2005 and February 2011: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS technical missions; December 2013 and January 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; May 2017: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS technical mission; October 2017 and May 2018: Technical missions facilitated by the World Heritage Centre

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Legal framework (inefficient enforcement of protective legislation)
- Management systems/ management plan
- Mining (potential degradation of the historic site by continued and uncontrolled mining operations in the Cerro Rico Mountain)

- Surface water pollution
- Instability and risk of collapse of the Cerro Rico
- Deficiencies in conservation: special attention required for the restoration and upgrading of structures with residential use and the archaeological industrial heritage
- Environmental impacts on the hydraulic complex which in turn affects historic fabric and local population

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/420/>

Current conservation issues

On 2 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the executive summary of which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/420/documents/>, providing the following information:

- The approval of the Integrated and Participatory Management Plan (IPMP) in July 2021. The Management Plan, which contains 55 projects, was submitted by the Bolivian authorities in December 2021 to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- The Management Committee for the implementation of the IPMP was established and is composed of concerned institutions representing the three levels of government: national, departmental and Municipal authorities;
- In June 2021, the Autonomous Municipal Government of Potosi created the Natural and Cultural Landscape Unit to ensure a sustainable and integrated management of all components of the property: the historic centre, Cerro Rico and the Kari Kari lagoons;
- As part of the Management Plan's actions, a series of consultation meetings started in August 2021 with the participation of the Ministry of Cultures, Ministry of Mining and Metallurgy, local authorities, COMIBOL, FEDECOMIN and other mining cooperatives, civil and academic representatives, to discuss the possible alternatives for the relocation of miners and employment options for these miners who continue working above the 4,400m limit;
- After a census carried out in September 2021, COMIBOL, entity responsible for the relocation of miners, identified the 21 cooperatives that illegally work above the 4,400m limit and started together with FEDECOMIN and the Ministry of Culture a dialogue with the representatives of these cooperatives for their relocation. A proposal was made in October 2021 of three new potential areas for relocation of the 2,387 miners concerned, but the cooperative members raised some strong concerns;
- Development of an inventory of affected structures of the architectural, industrial and public spaces and urban buildings for the Ribera de los Ingenios and formulation of guidelines and criteria for the intervention on historic and industrial buildings are ongoing;
- For the implementation of preventive conservation projects at the historic centre as well as initiatives to improve urban mobility and public transport, some interventions have been carried out, but the local government admits to lack of technical staff and financial resources for their implementation;
- There are some concerns about the environmental impacts of authorized mining concessions which could cause the generation of acid waters contaminating surface water resources, wetlands, terrestrial wildlife at the Kari Kari system;
- Consultations among the three levels of government are ongoing regarding the proposal for Minor Boundary Modification to respond to the recommendations provided by the World Heritage Committee to ensure its articulation with existing land use regulations;
- Work has been reported with regard to the updating of local regulations through a consultancy in view of the elaboration of a Landscape Charter to harmonize regulations in the three components of the property;
- A new extension of at least two years to the timeline for the full implementation of the corrective measures is required taken into consideration the context of the political situation of the country, the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and the social situation in the region of Potosi.

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

The State Party should be commended for the implementation, despite the difficult context, of various important actions requested by the Committee in previous sessions, to meet the corrective measures for achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

The finalization, approval and submission for review of the IPMP for the whole property should be welcomed since this instrument will constitute the basis of the actions required to ensure the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

The IPMP was assessed by ICOMOS in its April 2022 technical review, which noted that the plan is based on the DSOCR and was elaborated according to the methodology proposed in previous missions by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and includes overall strategies and policies for each of the elements that make up the property. The document, and its correct implementation, could contribute to the fulfilment of the indicators of the DSOCR, presenting general guidelines to follow in the coming years as well as for the preservation of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including integrity and authenticity. Although ICOMOS noted that the IPMP could be improved by expanding the strategies and the projects or programmes to be developed by all the authorities involved, the plan establishes an initial roadmap for its application in the near future. The creation of a Management Unit, as foreseen in the IPMP, will ensure the participation of agencies, institutions and organizations of the civil society related to the property's management.

The efforts deployed by the three level of government under the leading of the Ministry of Culture to ensure a dialogue with the cooperatives concerned to find a solution for the relocation of miners working illegally above 4,400m limit should also be noted and the State Party encouraged to reinforce the consultations and continue the studies to identify the new potential areas for relocation taking into consideration the social and economic needs of the communities concerned.

The lack of progress in the harmonisation, expansion and reinforcement of the legal framework for the protection of all the components of the property remains a serious concern. The State Party should be urged to finalize the process and to ensure the resources and management mechanisms needed to address several of the corrective measures related to the property's mining productive heritage.

Another urgent issue remains the finalization of a proposal for the adoption of the revised Minor Boundary Modification for the three components of the property, in accordance with recommendation provided by the Committee in its Decision **43 COM 8B.66**, which is a requirement to ensure the proper implementation of the IPMP.

While some progress has been achieved regarding the conservation intervention on some of the monumental and industrial heritage at the Historic Centre, the information provided with regard to the lack of financial and human resources to ensure the design and implementation of preventive conservations projects is source of concern.

Finally, the environmental impacts due to the authorization of mining activities within the area of Kari Kari Lagoons should be mentioned and the State Party requested to ensure appropriate protection to this important component of the property.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.18

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.35**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
3. Commends the State Party for its efforts to implement the previous Committee decisions and the set of corrective measures for achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) despite the difficult context at the national level;

4. *Welcomes the finalization, official approval and submission of the Integrated and Participatory Management Plan (IPMP) for the entire property and requests the State Party to ensure its full implementation with adequate resources in place;*
5. *Urges the State Party to finalize the revised proposal of a Minor Boundary Modification for the establishment of the property's buffer zone, and requests the State Party to submit the proposal to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies and approval by the World Heritage Committee, as per Paragraphs 163 and 164 of the Operational Guidelines, as soon as possible, and no later than **1 December 2023**;*
6. *Regrets that no significant progress has been achieved to ensure the consolidation and enforcement of the legal framework and regulations related to the entire property and that no sufficient resources and mechanisms needed to address long-standing and serious concerns related to the property's productive mining heritage have been identified;*
7. *Also requests the State Party to provide sufficient human and financial resources to address the architectural and industrial heritage conservation challenges identified for the implementation of future projects at the historic centre;*
8. *Express its concern about the environmental impacts of mining concessions approved at the Kari Kari Lagoons, one important component of the property, and requests the State Party to ensure legal protection to this area and protect its integrity;*
9. *Further requests 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;*
10. ***Decides to retain City of Potosí (Bolivia (Plurinational State of)) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

20. Chan Chan Archaeological Zone (Peru) (C 366)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1986

Criteria (i)(iii)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1986-present

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

- Fragile state of conservation of earthen structures and decorated surfaces due to extreme climatic conditions (El Niño phenomenon) and other environmental factors
- Inadequate management system in place
- Insufficient capacity and resources for the implementation of conservation measures
- Increase in the levels of the phreatic water table

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4647>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4647>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4647>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/366/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 5 (from 1987-1998)

Total amount approved: USD 118,700

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/366/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

1997: ICOMOS mission; February 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS and ICCROM mission; November 2010 and December 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community
- Illegal activities (illegal occupation of the property)
- Management systems/ management plan
- Water (rising water table levels, rain/water table)
- Continuous deterioration of earthen architecture structures and decorated surfaces from lack of conservation and maintenance practices
- Unregulated farming activities
- Delay in implementing protective measures (legislation and regulations already passed by the National Authorities)
- Development pressures

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/366/>

Current conservation issues

On 8 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/366/documents/>, and responds to previous decisions of the Committee and the adopted corrective measures as follows:

- The Master Plan for the Conservation and Management of the Chan Chan Archaeological Complex, approved by Ministerial Resolution No. 000130-2021-DM/MC, was published in “El Peruano” Official Gazette. The State Party confirms its commitment to provide financing for the implementation of the Master Plan through the Ministry of Culture. An amount of 2 million soles (USD 600,000) was allocated for 2021, while an amount of 4 million soles (USD 1.200,000) was foreseen for 2022;
- As part of the process of the delimitation and regulation of the proposed buffer zone, in 2021 the Ministry of Culture submitted to the Provincial Municipality of Trujillo - Agency of the Metropolitan Development Plan of Trujillo (PLANDET) an extensive field survey and diagnosis of the buffer zone. PLANDET is now in the process of updating the information on proposed land use in the buffer zone that will be established in the form of a ‘specific plan’. This plan will be incorporated into the Urban Development Plan of Trujillo and requires the consensus of all stakeholders;
- The process to amend Law No. 28261, which will allow the full recovery of the Chan Chan Archaeological Zone, continues with the review and verification of the occupied archaeological lands by the Directorate of Cadastre and Legal Physical Sanitation of the Ministry of Culture. The proposed modification of Law No. 28261 will allow for progressive expropriation in accordance with Legislative Decree No. 1192, which approves the Framework Law on the Acquisition and Expropriation of Real Estate, Transfer of Government-owned Real Estate;
- In spite of restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation of corrective measures continued in 2021, including, among others, the improvement of the site museum and public tourist services, archaeological research activities by the Pan-American Conservation

Centre for Earthen Heritage Sites (PCCEHS), and monitoring of the meteorological conditions and water levels;

- In December 2019, the Ministry of Culture carried out an Emergency Archaeological Action in the Nik An complex, including the sector "Hall of 24 Niches", in anticipation of the potential risk of the occurrence of rainfall. In this context, maintenance and conservation actions were carried out on deteriorated architectural elements and surfaces;
- Development of the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Prevention Plan of the Chan Chan Archaeological Complex was initiated with the training of technical and professional personnel and preparation of a work plan. The execution of the diagnosis, formulation and validation of the final document was foreseen in 2022.
- Awareness-raising activities included online activities and the use of social media, while artisan workshops were held on ceramic, weaving and embroidery techniques, involving 83 participants;
- The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry and Transport and Communications continue with the identification of alternatives for the improvement of the existing road project "Autopista del Sol" or for a new project. The results of the analysis will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre.

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

The report of the State Party confirms again the professional manner in which the property is managed. The State Party should be commended for its continued commitment to the conservation and management of the property - through the approved Master Plan - and to the implementation of the programme of corrective measures to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

The State Party should also be commended for the archaeological emergency actions at the Nik An complex, the start of the preparation of a DRR Prevention Plan and the monitoring activities carried out by the PCCEHS.

With regard to the delimitation and regulation of the buffer zone, it is noted that the Ministry of Culture, in accordance with the work plan submitted in May 2021, has undertaken a survey of the area concerned and that PLANDET has advanced in the verification of the information through extensive field surveys. It is also noted that a coordinated work is ongoing between the Ministry of Culture, the Provincial Municipality of Trujillo and the district municipalities of Huanchaco, la Esperanza and Victor Larco Herrera to complete the regulations of the land uses of the buffer zone and that a comprehensive work plan has been established for this purpose. However, the final agreement on the regulation for the buffer zone that was scheduled for October 2021 has not been achieved. The elaboration and approval of a 'specific plan' that will include these regulations, within the framework of the Urban Development Plan of Trujillo, may be expected to be a long process during which further deterioration of the situation may occur. The State Party should be recommended to establish a timeline for the urgent finalization and approval of the 'specific plan' within the Urban Development Plan of Trujillo.

The same concern is expressed with regard to the amendment and implementation of Law No. 28261, which will allow the recuperation of illegally occupied land within the property and its buffer zone.

Both processes require the participation of, or actions by, multiple actors at the national, regional and local levels. It is recommended that the State Party be urged to strengthen coordination mechanisms at all levels and commit all stakeholders in order to accelerate the legal processes that are required as early as possible and put in place a timeframe for their resolution.

Regarding the road project 'Autopista del Sol', it is noted that no new information is provided.

Without the resolution of the above-mentioned two issues, the Committee will not be able to assess to what extent the DSOCR, as defined in its Decision **36 COM 7A.34**, has been reached. It is therefore recommended that the Committee retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.20

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.37**, adopted at its 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
3. Welcomes the commitment of the State Party to implementing the Master Plan of the property and to providing the necessary funding for this purpose, and appreciates the continued research and monitoring activities of the Pan-American Conservation Centre for Earthen Heritage Sites (PCCEHS), as well as the implementation of a number of important conservation projects, public awareness and outreach activities;
4. Commends the State Party for its continued commitment to the implementation of the Committee's decisions and programme of corrective measures, as adopted in Decision **36 COM 7A.34**, with the aim of achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);
5. Notes however with regret that, although some progress has been made, two essential components of the programme of corrective measures have remained pending for several years, and urges once again the State Party to urgently take the necessary measures for enhanced coordination, commitment and a strict timeframe for:
 - a) the delimitation and regulations of the proposed buffer zone,
 - b) the implementation of the amended Law No. 28261 that would address the matter of illegal occupation;
6. Requests 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. **Decides to retain Chan Chan Archaeological Zone (Peru) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1993

Criteria (iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2005-present

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

- Considerable decay of materials and structures resulting from lack of comprehensive conservation and maintenance, and torrential rains in 2004, 2005 and 2010
- Deterioration of architectural and urban coherence compromising the integrity and authenticity of the property
- Lack of adequate and efficient management, planning and conservation mechanisms, and institutional arrangements

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5965>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5965>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/5965>

Updated in 2015, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6263>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/658/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/658/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: USD 20,000 (Spanish Funds-in-Trust for World Heritage) for the planning, implementation and subsequent publications of participatory workshops and meetings with artisans and civil society in Coro and La Vela

Previous monitoring missions

December 2003 and September 2006: World Heritage Centre missions to assessment of the state of conservation; July 2002, April 2005, May 2008 and February 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; October 2015: ICOMOS Advisory mission; July 2018: ICOMOS Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Flooding (and water damage)
- Management systems/ management plan
- Water (rain/water table)
- Serious deterioration of materials and structures
- Deterioration of the architectural and urban coherence and integrity of the property
- Lack of adequate management, planning and conservation mechanisms
- Absence of detailed and technical information on the state of conservation of the property since 2007

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/658/>

Current conservation issues

On 17 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/658/documents/>, providing the following information.

The Office of Strategic Projects and Design for the Patrimonial Areas of Coro and La Vela and their Protection Areas (OPEDAP), the Site Manager and the mixed commission (including Cultural Heritage Institute, the Municipal Heritage Institutes of Miranda and Colina, the Environment Secretariat, the spokespersons of the Communal Councils, the Clay Artisans of the "Jesús Chucho Coello School" and an instance of the Regional Executive) have coordinated and monitored a number of activities, including:

- Progress in the elaboration of the Management Plan, palliative actions related to the Drainage Plan, and maintenance, restoration and conservation activities finalized or ongoing on buildings located in Coro and La Vela;
- Preliminary drafting of a proposal for the establishment of the property's buffer zone;
- Actions related to the corrective measures focusing on the real estate and public spaces in the UNESCO Zone, Zone of Historical Artistic Value, and areas of influence;
- Activities to strengthen the team of artisans from the Jesús Chucho Coello School, and for the consolidation, restoration and maintenance of the traditional buildings in Coro and its Puerto de la Vela;
- Establishment of agreements with regional government secretaries and regional universities, including the hiring of master craftsmen, artisans and assistants or apprentices, to engage a

multidisciplinary team in the areas of engineering, architecture, design, information, technology, finance, and culture;

- Postponement to the end of 2023 of the time-limit for the finalization of the corrective measures adopted in Decision **38 COM 7A.23** to reach the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

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

Due note is taken of the numerous restoration and conservation projects finalized or ongoing on buildings located in Coro and La Vela, as well as of numerous mitigation measures, with the active participation of the traditional mud school in their implementation.

Note is also taken of the documented and effective progress in the definition of the buffer zone of the property. In this context, it is hoped that a Minor Boundary Modification will be soon finalized and formally submitted, as per Paragraphs 163-164 and Annex 11 of the Operational Guidelines.

In spite of the request of the World Heritage Committee, reiterated in Decision **44 COM 7A.38**, it is regrettable that the state of conservation report submitted by the State Party does not follow the mandatory report format contained in Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines and does not provide clear and comprehensive information about the implementation of each single corrective measure adopted by Decision **38 COM 7A.23** to reach the DSOCR.

It is regretful to observe that, again, many of the recommendations of the 2018 ICOMOS Advisory mission do not seem to be fully addressed by the report.

The postponement of the finalization of the corrective measures to the end of 2023 is also noted with regrets. The issue of vulnerability to flooding and water damage of the property has not yet been durably and comprehensively solved, as the financial resources necessary to put in place a complete drainage system have not been identified.

The progress in the development of the property's disaster risk preparedness plan seems to be insufficient, as part of the Management Plan, which is yet to be achieved. In this context, the absence of any complete outline, even preliminary, of the property's Management Plan, remains of great concern.

In light of the many issues mentioned in the 2018 mission report that remain without solution, of the delay and insufficient documentation on the implementation of the corrective measures, and of the absence of the Management Plan for the property it is recommended that the Committee retain Coro and its Port on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.21

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.38**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*
3. *Takes note with appreciation of the restoration and conservation works undertaken in the property, in collaboration with the traditional mud artisan school;*
4. *Takes note of the information submitted regarding the development of a Minor Boundary Modification for the establishment of the property's buffer zone, and requests the State Party to submit the final proposal for such Minor Boundary Modification to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies and approval by the World Heritage Committee, as per Paragraphs 163 and 164 of the Operational Guidelines, as soon as it is available, also ensuring that the buffer zone is adequately reflected in the relevant legal framework and planning instruments for the property;*

5. Takes note with concern that insufficient information was provided by the State Party regarding its progress towards addressing each of the 11 corrective measures adopted in Decision **38 COM 7A.23** to reach the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and of the delay reported on their implementation; and in this regard, reiterates its request to the State Party to implement the recommendations of the 2018 ICOMOS Advisory mission report, providing guidance on the actions needed to effectively implement the complete set of corrective measures;
6. Regrets that the issue of vulnerability to flooding and water damage of the property has not yet been durably and comprehensibly solved, as the financial resources necessary to put in place a complete drainage system have not been identified;
7. Expresses its great concern that no updated outline or draft of the property's Management Plan has been submitted yet, and that insufficient progress is reported on the property's disaster risk preparedness, and therefore further reiterates its request to the State Party to submit the draft Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies as soon as it is available;
8. Requests 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, which follows the mandatory format contained in Annex 13 of the Operational Guidelines and provides clear and complete information on all corrective measures adopted to reach the DSOOCR, and on the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
9. Decides to retain Coro and its Port (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

AFRICA

23. Timbuktu (Mali) (C 119rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1988

Criteria (ii)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1990-2005, 2012-present

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

- Occupation of the property by armed groups
- Absence of management
- Destruction of 14 mausoleums and degradation of the three mosques in the serial property

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

In progress

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6622>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/119/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 8 (from 1981-2018)

Total amount approved: USD 189,352

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/119/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 100,000 from the Italian Funds-in-Trust; USD 55,000 from the UNESCO Emergency Fund; USD 37,516 from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust; approximately USD 12 million in the framework of the "Action Plan for the Rehabilitation of the Cultural Heritage and the Safeguarding of Ancient Manuscripts" managed by UNESCO or bilaterally (including the European Union, Switzerland, Spain, Norway, the Netherlands, Croatia, Mauritius, Germany, Luxembourg, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEOMA), the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF), the African World Heritage Fund, ICOM); USD 480,934 from the International Criminal Court (ICC) Trust Fund for Victims for the "Rehabilitation and enhancement of protected buildings in Timbuktu" project; USD 15,000 from the International Alliance for Heritage Protection in Conflict Zones (ALIPH), Exceptional Relief Fund to support the heritage sector in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Previous monitoring missions

2002, 2004, 2005, 2006: World Heritage Centre missions; 2008, 2009 and 2010: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; May, October and December 2012: UNESCO emergency missions to Mali; June 2013: UNESCO assessment mission to Timbuktu; 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

- Occupation of the property by armed groups
- Lack of management structure at the site (problem resolved in 2019)
- Armed conflict

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/119/>

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/119/documents/>) providing the following information:

- The security context of the property remains precarious;
- Traditional methods of conservation have improved the physical conditions of the mosques;
- Projects financed by the European Union and the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH) encouraged the conservation of the property;
- Climate change is causing impacts such as the scarcity of traditional building materials, the combined effects of deforestation and silting of the Niger River, silting of the edges of mosques and cemeteries housing mausoleums, or erosion by extremely heavy rains;
- The proliferation of plastic waste at the property has been noted;
- The military fort of the Malian army and international forces is located less than 50 metres from the Djingareyber mosque; the protection barrier of the Malian army nearly touches the building and forces heavy machinery to pass by at the base of the walls;
- The lack of means of the Cultural Mission and traditional actors is affecting the conservation and management of the property;
- Traditional communities often solicit, and without consultation with the Cultural Mission, different partners for interventions that do not respect the heritage rules preserving the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
- Exchange meetings between the stakeholders have made it possible to limit inappropriate interventions;
- The Djingareyber Mosque has benefitted from rehabilitation works of the main façade and doors in the large courtyard, measures to prevent silting and erosion of the walls, as well as a rewiring of the electrical circuit to prevent short circuits that could cause fires. Rehabilitation work was also carried out on the Sankoré and Sidi Yahia Mosques;
- The rehabilitation of Independence Square has progressed, and the provisional reception of the El-Farouk monument has taken place;
- Two training workshops on the involvement of communities in the management of existing properties (in Mopti) and on traditional architecture (in Timbuktu) were organized;
- The Cultural Mission is investing in awareness-raising amongst regional and municipal authorities on the importance of heritage protection and management;
- The Governor established a working committee composed of the State's technical services and having as its main mission the enforcement of town planning regulations;
- The REFLET TOMBOUCTOU association supports awareness-raising on social networks and among traditional communities;
- As part of the compensation for victims of the destruction of mausoleums, the ICC Trust Fund for Victims has paid out funds to various individuals (mausoleum managers, guards and masons). The Cultural Mission is not involved. Collective reparations have not yet been implemented;
- The work on developing 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 report provided by the State Party on the property contains information on the continuity of conservation, management and awareness-raising measures carried out with traditional actors, notably the mosque management committees and the masons' guild in a still precarious security context.

It provides information on a certain number of measures regarding previously identified priorities, although it is not clear which ones apply to the period since the last decision of the World Heritage

Committee. Thus, the rehabilitation and maintenance works undertaken on some parts of the three mosques are welcomed, notably on the Djingareyber Mosque, which has seen several interventions that had indeed become urgent, such as the repair of the façades and doors, and interventions on the electrical installations. However, no details have been provided on this work or how they are documented. To protect the authenticity of the mosques, documentation is needed to justify the interventions and demonstrate how traditional methods and materials have been deployed. It appears that climate change is further aggravating the supply of traditional building materials, and there remains a need to establish plantations to ensure a sustainable supply of appropriate timber.

It is especially reassuring to learn that increased attention is being paid to the importance of traditional conservation measures, including the monitoring and accountability of the various actors. As such, the exchange meetings between stakeholders making it possible to limit inappropriate interventions, and training workshops on the involvement of communities in the management of listed properties are welcomed. This deserves to be further strengthened, as indicated by the observation that the lack of knowledge about World Heritage leads traditional communities to seek support, without prior consultation with the Cultural Mission, for interventions that do not respect the heritage rules preserving the Outstanding Universal Value of the property,

It has also been noted with satisfaction that the Cultural Mission seems to have increased the awareness of the municipal and regional authorities on the importance of heritage protection and management. In this context, and as requested by the Committee in 2021, the setting up by the Governor of a working commission composed of the State's technical services with the main mission of enforcing the town planning regulations is appreciated. Similarly, the support of the REFLET TOMBOUCTOU association in raising awareness on social networks and among traditional communities shows the important added value of the contribution of civil society in the promotion of heritage, which should be further encouraged.

Furthermore, 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 draft updated management plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The continued silting of the mosques linked to silting of the Niger River due to deforestation remains a concern, and strategic actions are urgently needed to consider how to address this issue at the appropriate regional scale.

Particular attention should urgently be paid to the protection of the cemeteries and the cleanliness of their immediate surroundings. The implementation of development projects around the Djingareyber Mosque, without prior impact studies, could in the very short term impair its Outstanding Universal Value, and should be avoided.

It is noted with appreciation that the DSOCR is currently being finalized. This initiative, consisting of a capacity-building programme and remote and on-site support, led by CRAterre-ENSAG (Grenoble/France) and a national consultant in partnership with the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage (DNPC), and covering all three Malian properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, is implemented within the framework of the World Heritage Centre's "Strategy for developing the desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) in the Africa Region 2021-21025", which is financially supported by the Government of Norway in several African countries. This process is therefore welcomed 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 and continue to apply the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism for the property.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.23

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.2, adopted at its 44th extended session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),*

3. *Notes with satisfaction the continuity of the conservation, management and awareness-raising measures undertaken by traditional actors, notably the mosque management committees and the masons' guild in a still precarious security context;*
4. *Commends the maintenance and rehabilitation work undertaken on various parts of the three mosques, notably the urgent interventions at the Djingareyber Mosque, such as the refurbishment of the façades and doors, and the interventions on the electrical installations, urges the State Party to ensure that all the work is well documented with regard to demonstrating that traditional methods and materials bolster the authenticity of the property and requests the State Party to provide details on the work undertaken;*
5. *Notes that climate change seems to have aggravated the supply of traditional construction material, and reiterates its request for the creation of plantations to guarantee a sustainable supply of appropriate building timber;*
6. *Expresses its concern over the continued silting of the mosques, which appears to be related to the silting of the Niger River due to deforestation and urges the State Party to consider appropriate strategic actions that could begin to address this problem at an appropriate regional level;*
7. *Notes 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;*
8. *Recognizes that the State Party has paid increased attention to the importance of traditional conservation methods, by increasing the involvement of various stakeholders through exchange meetings or training workshops on the involvement of communities in the management of heritage, and requests the State Party to further strengthen these actions to ensure that the initiatives called for by traditional communities are coordinated with the Cultural Mission and respect the heritage rules preserving the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;*
9. *Also commends the State Party for raising awareness, particularly among municipal and regional authorities, of the importance of heritage protection and management, including the establishment by the Governor of a working commission to enforce the town planning regulations, and requests the State Party to inform the Committee in more detail of the measures taken by this commission to improve enforcement of the regulations;*
10. *Reminds the State Party of the importance of not undertaking development projects around the mosques of Djingareyber, Sankore and Sidi Yayia, without prior studies of their potential impact on them, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;*
11. *Encourages the State Party to further promote the contribution of civil society to the promotion of heritage, and awareness-raising on social networks and among traditional communities;*
12. *Expresses its appreciation that a of capacity-building programme with remote and on-site 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;*

13. Requests 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. Decides to continue the application of the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism for the property;
15. Decides to retain Timbuktu (Mali) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

25. Tombs of Buganda Kings at Kasubi (Uganda) (C 1022)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

ARAB STATES

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

28. Hatra (Iraq) (C 277rev)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

30. General Decision on the World Heritage properties of Iraq

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (ii)(iii)(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
Conflict situation prevailing in the country

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
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/190/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/190/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

March 2003: World Heritage Centre mission; May 2006: World Heritage Centre Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; August 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Deliberate destruction of heritage (Inadequate protection leading to a threat to rock-hewn monumental tombs, vandalism and development of agricultural activities in the rural zone)
- Governance
- Housing (Urban encroachment and uncontrolled building construction leading to destruction of archaeological areas)
- Interpretative and visitation facilities (Need for a presentation and interpretation system for visitors and the local population)
- Livestock farming / grazing of domesticated animals
- Crop production
- Management activities (Inappropriate earlier restoration work)
- Management systems/management plan (Need to complete the Conservation and Management Plan in order to co-ordinate actions in the short and medium term; Need to provide a detailed map at the appropriate scale showing the boundaries of the property and buffer zone, as well as regulatory measures foreseen to ensure the protection of the property; Inadequate on-site security and control systems)
- Surface water pollution (Problem of discharge of sewage from the modern town into the Wadi Belghader)
- Fire (wildfires)
- Armed conflict

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/190/>

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/190/documents/>. Works performed at the property during 2021 and progress in several conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions are presented, as follows:

- Various maintenance and restoration works have been carried out at the theatre in the Agora area, including the following: removal of vegetation, especially within the masonry, reassembly of the stonework after its treatment with resin, and reopening of a blocked side gate, which was causing damage related to the accumulation of humidity;
- In November 2021, the following works were undertaken in the area of the Severan gate: removal of vegetation, restoration of the archaeological remains of the monument, and replacing the corrugated roof shelter with a new tiled roof;
- The “lower office” administrative building was rehabilitated, vegetation in the area was removed, and fallen statues were re-erected;
- The original water channels have been cleaned in order to prevent the accumulation of rainwater and subsequent damage resulting from it;
- Restoration works have been carried out for the Greek Propylaeum at the sanctuary of Apollo.

Regarding the Cyrene Grand Hotel project near the Temple of Zeus, the State Party informs that this project was part of a larger initiative, significant parts of which were halted before 2011. The hotel project is currently on hold and is likely to be cancelled. The Department of Antiquities (DoA) considers this project cancelled until further notice and shall keep the Committee informed about any developments in this regard.

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 been able to move forward with the implementation of several initiatives contributing to rehabilitation, maintenance, and restoration of the property, which is welcomed.

The information provided by the State Party concerning the suspension of the Cyrene Grand Hotel project is welcome, and it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to keep it informed about any future developments in this regard.

The State Party mentions restoration works being carried out at the theatre in the Agora area, the Severan gate area, and the sanctuary of Apollo. However, it does not provide sufficient description of the works and does not elaborate on the implementation details. In this regard, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to provide detailed information about works that have been undertaken or are planned, and to continue to consult with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS with regard to conservation materials and techniques.

The pollution caused by the sewage disposal of Shahat City into the Wadi Belghader is not mentioned in the report. Addressing this issue remains a necessity to avoid more damage to the archaeological site.

It remains essential that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission requested by the Committee at its previous sessions and 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 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 a Minor Boundary Modification proposal in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines and to initiate the process for the elaboration of a Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV), in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for examination by the World Heritage Committee.

A comprehensive strategy for managing and conserving the property in the current context remains a necessity. It is essential that the State Party is strongly encouraged to elaborate a Management Plan and seek technical and financial support to this end.

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.33

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.11, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021);

3. Notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the State Party to address the conservation of the property; and requests it to continue its efforts in this regard to the extent possible;
4. Also notes that the Cyrene Grand Hotel project is halted, and also requests the State Party 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 on-going 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. Further notes the restoration works being carried out at the theatre in the Agora area, the Severan gate area, and the sanctuary of Apollo, and further requests the State Party to provide detailed information in this regard, and to continue to consult with the World Heritage centre and ICOMOS with regard to conservation materials and techniques planned at the property before their application;
6. Reiterates its request to the State Party to provide updated information about the damage caused by pollution due to sewage disposal of Shahat city into Wadi Belghader and to seek the necessary technical and financial support to develop relevant mitigation measures;
7. Also reiterates its 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. Requests furthermore 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 moreover 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. Strongly encourages the State Party to pursue the development of the Management Plan for the property, and invites it to seek the necessary technical and financial support;
11. Notes with appreciation the invitation from the State Party for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, and also encourages it to take place as soon as conditions permit;
12. Continues to call 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;
13. Reiterates its appeal 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 during 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;

14. Finally requests 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. **Decides to retain Archaeological Site of Cyrene (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)

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
Conflict situation prevailing in the country

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

Corrective measures identified
In progress

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures
In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/documents/>

International Assistance
Requests approved: 3 (from 1988-1990)
Total amount approved: USD 45,500
For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds
Total amount granted: USD 24,543 for the European Project "Protecting Cultural Heritage and Diversity in Complex Emergencies for Stability and Peace".
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
1988: UNESCO mission; March 2003: World Heritage Centre mission; May 2006: World Heritage Centre mission; January 2007: World Heritage Centre Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing (urban encroachment)
- Illegal activities
- Desertification
- Flooding
-
- Armed conflict
- Dust: Sand covering certain areas of the property
- Graffiti
- Fire (wildfires)
- Localised utilities: Discharge of domestic wastewater at the west of the property (issue resolved)

- Uncontrolled growth of vegetation
- Relative humidity (deterioration of monuments)
- Human and financial resources
- Management Systems/ management plan: Absence of management plan

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/>

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/183/documents/>. Works performed at the property during 2021 and progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented, as follows:

- Rows of trees have been planted as a potential windbreak along the paved road linking the main road and the amphitheatre;
- In efforts to enhance security, a new metal fence was installed to the east of the site, in the “Barco Area”, and in place of the old fence adjacent to the port of the ancient city;
- Works are in progress to construct an administrative building and a service building (toilets) in the amphitheater area;
- The old roof of the warehouse building was replaced with a new one made of corrugated metal;
- A channel to drain the sewage water collected in the area of the city fence to the west of the property was created;
- The deteriorated elements of the wooden floor of the stage of the theatre were removed. Work is in progress to replace these elements;
- Regular cleaning works have been conducted, including efforts to remove vegetation from the historic fabric;
- Digital documentation works included the digital scanning of photos in the archives of the Leptis Magna office, as well as the registration cards of objects from the Leptis Magna Museum.

Besides the above-mentioned information, two main conservation issues have been highlighted:

- The Hunting Baths appear to be in an alarming state of conservation and are under threat of collapse due to various factors, including sand pressure on the walls of the building and growth of vegetation. Its frescoes have seriously deteriorated due to the increased humidity. The monument needs an urgent intervention, and support from the international community has been requested in this regard. The Department of Antiquities (DoA) is currently studying several technical proposals and is aiming to prepare detailed intervention plans for the monument;
- There is continuous tidal flooding and sea encroachment on the Circus, with sea waves reaching its north seating area, and, in high tide, it appears that the sea water pours into the race track.

The State Party reiterates its invitation for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to assess the state of conservation of the property.

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

The State Party has been able to move forward with the implementation of several initiatives contributing to rehabilitation, maintenance, and preservation of the property, which is welcomed.

On the other hand, information provided by the State Party concerning the deteriorating state of the Hunting Baths is alarming. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to pursue the development of a conservation strategy for the Hunting Baths, with urgent conservation measures aiming to preserve and protect the monument, and to seek the necessary technical and financial support in this regard. Furthermore, it is important that the State Party continues to consult the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies with regard to restoration materials and techniques planned to be used at the Hunting Baths and other archaeological remains at the property before their application.

With regard to the issue of the tidal flooding and continuous sea encroachment on the circus area, it is recommended that the State Party develop technical proposals with mitigation measures to address the issue and present them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

A comprehensive and holistic Conservation Action Plan, which would strategically address the pending conservation issues at the property appears to be a necessity. Moreover, it is important that the State Party be further encouraged to elaborate a Management Plan and seek technical and financial support to this end.

Between April and October 2021, four online technical meetings brought together the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, addressing the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), supported through the World Heritage Fund and the Netherlands Funds in Trust project "Strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of corrective measures for Libyan World Heritage properties". It is crucial that the State Party finalizes the development of the DSOCR, with 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 a Minor Boundary Modification proposal, in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines. It is also important that the State Party continues consultation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS concerning the development and submission of the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) for examination by the World Heritage Committee.

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

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.34

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.12**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),*
3. *Notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the State Party to address the conservation of the property; and requests it to continue its efforts in this regard to the extent possible and to seek the necessary funds as needed;*
4. *Also notes with great concern the alarming state of conservation of the Hunting Baths and also requests the State Party to:*
 - a) *Pursue the development of a conservation strategy for the Hunting Baths, with urgent conservation measures aiming to preserve and protect the monument, and to seek the necessary technical and financial support in this regard,*
 - b) *Present the proposed conservation plan for the Hunting Baths to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,*
 - c) *Continue to consult the Advisory Bodies with regard to restoration materials and techniques planned to be used at the Hunting Baths and the other archaeological remains at the property before their application;*
5. *Further notes with concern the issue of tidal flooding and continuous sea encroachment on the circus area and further requests the State Party to develop proposals with*

mitigation measures to address the issue and to present the proposals to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

6. *Encourages the State Party to initiate the development of a comprehensive Conservation Action Plan for the property, and to pursue the development of a Management Plan, while seeking the necessary technical and financial support in this regard;*
7. *Urges the State Party to finalize the process of development of 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. *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;*
9. *Requests moreover the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, to finalize the development of a draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and to submit it for examination by the World Heritage Committee;*
10. *Reiterates its previous request to the State Party 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 on-going and 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;*
11. *Notes furthermore with appreciation 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, to take place as soon as the conditions permit;*
12. *Continues to call 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;*
13. *Finally requests 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. ***Decides to retain Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

38. Hebron/AI-Khalil Old Town (Palestine) (C 1565)

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1986

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

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

Destruction as well as ascertained and potential threats consequent to the armed conflict in Syria started in March 2011.

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

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/21/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1986-2023)

Total amount approved: USD 80,250

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: USD 195,255 by the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund

Total amount provided to the six Syrian World Heritage properties: 200,000 euros by the Italian Government; for built, movable and intangible heritage: 2.46 million euros by the European Union, USD 170,000 by the Flemish Government, 63,000 euros by the Austrian Government, USD 200,000 by the German Government; for cultural heritage under conflict: USD 200,000 by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain

Previous monitoring missions

January 2017: UNESCO Rapid Assessment mission, February 2023: UNESCO Rapid Assessment mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Before the conflict:

- Legal framework (Lack of definition of the buffer zone)
- Management System/ Management Plan (Lack of conservation and/or management plans)
- Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system (Inappropriate restoration works)

- Housing (Urban encroachment)

Since 2013:

- Armed conflict (Destruction and damage to heritage)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 January 2022 and 24 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports for the six Syrian World Heritage properties, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/21/documents/>, and include updated information on progress and challenges in a number of conservation issues at the property, as follows:

- Many activities are being implemented for the recovery of the property despite numerous challenges, including limited human and financial resources as well as limited raw materials;
- The Governorate of Aleppo has accelerated the rehabilitation of the Old City's infrastructure and social services in order to revitalize its economy. Safety measures have been undertaken, such as the dismantling of collapsed or unstable walls in narrow alleys. In collaboration with the Aga Khan Cultural Services in Syria, the 60 shops of Suq al-Harir and the three khans (Khan al-Harir, Khan Jaki and Khan al-Venitia) were restored, in addition to the 18 shops of Fistuq Square, the 57 shops of Suq al-Hibal and the 19 shops of Suq al-Ahmadiyya. The restoration of the 48 shops of Suq al-Mihmas and the 32 shops of the western section of Suq al-Attarin is also envisaged;
- Work is progressing for the rehabilitation of public squares, such as Sahat al-Hatab, Qadi Askar, al-Milh, as well as for their axial streets;
- Restoration work is progressing in several parts of the Great Mosque, using the original stone whenever possible. These include the eastern and western walls of the main gate (Eastern gate), the southern side with the Qibla, the northern façade of the eastern side, the north gallery, the north-eastern corner and the northwestern corner next to the minaret, as well as the minaret itself. At the Citadel, walls and towers are being rebuilt on the northern and eastern part of the wall. Documentation, emergency consolidations and restoration work are progressing steadily at Bayt Ghazaleh and Bayt Ajiqbash;
- According to the Ministry of Endowment, a total of 100 mosques (77% of ancient mosques) have been restored, including the severely damaged mosques of Naqusa, al-Safahia, Tawashi, Ismailia, Nur al-Din and al-Sahibiyya as well as Madrasa Turuntaiyya and Takiyya al-Nasimi;
- The recovery phase continues to be led by the Committee for the Protection of the Ancient City, headed by the Governor of Aleppo – who has issued a number of decrees for the recovery of the Old City – supported by technical committees. In 2021 and 2022, 231 licenses for restoration work were granted to residential buildings and shops. 108 restoration permits were also provided to the Ministry of Endowment for mosques, residential buildings and shops, bringing the percentage of estates of the Ministry that have been granted a license since 2017 up to 80% (490 licenses for 600 estates);
- Legal facilities are provided to encourage investors to participate in the recovery of the city, and social, educational, cultural and tourism activities (including for the promotion and safeguarding of al-Qudoud al-Halabiya which is registered on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021) are being carried out to foster the return of inhabitants.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck south-eastern Türkiye, near the Syrian border on 6 February 2023, and the subsequent aftershocks, inflicted significant damage to the property, whose historic fabric was already weakened by the impact of the conflict. A UNESCO Rapid Assessment mission took place from 25 to 27 February 2023, which confirmed that the Citadel and its structures, the historic souqs, museums, monuments, residential historic buildings, and many religious buildings suffered various degrees of damage. Damage in residential areas was exacerbated by inappropriate post-conflict stabilization work and repairs. An Emergency Assistance request from the World Heritage Fund was approved on 17 March 2023, which aims at assessing and documenting damage as well as undertaking consolidation and conservation work at the western tower of the city wall.

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

See General Decision **45COM 7A.46** of this Document on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic.

It is extremely unfortunate that the February 2023 earthquake and the subsequent aftershocks have further inflicted significant damage to the property, posing an additional challenge to recovery, where planning, coordination and restoration works were progressing well. It is recommended that the Committee welcome the efforts of the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM), its partners and the local community, despite the challenges, and encourage the pursuit of activities planned for the recovery of the property.

It is noted that great efforts have been made for the recovery of infrastructure and the revival of economic life in the Old City, as outlined in the State Party report prior to the February 2023 earthquake. Works included restoration and the revitalization of most of its ancient suqs and a number of public squares. The rehabilitation of Suq al-Saqatiyya as a pilot project was showcased as a case study in the joint ICOMOS-ICCROM publication, *Analysis of Case Studies in Recovery and Reconstruction*, published in 2020 and launched in March 2021, and is a remarkable example of both physical conservation and revitalization. Safety measures were implemented in the Old City to protect inhabitants from risks of collapse of damaged structures, as previously requested by the Committee, but it would be preferable that wherever possible significant fabric and architectural detail are stabilized and consolidated, rather than dismantled. The issue of stabilization and securing monuments and buildings has become even more critical in light of the earthquake damage. It is expected that emergency assistance will contribute to stabilization and consolidation works..

There have been other significant works completed or which are in progress at the property. The numerous images provided in the State Party report and its annex reflect its efforts prior to the earthquake. There are some apparent differences in the stone used and the State Party should be encouraged to undertake repairs and reconstruction works using matching stone, and to ensure authenticity of design and materials when reconstruction is planned. Noting that the State Party has indicated that numerous restoration permits have also been issued in 2021 and 2022, it is recommended that the Committee remind the State Party to submit information on any major project to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The recovery work that has been undertaken seems to have been well coordinated to date. Nonetheless, and in order to plan in the longer term, it is recommended that the State Party be reminded of the Committee's previous requests to afford priority to a Reconstruction and Recovery Master Plan and the elaboration of an updated Management Plan, to be developed in line with the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

One of the major challenges for recovery of the property is the ongoing lack of available funds. Given the immense challenges of reconstruction and recovery at the property, and considering that it is critical to intervene swiftly to avoid further irreversible loss, the international community is to be encouraged to support the implementation of activities for the stabilization and recovery of the property.

Given the ongoing momentum of recovery projects, and the impact of the February 2023 earthquake, the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission should occur as soon as the security situation allows, in order to proceed with a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property. It is also highly desirable that the required set of corrective measures and the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) be developed as expeditiously as possible.

No information was provided on the previously reported creation of a buffer zone. It is recommended that the Committee recall the need to submit a minor boundary modification to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies, should any buffer zone delineation be agreed upon by stakeholders.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.40

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7A.18** and **44 COM 7A.24**, at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021),
3. Taking into account Decision **45 COM 7A.46**, on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic,
4. Taking note of the UNESCO Rapid Assessment mission carried out to the property in February 2023 following the devastating earthquake, expresses great concerns about the damage inflicted at the property, which poses additional challenges to recovery efforts;
5. Notes with appreciation that safety measures were implemented in the Old City to protect inhabitants from risks of collapse of damaged structures, as previously requested by the Committee, and encourages the State Party to stabilize and consolidate the original fabric and architectural details, where possible, in preference to dismantling;
6. Taking note of the continued efforts towards the recovery of the property since December 2016, reiterates its encouragement to all stakeholders to continue their efforts, and requests that repair and reconstruction uses matching stone and that planning for reconstruction ensures the authenticity of design and materials,
7. Reminds the State Party of its obligation to submit information on major projects to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
8. Also reminds the State Party of the need to develop a Reconstruction and Recovery Master Plan and an updated Management Plan for the property, and recommends that these plans be developed in line with the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape and in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
9. Calls again on all States Parties to support the emergency safeguarding and recovery measures, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
10. Reiterates the need for the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to be carried out as soon as the situation allows, in order to proceed with a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property;
11. Invites the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to facilitate the elaboration of 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 at the earliest opportunity;
12. Noting the previously reported issuance of a regulation for the creation of a buffer zone, also reiterates its encouragement to the State Party to submit a proposal for a minor boundary modification to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2024**, in accordance with Paragraphs 163-164 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by ICOMOS;
13. Requests 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. **Decides to retain Ancient City of Aleppo (Syrian Arab Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1980

Criteria (i)(iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

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

Destruction as well as ascertained and potential threats consequent to the armed conflict in Syria started in March 2011

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

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/22/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1995-2018)

Total amount approved: USD 81,250

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/22/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the six Syrian World Heritage properties: 200,000 euros by the Italian Government; for built, movable and intangible heritage: 2.46 million euros by the European Union, USD 170,000 by the Flemish Government, 63,000 euros by the Austrian Government, USD 200,000 by the German Government; for cultural heritage under conflict: USD 200,000 by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain; USD 30,000 from the World Heritage Fund budget line dedicated to properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Previous monitoring missions

Since the start of the conflict in March 2011, the security situation has not allowed any missions to be undertaken at this World Heritage property

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Before the conflict:

- Illegal Activities
- Housing

Since March 2011:

- Armed conflict (Damage of historic buildings)
- Illegal activities (illegal constructions following the start of the conflict and illegal excavations)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/22/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 January 2022 and 24 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports for the six Syrian World Heritage properties, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/22/documents/>, and include brief information on a number of conservation issues at the property, as follows:

- Emergency restoration work was undertaken at the western gallery and reception hall of the theatre/Citadel and one of the theatre's entrances (vomitorium), using original stone blocks whenever possible;
- The official adoption of the building code is progressing;
- Within the framework of the request for financial support from the World Heritage Fund, documentation work was carried out for the Kalybe monument.

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

See General decision **45 COM 7A.46** of this Document on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The State Party has undertaken minor emergency restoration work at the property, but no major work, in accordance with the previous request of the Committee (Decision **44 COM 7A.19**).

On 18 October 2021, the State Party submitted a request for financial support from the World Heritage Fund to conduct essential studies for the rehabilitation of the Kalybe monument (Cradle of the King's Daughter), to define optimal restoration approaches, as requested by the Committee (Decisions **43 COM 7A.32** and **44 COM 7A.19**). The request was approved on 4 November 2021, and a report was submitted on 18 December 2022. The project includes the preparation of a historical study and analysis of previous restoration works, documentation of damage using photogrammetric techniques, debris management, and restoration studies. The project report and outcomes have been subject to technical review by ICOMOS, which concludes that overall the work is compelling, but that more information is required about the documentation of archaeological monitoring, there is insufficient information provided about the proposed anastylosis project, and the approach to securing the surroundings of the monument has not been addressed. It would be appropriate for the Committee to recommend that the report be revised accordingly and re-submitted for further review. The State Party should also be requested to provide detailed information, including project documentation and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), prepared in accordance with the new Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, in conformity with Paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, prior to any final decision about the proceeding with the proposed works.

Following the technical review of the building code by ICOMOS, the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) has informed that the plan for adoption integrates most of the comments provided by ICOMOS. It is recalled that the technical review also supports the preparation of a site management plan and master plan, which are crucial to inform restoration decisions and ensure coordination among stakeholders.

The World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, has initiated remote work to support the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

Given the progress achieved in planning the recovery of the property, the previously requested joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission will be crucial as soon as the situation allows.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.41

The World Heritage Committee,

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

2. Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7A.19** and **44 COM 7A.24**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
3. Taking into account Decision **45 COM 7A.46**, on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic,
4. Recalling the previously reported extensive illegal excavations at the site, reiterates its call upon the international community to collaborate for the sharing of inventories and documentation that could facilitate the return of looted cultural property;
5. Encourages the State Party to continue implementing emergency consolidation work at the property and to limit other restoration works until optimal restoration approaches have been determined;
6. Welcomes the project aimed at conducting the necessary studies for the rehabilitation of the Kalybe monument (Cradle of the King's Daughter) funded through the World Heritage Fund, and requests the State Party to revise the project report in line with the technical review by ICOMOS and re-submit it for further technical review, and also requests the State Party to submit detailed information about the proposed anastylosis project, including project documentation and a Heritage Impact Assessment prepared in accordance with the new Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, in conformity with Paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines for review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, prior to any final decision about the proposed works proceeding;
7. Taking note that the approval of the building code is progressing, recalls that the technical review also highlighted the need for the preparation of a site management plan and master plan, which are crucial to inform restoration decisions and ensure coordination among stakeholders and further requests the State Party to instigate these important projects as soon as circumstances allow;
8. Calls again on all States Parties to support emergency safeguarding and recovery measures, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
9. Reiterates the need for the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to be carried out as soon as the situation allows, in order to proceed with a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property;
10. Also encourages the State Party to pursue the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and a set of correctives measures, for potential examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session;
11. Requests 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. **Decides to retain Ancient City of Bosra (Syrian Arab Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

42. Ancient City of Damascus (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 20bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

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

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

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

Destruction as well as ascertained and potential threats consequent to the armed conflict in Syria started in March 2011

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7685>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7685>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7685>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/20/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 7 (from 1981-2020)

Total amount approved: USD 186,050

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/20/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted to the property: USD 10,000 from the Italian Funds-in-Trust.

Total amount provided to the six Syrian World Heritage properties: 200,000 euros by the Italian Government; for movable and intangible heritage: 2.46 million euros by the European Union, USD 170,000 by the Flemish Government, 63,000 euros by the Austrian Government, USD 200,000 by the German Government; for cultural heritage under conflict: USD 200,000 by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain

Previous monitoring missions

March and December 2007: World Heritage Centre missions for the King Faisal Street project; April 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission. April 2016: World Heritage Centre Rapid Assessment mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Before the conflict:

- Society valuing of heritage (Poor state of conservation) (issue resolved)
- Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system (Inappropriate restoration techniques) (issue resolved)
- Legal framework (Lack of a buffer zone) (issue resolved)
- Management System/Management Plan (Lack of a management plan)
- Housing (Development projects threatening the emblematic historic fabric)
- Ground transport infrastructure (Development projects threatening the emblematic historic fabric) (issue resolved)

Since March 2011:

- Armed conflict (Damage due to the armed conflict)
- Other factors (Fire due to an electrical incident at al-Asrooniya and elsewhere in the property) (issue resolved)
- Management activities (Lack of maintenance of the sewage system due to the conflict) (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/20/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 January 2022 and 24 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports for the six Syrian World Heritage properties, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/20/documents/>, and include updated information on progress in a number of conservation issues at the property, as follows:

- The ancient city wall between Bab Touma and Bab al-Salam has been repaired and reconstructed through emergency financial support from the World Heritage Fund, a new sewage network is being implemented in the vicinity of the Damascus wall in al-Joura neighborhood, and the wall structure is being monitored;
- The electric lines have been grounded in Suq al-Sroujia and Suq Bab Sarija, and a workshop was organized to stress the importance and address the issue of grounding electric networks in the Old City;
- The ancient city is still impacted by fires. A workshop was organized by the Syndicate of Engineers, in partnership with the Fire Brigade, to further mitigate risks in the city. Its recommendations are being implemented through a committee created to address the issue of recurring fires and pending the installation of dry extinguishing lines, notably the installation of emergency water tanks and fire alarms, in addition to equipment provision and setting response mechanisms. The Damascus Fire Brigade has developed a study for securing dry water lines and water supplies in the entire city, and, in coordination with the 'Fijah Water Corporation' is proceeding with the periodic maintenance of the 81 water nozzles in the property;
- The traditional building construction professions and the use of traditional building materials have been promoted. The educational centre for traditional crafts, which also promotes traditional building materials and is supported by al-Sakhra Association, opened in the Jewish quarter. A workshop on traditional building construction techniques was planned in March 2022, supported by the Syndicate of Engineers. All restoration works undertaken by the Directorate of the Old City, and notably in Suq Sarija, were undertaken using traditional building materials;
- A cooperation agreement was signed with the University of Damascus to undertake studies in the Old City, and an urban design competition was launched for Bab Touma Square, in cooperation with the British Syrian Society;
- With the support of the Aga Khan Cultural Services – Syria, Khan Suleiman Pasha is undergoing rehabilitation to become a five-star hotel. The work is carried out in cooperation with an investment group. The two central domes, that were long missing, have been reconstructed in glass;
- The Aga Khan Development Network has also established a microfinance service to provide loans for the restoration of residential houses within the property;
- In 2021, 13 permits for emergency consolidation and restoration work were granted in the Jewish quarter in order to maintain abandoned buildings;
- A 3-year project was launched in November 2022 for the 'digital transformation' of the ancient city, involving several stakeholders including local communities. It aims at transforming it into a sustainable city, which takes into account the requirements of residents, and enhances the city's economic, tourism, cultural, and environmental dynamism. Designed into 15 programmes, it will be implemented by technical teams under the supervision of a multidisciplinary technical advisory committee. The first phase foresees the production of a 3-D model of the city using drone technology, within a comprehensive development plan, employing modern technologies to improve various services for citizens and tourists.

On 19 February 2023, it was reported by the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM) that the Technical Institute for Applied Arts and the Intermediate Institute of Antiquities and Museums in the Citadel of Damascus incurred damage from shelling.

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

See General Decision **45 COM 7A.46** of this Document on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic.

The State Party has completed restoration works at the ancient wall between Bab Touma and Bab al-Salam and proceeded to the monitoring of structures, and has substantially progressed in the mitigation

of risks of leakage in the vicinity of the ancient wall in al-Joura neighborhood, notably through the implementation of new sewage infrastructure. It has also continued to reduce the risk of fires caused by the electric network, by starting the work of grounding electric networks, implementing dry lines, providing firefighter equipment and training, in addition to identifying areas most at risk. The Committee may wish to request submission of further information about the adaptation of Khan Suleiman Pasha to become a five-star hotel, including the introduction of new glass domes, and remind the State Party of its obligations under paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The opening of the educational centre for traditional building materials, first mentioned in 2019, is very welcome, as are the workshops that are being carried out on building construction techniques, and the use of traditional material in all restoration work undertaken by the Directorate of the Old City and the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM), which will contribute to countering the gradual diminution of the authenticity of the property. The microfinance loans system being established for the restoration of residential housing within the property is welcomed.

The DGAM has provided information that a coordination mechanism, led by the Directorate of the Old City under the responsibility of the Governorate of Damascus, is operating with efficiency at the site, and management and protection activities are undertaken under the guidance of a Master Plan which is operational, though still under the process of being approved. The development of partnerships with the local communities, NGOs and universities is very welcomed, as is the elaboration of the 'digital transformation' of the ancient city project, including a development plan, employing modern technologies to improve the various services in the ancient city. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the Committee request further information on how the digital transformation project and comprehensive development plan are linked with the overall Master Plan to ensure the long term sustainable development of the City. It is also recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to also seek international support for continuing the work towards the elaboration of the Management Plan for the property and its conservation, as previously requested in Decision **44 COM 7A.20**. The Management Plan remains crucial to inform restoration decisions and ensure coordination among stakeholders. The Committee should also encourage the State Party to continue implementing all of the recommendations of the 2016 UNESCO First Aid Support Meeting and the 2016 UNESCO Technical Assistance Workshop, including the Ottoman Bank, for which no updated information has been provided.

Reports of further damage arising from conflict, including reported damage to the Technical Institute for Applied Arts and the Intermediate Institute of Antiquities and Museums in the Citadel of Damascus, are an ongoing cause for concern and threat to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and it would be appropriate for the Committee to call on all parties to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the attributes which support and convey the OUV of the property, and to fulfil their obligations under international law.

Progress has been achieved towards the implementation of the corrective measures in view of achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). The State Party should be encouraged to continue implementing the corrective measures in accordance with the established timeframe and to submit reports and evidence to the World Heritage Centre as the corrective measures are progressively implemented.

Notwithstanding the progress achieved in a number of conservation and management matters at the property, it remains crucial that the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission take place as soon as the situation allows, to enable a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property.

Draft Decision : 45 COM 7A.42

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7A.20** and **44 COM 7A.24**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),*

3. Taking into account Decision **45 COM 7A.46** on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic,
4. Takes note of the restoration works carried out at the property, including major repair to the ancient city wall between Bab Touma and Bab al-Salam supported by the World Heritage Fund, and the adaptation of the Khan Suleiman Pasha to become a five-star hotel, and requests the State Party to submit further information about this project for review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, and reminds the State Party to submit information on any proposal that may have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies before making any decision that would be difficult to reverse and before any further works commence, along with Heritage Impact Assessments, in conformity with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
5. Welcomes the work undertaken on infrastructure improvement, the provision of equipment and the response mechanisms in place to ensure efficiency in mitigating risks linked to electricity and sewage infrastructure in priority areas, and encourages the State Party to continue implementing the risk mitigation strategy;
6. Also welcomes the opening of the educational centre for traditional crafts, the organization of training workshops on traditional building construction techniques, and the provision of traditional materials for all restoration works undertaken by the Directorate of the Old City;
7. Notes that a micro-finance loans system is being established for residential housing, and that restoration licenses have also been issued for buildings in residential areas;
8. Further welcomes the enhanced cooperation of the national institutions in charge of the management of the property with local communities, NGOs and the University of Damascus;
9. Also encourages the State Party to continue to implement fully all of the recommendations of the 2016 UNESCO First Aid Support Meeting and the 2016 UNESCO Technical Assistance Workshop, and to submit an updated report on works related to the Ottoman Bank to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
10. Also takes note that a coordination mechanism, led by the Directorate of the Old City under the responsibility of the Governorate of Damascus, is operating efficiently at the site, and that management and protection activities are undertaken under the guidance of a Master Plan which is operational, though still under the process of being approved, requests the State Party to provide further information on how the digital transformation project and comprehensive development plan are linked with the overall Master Plan to ensure the long terms sustainable development of the City, and to inform the World Heritage Centre once the Master Plan is approved;
11. Encourages again the State Party to seek funding support for the elaboration of the Management Plan, which remains a crucial tool for the adequate long-term management of the property;
12. Urges all parties to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the attributes which support and convey the OUV of the property, and to fulfil their obligations under international law, in particular the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;

13. Calls upon the international community to support the conservation of the property;
14. Commends the progress made by the State Party in the implementation of the corrective measures, aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and further encourages it to continue implementing the corrective measures in accordance with the established timeframe, and to submit reports and evidence to the World Heritage Centre as the corrective measures are progressively being implemented;
15. Reiterates its request that the invited World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission be carried out as soon as the situation allows, in order to enable a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property;
16. Also requests 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.
17. **Decides to retain Ancient City of Damascus (Syrian Arab Republic) from the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

43. Ancient villages of Northern Syria (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 1348)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2011

Criteria (iii)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

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

Destruction as well as ascertained and potential threats consequent to the armed conflict in Syria started in March 2011

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Not yet drafted

Corrective measures identified

Not yet 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/1348/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (2007)

Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the six Syrian World Heritage properties: 200,000 euros by the Italian Government; for built, movable and intangible heritage: 2.46 million euros by the European Union, USD 170,000 by the Flemish Government, 63,000 euros by the Austrian Government, USD 200,000 by the German Government; for cultural heritage under conflict: USD 200,000 by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain.

Previous monitoring missions

Since the start of the conflict in March 2011, the security situation has not allowed any missions to be undertaken to this World Heritage property

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Before the conflict:

- Legal framework (Protection Policy does not adequately integrate cultural landscapes)
- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Housing (Development or infrastructure projects)
- Management System/Management Plan (Management Plan still incomplete and lack of an Action Plan)

Since March 2011:

- Armed conflict (Destruction and damage due to the armed conflict)
- Illegal activities (Use of ancient stones as building material, illegal constructions and excavations, use of the sites by internally displaced people)
- Military training (Use of the sites by armed groups)
- Deliberate destruction of heritage
- Quarrying
- Land conversion

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 January 2022 and 24 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports for the six Syrian World Heritage properties, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1348/documents/>, and do not include updated information about the property and its state of conservation.

The State Party reports that the site is still mostly inaccessible owing to the ongoing presence of armed groups, and consequently, no further information could be provided.

In February 2023, reports were received from third parties about damage inflicted to the property as a result of the 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck south-eastern Türkiye near the Syrian border, and the subsequent aftershocks. The reports include information and photos about collapsed walls and/or ceilings, as well as cracks in walls at the archaeological parks of Jebel Zawiye, Jebel al-A'la, Jebel Barisha, Jebel Wastani and Jebel Sem'an, where, in particular, the collapse of an arch of the western basilica at Qal'at Sem'an is reported.

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

See General Decision **45 COM 7A.46** of this Document on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic.

It is concerning that the property continues to be inaccessible, which prevents full detailed on-site assessment of the damage and overall state of conservation of the property.

It remains essential that these assessments are undertaken in detail as soon as the security situation allows, and the measures needed for ensuring the conservation and protection of the property are identified, which would, in due course, allow for the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and identification of an associated set of corrective measures.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.43

The World Heritage Committee,

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

2. Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7A.21** and **44 COM 7A.24**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
3. Taking into account Decision **45 COM 7A.46**, on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic,
4. Expresses its great concern about the situation at the property, in particular the ongoing presence of armed groups, the additional damage resulting from the February 2023 earthquake, and the lack of detailed information on damage incurred;
5. Calls again on all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any action that could cause further damage to the property, including through its use for military or other purposes;
6. Also calls again on all States Parties to support emergency safeguarding and recovery measures, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
7. Reiterates the need for the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to be carried out as soon as the security situation allows, in order to proceed with a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property;
8. Requests 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;
9. **Decides to retain Ancient Villages of Northern Syria (Syrian Arab Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

44. Crac des chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 1229)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2006

Criteria (ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

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

Destruction as well as ascertained and potential threats consequent to the armed conflict in Syria started in March 2011

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Drafted; proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Corrective measures identified

Drafted; proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Drafted; proposed for adoption in the draft Decision below

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1229/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1998-2020)

Total amount approved: USD 65,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1229/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount: 200,000 Euros by the Italian Government; for built, movable and intangible heritage: 2.46 million Euros by the European Union, USD 170,000 by the Flemish Government, 63,000 Euros by the Austrian Government, USD 200,000 by the German Government; for cultural heritage under conflict: USD 200,000 by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain; USD 138,000 from the World Heritage Fund budget line dedicated to properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Previous monitoring missions

Since the start of the conflict in March 2011, the security situation has not allowed any missions to be undertaken to this World Heritage property

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Before the conflict:

- Management System/Management Plan (Lack of conservation and/or management plans)
- Management activities (Inappropriate restoration works)
- Housing (Urban encroachment)
- Quarrying (Exploitation of quarries within the perimeter of World Heritage properties)

Since 2011:

- Armed conflict (Destruction and damage due to the armed conflict)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (Cable car project at Qal'at Salah El-Din) (issue resolved)
- Invasive vegetation

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1229/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 January 2022 and 24 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports for the six Syrian World Heritage properties, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1229/documents/>, and include updated information on progress and challenges with conservation issues at the property, as follows:

- In the framework of the support provided through the World Heritage Fund for the "First phase of the Master Plan for the site of Crac des Chevaliers", the following was undertaken:
 - (i) Establishment of a topographic network of survey points for the entire site and its surroundings,
 - (ii) Identification of critical stability cases as well as restoration needs at the site, with prioritization of interventions and development of detailed restoration proposals aligned with the recommendations of the 2016 UNESCO technical assistance workshop,
 - (iii) Diagnosis of stone deterioration,
 - (iv) Inputs to the management plan, identification of priorities for structural interventions and the concept for the site management;
- The rehabilitation of tourism and cultural routes has begun, with installation of wooden carpentry, signage and lighting, in addition to weeding the site;
- An agreement was signed with Saint Ephrem Patriarchal Development Committee for several projects funded by Hungary, that were implemented between July 2021 and December 2022. The work, undertaken using original stones whenever possible and lime mortar, include the restoration and reconstruction of al-Zahir Baybars Tower and surroundings, the interior of the church (including frescoes), the northern curtain near the Tower of the King's Daughter, the Hall of the

Knights, and the Ottoman building's facades. The northern wall overlooking the moat was partially restored;

- Within the financial assistance from the World Heritage Fund, a damage assessment in the buffer zone of Crac des Chevaliers was carried out. Three levels of damage were identified ranking from completely destroyed (2%), heavily damaged (18%) to slightly damaged (40%). 16% were assessed in good condition, while 10 illegal constructions were identified in the protected area surrounding the monument;
- Within the same financial assistance, documentation work was carried out at Qal'at Salah El-Din in view of expanding the buffer zone on the basis of new archaeological evidence. A Minor Boundary Modification proposal was submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- A visitor plan is being developed for sustainable tourism at Qal'at Salah El-Din, including visitor trails, an information centre, and visitor information facilities.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck south-eastern Türkiye, near the Syrian border, on 6 February 2023, and its subsequent aftershocks, inflicted damage to the property. Cracks and collapses at both component sites were reported by the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM). A request for Emergency Assistance from the World Heritage Fund was approved on 20 March 2023, which aims at further assessing and documenting damage as well as undertaking consolidation and conservation work.

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

See General Decision **45 COM 46** of this Document on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic.

It is extremely unfortunate that the February 2023 earthquake inflicted further damage at both castles, where substantial progress had been made towards the physical recovery of both component sites of the property following recent damage. This progress is the result of substantial efforts to establish strategic partnerships and seek international support, including the implementation of International Assistance requests and financial assistance from the World Heritage Fund.

The project implemented through International Assistance for Qal'at Salah El-Din, and approved on 3 March 2020, has been completed. It included the update of the topographic survey, systematic documentation of damage at Qal'at Salah El-Din and the identification and implementation of emergency measures at the site and its buffer zone. The State Party has also submitted a comprehensive report on work undertaken at Crac des Chevaliers for completing the project that was also supported through the World Heritage Fund, which includes studies on the historical evolution of the monument and its water management system, in addition to other activities. The section on priorities for structural interventions, which is based on the 2016 UNESCO workshop recommendations, and the section providing the concept for the site management with maps of visitor routes, are intended to guide future activities at the sites and support the management of the property in the medium term and the development of a Master Plan for the property.

With financial assistance from the World Heritage Fund budget line dedicated to properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, which was approved on 28 July 2021, a comprehensive assessment of the situation in the buffer zone of the Crac des Chevaliers component highlights violations that occurred during the conflict. At Qal'at Salah El-Din, works allowed for the submission of a Minor Boundary Modification proposal to the World Heritage Centre, and cooperation has been established with local authorities in order to mitigate risks of fires.

Numerous documents including before/after images that have been submitted for the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), present the consolidation and restoration work undertaken at the Crac des Chevaliers and at Qal'at Salah El-Din. There have been some constraints in the use of original stones for restoration, as many have been extensively damaged at Crac des Chevaliers. Two online meetings, organized on 8 June and 20 December 2021, as well as substantial follow up, allowed the work on the DSOCR to progress. The proposed DSOCR, corrective measures, and a timeframe for implementation have been established through an online process between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and are recommended for adoption.

On 12 April 2023, a technical online workshop was organized to discuss the project proposal submitted to the World Heritage Centre for the restoration of the stable and counterscarp walls, considered as a

priority due to structural stability issues. The State Party has subsequently provided additional documentation, including an extensive photographic survey, and drawings show proposed remedial and reconstruction works. In view of the scale of the proposed intervention and its potential effect on a major attribute of the property, which supports its OUV, the proposed works should be subject to a Heritage Impact Assessment, prepared in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, and submitted, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for technical review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies.

Given the progress achieved in resuming regular conservation and management work at the property, including the restoration of several structures at both sites, it remains crucial that the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission takes place as soon as the situation allows, to enable a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property.

Draft Decision: 45COM 7A.44

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7A.22** and **44 COM 7A.24**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),*
3. *Taking into account Decision **45 COM 7A.46** on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic,*
4. *Expressing its concerns about the additional damage at the property resulting from the February 2023 earthquake, welcomes the works planned in the framework of the Emergency Assistance request approved in March 2023, with the aim of addressing its impact at both castles;*
5. *Also welcomes the substantial progress made towards the recovery of both component sites of the property, due to efforts made for establishing strategic partnerships and seeking international support, notably through requests to the World Heritage Fund;*
6. *Takes note of the works undertaken by the State Party, in the framework of the projects supported through International Assistance under the World Heritage Fund, and their contribution to improved management;*
7. *Further welcomes the progress made towards the implementation of the financial assistance request approved on 28 July 2021 to address the protection of the property's buffer zones, and in particular the submission of the Minor Boundary Modification proposal and the efforts made to mitigate risks of fire in the buffer zone of Qal'at Salah El-Din;*
8. *Also takes note of the works undertaken and proposed to the stables and counterscarp walls at Crac de Chevaliers, to address structural stability issues, and in view the scale of the proposed intervention and its potential effect on a major attribute of the property, which supports its OUV, requests the State Party to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*, and, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines,*
9. *Takes note with satisfaction of the works undertaken by the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS for the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and a*

set of correctives measures, and adopts the following DSOCR, corrective measures and timeframe:

a) *Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR):*

- (i) *Removal of substantive threats arising from the conflict that started in 2011,*
- (ii) *Restoration of the deteriorated/compromised attributes, or at least evidence that the State Party has planned more appropriate restoration works and has initiated the process at both sites,*
- (iii) *Reinstatement of the property's protection and management system with enhanced collaboration with the local community, in order to enhance the capacity to manage additional factors that threaten the integrity and authenticity of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;*

b) *Corrective measures:*

- Implemented since 2013:

- (i) *Debris management and cleaning carried out at both sites,*
- (ii) *Damage assessment and documentation carried out at both sites,*
- (iii) *Cleaning of vegetation growth endangering the structures undertaken at both sites,*
- (iv) *Emergency structural interventions and restoration work initiated at both sites,*
- (v) *Preparation of a Master plan for Crac des Chevaliers initiated,*
- (vi) *Illegal constructions identified within the buffer zones.*

- Not yet implemented:

- (i) *Damaged structures at Crac des Chevaliers are restored. Those not yet restored should be at least planned appropriately,*
- (ii) *All emergency structural interventions are implemented at Qal'at Salah El-Din,*
- (iii) *Cooperation with the local community is strengthened for an enhanced protection at both component sites,*
- (iv) *Challenges in the buffer zone are addressed, notably a damage assessment is carried out and emergency measures are defined in the buffer zone of Crac des Chevaliers and the boundaries of the buffer zone of Qal'at Salah El-Din are redefined,*
- (v) *A study and consultations are carried out to set criteria and priorities for the removal of illegal constructions within the buffer zone of Crac des Chevaliers.*

c) *Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures:*

The implementation of corrective measures should be completed within a period of three years;

10. *Calls upon* the international community to support the implementation of the above-mentioned corrective measures;

11. *Reiterates* the need for the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to be carried out as soon as the situation allows, in order to proceed with a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property;

12. Requests 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. **Decides to retain Crac des Chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Din (Syrian Arab Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

45. Site of Palmyra (Syrian Arab Republic) (C 23bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1980

Criteria (i)(ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2013-present

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

Destruction as well as ascertained and potential threats consequent to the armed conflict in Syria started in March 2011.

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

Corrective measures identified

In progress

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 6 (from 1989-2023)

Total amount approved: USD 111,250

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: USD 38,543 by the Flemish Government, USD 18,560 from the UNESCO Emergency Fund, USD 21,000 by the Government of the Netherlands

Total amount provided to the six Syrian World Heritage properties: 200,000 euros by the Italian Government; for built, movable and intangible heritage: 2.46 million euros by the European Union, USD 170,000 by the Flemish Government, 63,000 euros by the Austrian Government, USD 200,000 by the German Government; for cultural heritage under conflict: USD 200,000 by the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage in Bahrain.

Previous monitoring missions

April 2016: World Heritage Centre Rapid Assessment mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Before the conflict:

- Relative humidity
- Temperature change (Serious weathering of many stone blocks due to capillary rising and variations in humidity and temperature)
- Housing (Urban growth of the neighbouring agglomeration)
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure
- Ground transport infrastructure (International tarmac road crosses the site, heavy automobile and truck traffic inducing vibrations, pollution, and risk of accidents)
- Major linear utility (Pipeline crossing the southern necropolis)

- Localized utility (Brightly-coloured antenna on hill)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (Construction of a hotel close to the thermal springs)
- Management System/Management Plan (Lack of a management plan)

Since March 2011:

- Armed conflict (Destruction due to the armed conflict)
- Deliberate destruction of heritage (Perilous condition of the portico of the Temple of Bel and the Triumphal Arch)
- Illegal activities (illegal excavations)
- Financial resources (Lack of adequate funding for urgent conservation initiatives)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23/>

Current conservation issues

On 3 January 2022 and 24 January 2023, the State Party submitted state of conservation reports for the six Syrian World Heritage properties, which are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/23/documents/>, and include updated information on progress and challenges relating to some of the conservation issues at the property, as follows:

- Major challenges include the lack of international and financial support to implement the road map for the emergency consolidation, conservation and restoration of several archaeological monuments, the risk of further deterioration to damaged monuments due to weathering, the absence of a management structure at the site, and the fact that the population has not yet completely returned to the city of Palmyra;
- The results of the 2019 assessment of illegal pits (461 at the site) are recalled, with additional information referring to illegal excavations that have led to the discovery of several new burials that were found looted and vandalized;
- Following a first memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed in March 2022, the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums (DGAM), the Syrian Trust for Development and the Institute for the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences signed an MoU for the second phase of the restoration of the Triumphal Arch in October 2022;
- Following the exchanges between the World Heritage Centre and the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums of Syria (DGAM) regarding the creation of the international scientific task force, an international scientific committee has been formed under the responsibility of the DGAM, with a view to supporting the restoration of the property;
- Under the supervision of the DGAM, and with financial support from Russian institutions, a Syrian-Russian team began restoration work at the site of the Afqa spring, previously vandalized by extremist armed groups during the conflict. The spring is historically the reason of the prosperity and of the continuity of life in Palmyra, and its recovery would contribute to restoring the oasis and bringing back the population, including farmers, to the region;
- Rehabilitation work includes the restoration of the former museum of folk traditions and its transformation into a Visitor Center, and the restoration of the Hostel building in the sanctuary of the Temple of Bel, which will be used to accommodate experts and work teams;
- In order to encourage the return of the population, the Governorate of Homs, progressed in the rehabilitation of the city of Palmyra's infrastructure and social, educational and health services, electricity networks, sanitation and drainage systems, roads and public spaces, etc. With support from the Red Crescent and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), two schools and 250 houses were restored. The Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch funded the restoration of 50 residential buildings;
- On 28 October 2022, the DGAM submitted an International Assistance request to undertake a detailed survey of the Portico of Temple of Bel in order to define the technical requirements for its emergency consolidation;
- The preparation of a conservation management plan for the property is planned.

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

See General Decision **45 COM 7A.46** of this Document on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic.

It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its concerns about the high number of illicit excavations at the site, including the uncovered looted burials, as well as the risk of further damage to monuments, exacerbated by weathering and the lack of funding availability for emergency intervention and consolidation work.

The creation of an international scientific Task Force, with guidance provided by the World Heritage Centre, as well as the meetings that took place in July 2022, November 2022, and May 2023, to discuss the works undertaken to plan the restoration of the Triumphal Arch are welcome. This mechanism helps ensure that technical requirements meet international standards. A report was submitted in March 2023, providing information on the works carried out at the Triumphal Arch, demonstrating the quality of the methodology. The report provides a historical analysis of its construction and previous restorations, comprehensive archaeological studies focusing on its foundation and the archaeological fragments discovered during the excavations, which clarify the Arch's structural stability. The report also presents a thorough analysis of material condition, 3D-modelling of the structure before and after its destruction as well as in relation to its hypothetical initial stage of construction, in addition to a reconstruction approach that would give priority to maintaining authenticity. The parts of the Arch that are at risk of collapse have been dismantled. In June 2023, the restoration project was submitted by the State Party for technical review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

Plans to implement a first stage of consolidation of the portico of the Temple of Bel are also welcome, as is the proposed preparation of a conservation management plan for the property. These activities were among the main recommendations of the December 2019 UNESCO technical meeting on the recovery of the site.

The State Party is encouraged to continue transmitting to the World Heritage Centre, for examination by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information on any major project within the boundaries of the property or its buffer zone, before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. The interventions undertaken at the site of the Afqa spring, the Visitor Center, and the Hostel building, in addition to infrastructure works, are welcome, as they contribute to the revival of the site, including through the recovery of the oasis. These activities will encourage the return of inhabitants and allow for the accommodation of experts and work teams at the site, which will highly facilitate the implementation of restoration and recovery work.

Work on the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) has been initiated remotely through collaboration between the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS, ICCROM and the DGAM. A preliminary technical meeting occurred in December 2021, with further meetings planned for 2023, and substantial follow up is proposed including preparation of documents, specification of the DSOCR and identification of a programme of related corrective measures, consistent with the process and intent of the Operational Guidelines. This process should enable the DSOCR to be presented at the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee.

Given the challenges facing the property and the interest of the international community, it is highly desirable that the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission take place as soon as the situation allows, to enable a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.45

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions 44 COM 7A.23 and 44 COM 7A.24, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),*

3. Taking into account Decision **45 COM 7A.46**, on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic,
4. Reiterates its concern regarding the extensive illegal excavations at the property, and calls upon the international community to collaborate in the sharing of inventories and documentation that could facilitate the return of looted objects;
5. Reiterates its appeal to all States Parties to cooperate in fighting against the illicit trafficking of cultural property coming from Syria as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2199 of February 2015, and, in engaging in the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347 of March 2017;
6. Welcomes the creation of an international scientific task force which sets a framework for technical support provided for the conservation and recovery of the property, the meetings organized thereafter to discuss the preliminary studies and excavation work undertaken at the Triumphal Arch, and the submission of the restoration project for technical review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
7. Welcomes the approval of the International Assistance request for the first stage of work for the consolidation of the portico of the Temple of Bel, as well as the proposed preparation of a Conservation Management Plan for the property;
8. Encourages the State Party to continue to transmit detailed information on any major project within the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
9. Reiterating its concern that monuments at the property remain at serious risk of further damage, exacerbated by weathering and the lack of funding availability for emergency intervention, reiterates its request to the State Party to implement fully the recommendations of the 2019 UNESCO technical meeting and to continue to seek funding to support these activities;
10. Commending the efforts undertaken, including the restoration of Afqa Spring and other interventions, which contribute to the return of inhabitants and allow for the accommodation of experts and work teams, calls again on all States Parties to support emergency safeguarding and recovery measures, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
11. Takes note with satisfaction of the work instigated by the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies towards the elaboration of a set of corrective measures and the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and encourages them to finalize the proposal for examination by the Committee at its 46th session;
12. Reiterates the need for the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to be carried out as soon as the situation allows, in order to proceed with a comprehensive assessment of the state of conservation of the property;
13. Requests 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. ***Decides to retain Site of Palmyra (Syrian Arab Republic) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

46. General Decision on the World Heritage properties of the Syrian Arab Republic

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

47. Historic Town of Zabid (Yemen) (C 611)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1993

Criteria (ii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2000-present

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

- Serious deterioration of the built heritage (a high percentage of the residential houses being replaced by concrete and multi-storey buildings)
- The remaining houses in the city are rapidly deteriorating, due to the prevailing low income of the inhabitants
- Since the souq activities have been transferred outside the city, the ancient souq is almost empty and free from any type of activity and the shops are falling apart
- The traditional economic role of the city has vanished
- The city in general, is lacking any conservation and rehabilitation strategies
- Threats arising from the armed conflict in Yemen

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Adopted, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4357>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted; see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1282>

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Identified; see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4357>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/611/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 9 (from 1994-2014)

Total amount approved: USD 188,997

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/611/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 14,000 from the Italian Funds-in-Trust and the France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement

Total amount granted to Yemeni cultural properties: USD 194,836 from the European Union for damage assessments, capacity development and emergency stabilization of damaged buildings and protection of archaeological sites

2018-2021: 9,780,000 EUR from the European Union for the project: Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen (Sana'a, Shibam, Zabid and Aden)

2019-2020: USD 40,200 from the Heritage Emergency Fund (HEF) for post flood emergency interventions on two historic houses of outstanding importance in Zabid World Heritage site

2022-2026: USD 22,552,000 from the European Union for the project: Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen

Previous monitoring missions

2002 and 2003: international expertise missions; December 2004: World Heritage Centre mission; January 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2009: World Heritage Centre mission; January 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Threats arising from the armed conflict in Yemen
- Deliberate destruction of heritage
- Land conversion
- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Management system / management plan
- Serious degradation of the city's heritage (many houses and the ancient souq are in an alarming state of deterioration)
- Housing (Large percentage of the city's houses replaced by inappropriate concrete buildings)
- Large sections of the city's open spaces have been privatized, either illegally or informally and more than 30% of these are built-up
- Reduction in support and resources arising from political and socio-economic disturbances

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/611/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, an executive summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/611/documents/>, presenting the following information:

- The proximity of armed conflict and deteriorating economic conditions continue to threaten the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- Measures have been implemented to limit the spread of construction violations by suspending licenses and removing four unauthorised buildings;
- The Higher Committee for the Protection of Zabid is in place;
- The implementation of conservation projects, supported by the UNESCO Office for the Gulf States and Yemen, has continued in the framework of the European Union funded project: "Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen", several projects were completed in partnership with the Social Fund for Development (SFD) and the Public Works Project (PWP). Preparations are in progress for a second phase of this project;
- The restoration of 30 damaged buildings is being carried out with local funding;
- A workshop for managing cultural heritage sites during disasters and crises was held at the Centre for Architectural Training and Studies (CATS) in Sana'a;
- No progress is reported in implementing the 2015 National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020, owing to lack of financial support. However, it is hoped that resources might be found to implement this strategy and the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage over the coming years;
- Additional technical and financial support is required to contribute to capacity building and conservation efforts;
- The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property should be expedited, as soon as the security situation improves.

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

The security situation in Yemen, in combination with poor economic conditions, and ongoing lack of maintenance of the fragile structures continue to threaten the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the

property. In August 2022, it was reported that torrential rain incurred damage at several buildings within the property at varying degrees. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of organizational support and scarce resources, which continue to limit effective heritage management and physical conservation works. However, the efforts of local and international actors, including the support provided by the European Union through UNESCO are commendable. The restoration of historic buildings and progress with a number of damaged buildings is welcome. The European Union-funded project “Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen”, which was implemented between 2018 and 2022 by UNESCO, has promoted livelihood opportunities for youth through urban regeneration, including the maintenance and rehabilitation of buildings. The project has provided job opportunities to 6,263 young Yemenis in the four targeted cities (Old City of Sana’a, Old walled City of Shibam, Old Town of Zabid and historic areas of Aden), and has contributed to damage assessment and conservation. Documentation and conservation works have been undertaken, and a range of training and community awareness programmes have been implemented. In the framework of this project, 187 residential houses have been rehabilitated at this property, in addition to the Museum of Zabid as well as public areas, including the Souq area and the area of Bab Shibam, where paving and infrastructure works were carried out. Also, a traditional brick Kiln has been rehabilitated, and damaged parts of the City Wall have been repaired. In terms of capacity building, 11 workshops were implemented for 405 trainees. Crafts workshops engaged 35 young Yemenis who participated in a workshop on wood carpentry, and 15 who participated in a workshop on traditional construction techniques. A new phase of the project, entitled ‘Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen’ has been launched, with funding by the European Union.

Construction activities should continue to ensure compliance with building regulations, respecting original materials and building techniques. This is important to ensure the maintenance of the attributes which convey the OUV of the property, including its authenticity and integrity. The workshop about managing cultural heritage sites during disasters and crises is a positive step and it remains desirable that future training further develops local expertise in technical fields that contribute to preserving historical monuments within the property, and in Yemen generally. Urgent financial assistance is still required to support physical, economic and social recovery, which have been further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

No progress is reported with the definition of the boundary clarification and a minor boundary modification for the property in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines. The definition of boundaries remains important for ensuring the protection of the property and the ongoing efforts should be supported and encouraged. The previously requested Reactive Monitoring mission should visit the property as soon as the security situation allows. The challenges in finalizing the National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020, and implementing the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen’s Cultural Heritage, are acknowledged and it is hoped that these may progress, following a mission, preferably with international support.

The Historic Town of Zabid remains subject to ascertained and potential danger and it would be appropriate for the property to remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger, consistent with the expressed wish of the State Party.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.47

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision 44 COM 7A.25, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),*
3. *Expresses its continuing concern that the Historic Town of Zabid has incurred irreversible damages and continues to be vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and security challenges, and continuing limited support and resources for both heritage management and physical conservation;*

4. Commends the efforts undertaken in capacity building, awareness raising, damage assessment, documentation and emergency interventions at the property, and requests that they continue in consultation with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies;
5. Reiterates its previous requests to the State Party to:
 - a) Submit information on major projects to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - b) Elaborate proposals for a boundary clarification and a minor boundary modification in close coordination with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies, to be submitted in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines,
 - c) Consider ratifying the Second Protocol (1999) of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
6. Commends the outcomes of the first phase of the UNESCO/EU Cash for Work Project in Yemen, and the launch of the new EU-funded UNESCO Project 'Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage';
7. Notes with concern that current circumstances and lack of resources continue to prevent progress with the National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020 and the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage;
8. Reiterates the need for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on repair and conservation works, and to contribute to the processes required to enable the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, including the implementation of corrective measures, as soon as the situation in Yemen allows;
9. Continues to urge all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the cultural heritage of Yemen and the OUV of the property, and to fulfil their obligations under international law, in particular the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, especially sites on the World Heritage List and those included in the Tentative List of Yemen, and appeals to all States Parties to cooperate in the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347;
10. Reiterates its previous calls to the international community to provide technical and financial support, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures;
11. Requests 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. **Decides to retain Historic Town of Zabid (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

49. Old City of Sana'a (Yemen) (C 385)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1986

Criteria (iv)(v)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2015-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger
Damages and threats related to the armed conflict in Yemen

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
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/385/documents/>

International Assistance
Requests approved: 6 (from 1990-2014)
Total amount approved: USD 101,997
For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/385/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds
Total amount granted: 1988: USD 374,800, UNDP/UNESCO project in support of local staff training and fund-raising. 2004-2006: USD 680,000 for the Inventory of the historic city (Italian Funds-in-Trust and Fund for the International Campaign for the Safeguarding of the city of Sanaa); USD 12,000 for technical assistance in support of the reconstruction of the al-Qasimi neighborhood (Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH));
Total amount granted to Yemeni cultural properties: USD 194,836 from the European Union for damage assessments, capacity development and emergency stabilization of damaged buildings and protection of archaeological sites;
2018-2021: 9,780,000 EUR from the European Union for the project "Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen" (Shibam, Sana'a, Zabid and Aden);
2019: USD 100,000 from the Heritage Emergency Fund (HEF) for the reconstruction of the al-Qasimi neighborhood in old Sanaa;
2020: USD 97,245 from the Heritage Emergency Fund (HEF) for post flood emergency interventions in Sana'a;
2022-2026: USD 22,552,000 from the European Union for the project: Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen
2023: USD 925,925 from Japan for Building Climate-resilient Communities in Historic Cities in Yemen through Strengthened Disaster Risk Management and Awareness (Old City of Sana'a and Old Walled City of Shibam)

Previous monitoring missions
1998, 1999, 2003: World Heritage Centre monitoring missions; 2003 to 2005 and 2010: World Heritage Centre and experts' missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Problems with the rainwater drainage network
- Modern constructions and uncontrolled expansion of commercial activities (issue resolved)
- Lack of a Safeguarding Plan (issue resolved)
- Fly-over bridge project (issue resolved)
- Uncontrolled vertical and horizontal additions
- Management activities (Use of inappropriate building materials and techniques)
- Densification of the historic fabric through occupation of green areas

- Functional decay of the residential neighbourhoods
- Continued vulnerability of the property, as a result of extreme conditions since 2011
- Threats arising from the armed conflict in Yemen
- Physical damage and instability of buildings
- Urgent need for shelter for displaced residents
- Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community
- Desertification of green areas and public gardens/orchards
- Works at the Great Mosque of Sana'a and Al-Nahareen Mosque

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/385/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2022, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, an executive summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/385/documents/>, presenting the following information:

- The Old City of Sana'a continues to face many challenges and threats from the conflict in Yemen as well as those arising from natural factors, including the impact of heavy rains resulting in threats to around 380 earthen structures and the collapse of the sewer system;
- The implementation of conservation projects, supported by the UNESCO Office for the Gulf States and Yemen, has continued in the framework of the European Union funded project: "Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen" in partnership with the Social Fund for Development (SFD). The project supported capacity-building, including a workshop about managing cultural heritage sites during disasters and conflicts involving 46 trainees and museum managers in Yemen, documentation, and in securing and strengthening historic buildings in the Old City;
- Local actors have also contributed to rescue projects for threatened buildings;
- Funding from the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund has helped to secure buildings in the al-Qasimi neighbourhood and elsewhere from flood damage;
- No further work has been carried out in the Great Mosque of Sana'a, and work at Al-Nahareen Mosque is currently suspended and plans will be referred to the World Heritage Centre;
- There has been no progress with the National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020, nor in implementing the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage;
- There are no current intentions to propose modification to the property boundary, but a clarification of the existing property boundary has been proposed;
- Support from the UNESCO Office for the Gulf States and Yemen is acknowledged and UNESCO, the Advisory Bodies, and the international community are urged by the State Party to continue supporting the property, through further conservation funding and capacity building with site managers and others working in the city.

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

The ongoing situation in Yemen, in combination with a lack of regular maintenance and of organizational support and resources, continues to obstruct effective heritage management and physical conservation works. In addition, damage arising from torrential rains in 2020 is not yet fully repaired and heavy rains continue to pose a threat to the stability of many structures.

The European Union-funded project "Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen", which was implemented between 2018 and 2022 by UNESCO, has promoted livelihood opportunities for youth through urban regeneration, including the maintenance and rehabilitation of buildings. The project has provided job opportunities to 6,263 young Yemenis in the four targeted cities (Old City of Sana'a, Old walled City of Shibam, Old Town of Zabid and historic areas of Aden), and has contributed to damage assessment and conservation. Documentation and conservation works have been undertaken, and a range of training and community awareness programmes have been implemented. In the framework of this project, 210 residential houses have been rehabilitated at this property, and Al-Falihi and Khudair squares with associated infrastructure have been repaired, with

the restoration of 58 façades overlooking the squares and the installation of new pavements and drainage. In addition, the National Museum was stabilized and rehabilitated, and parts of the City Wall have been repaired. In terms of capacity building, more than 880 beneficiaries were engaged in training activities focusing on traditional construction techniques and the standards required in the preservation of historical sites. A new phase of the project, entitled 'Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen' has been launched, with funding by the European Union.

Rehabilitation plans need to reconcile the maintenance of housing and services with the need to restore damaged precincts and buildings, based on survey and documentation, using traditional techniques and materials. Unregulated new constructions and inadequate restorations continue to affect attributes which support the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

In February-March 2022, the World Heritage Centre received information regarding a reconstruction project for the Shu'ob Gate (Bab Shu'ob). As noted by ICOMOS in relation to this project, hypothetical reconstruction of previously built elements within the property could jeopardise its authenticity. While the merits of reconstructing features that have endured recent damage, arising from conflict, are recognised, work should be based on reliable evidence and be analogous to large-scale 'repair' work. The longstanding absence of Shu'ob gate is part of the history of the property, and if there is a desire to interpret the former gate, this should be achieved by means other than through conjectural reconstruction.

In May 2023, UNESCO received a set of documents for a rehabilitation project for souq al-Halaqa, which are currently being technically reviewed by ICOMOS. These documents also include information regarding the design for the reconstruction of Al-Nahareen Mosque.

It would be appropriate to request that no works are implemented in the framework of these projects, pending the conclusion of the technical review, and to recall the obligation to systematically submit information on major projects to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the Advisory Bodies, before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse. It is also important to recall that in accordance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, proposed major works should be assessed, in line with the new Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context, as they could have a negative impact on the OUV of the property, including its authenticity and integrity, which is already vulnerable.

Support by UNESCO in the definition of the boundary clarification and a minor boundary modification for the property, in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines, would contribute towards the protection of the property and should be pursued, despite the reluctance to make boundary changes in the current context.

Further support from the international community remains essential for building capacities in preventive and conservation measures. The previously requested Reactive Monitoring mission should visit the property as soon as the situation allows. The challenges in finalizing the National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020, and implementing the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, are acknowledged and it is hoped that these may progress, following a mission, preferably with international support.

The Old City of Sana'a remains subject to ascertained and potential danger, and it would be appropriate for the property to remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.49

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.26**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),
3. Commends the efforts undertaken in capacity building, awareness raising, damage assessment, documentation and emergency interventions at the property, and requests that they continue in consultation with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies;

4. Expresses its continuing concern that the Old City of Sana'a has incurred irreversible damages and continues to be vulnerable to extreme weather conditions and security challenges, and continuing limited support and resources for both heritage management and physical conservation;
5. Urges the State Party to:
 - a) Submit information on all major projects to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, while recalling that major transformations, should be assessed in line with the new Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, as they could have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property,
 - b) Pursue the elaboration of proposals for a boundary clarification and a minor boundary modification in close coordination with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies, to be submitted in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines,
 - c) Consider ratifying the Second Protocol (1999) of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;
6. Commends the outcomes of the first phase of the UNESCO/EU Cash for Work Project in Yemen, the launch of the new EU-funded UNESCO Project 'Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage, as well as the implementation of the Japan-funded project 'Building Climate-resilient Communities in Historic Cities in Yemen through Strengthened Disaster Risk Management and Awareness';
7. Notes with concern that current circumstances and lack of resources continue to prevent progress with the National Strategy for the Preservation of the Historic Cities, Sites and Monuments 2016-2020 and the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage;
8. Reiterates the need for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on repair and conservation works, and to contribute to the processes required to enable the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, including the implementation of corrective measures, as soon as the situation in Yemen allows;
9. Continues to urge all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the cultural heritage of Yemen and the OUV of the property, and to fulfil their obligations under international law, in particular the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, especially sites on the World Heritage List and those included in the Tentative List of Yemen, and appeals to all States Parties to cooperate in the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347;
10. Reiterates its previous calls to the international community to provide technical and financial support, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures;
11. Also requests 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. **Decides to retain Old City of Sana'a (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (iii)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2015-present

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

- Threats from natural elements
- Lack of organizational support and material resources for conservation
- Threats related to the armed conflict

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger
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/192/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 6 (from 1982-1999)

Total amount approved: USD 121,966

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/192/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted to Yemeni cultural properties: USD 194,836 from the European Union for damage assessments, capacity development and emergency stabilization of damaged buildings and protection of archaeological sites.

2018-2021: 9,780,000 EUR from the European Union for the project: Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen (Sana'a, Shibam, Zabid and Aden)

2022-2026: USD 22,552,000 from the European Union for the project: Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen

2023: USD 925,925 from Japan for Building Climate-resilient Communities in Historic Cities in Yemen through Strengthened Disaster Risk Management and Awareness (Old City of Sana'a and Old Walled City of Shibam)

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Financial resources
- Human resources
- Poor maintenance (issue previously reported as being resolved)
- Damage to historic buildings
- Reduction in support and resources arising from political and socio-economic disturbances

- Armed conflict
- Water (rain/water table) (Threats from rain and floods)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/192/>

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/192/documents/>, presenting the following information:

- The property remains exposed to threats from floods, rain, and resulting damage to mud buildings, as well as ongoing conflict and lack of government financial support;
- The implementation of conservation projects, supported by the UNESCO Office for the Gulf States and Yemen, has continued, in the framework of the European Union funded project 'Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen', in partnership with the Social Fund for Development (SFD) and Public Works Project (PWP). These projects included restoration of public infrastructure, the city wall and buildings, and street paving, and removal of Seasbana trees. In the future, this project will provide training and awareness programs targeting craftsmen, youth, workers in the field of cultural heritage and students, schools and universities;
- Other significant projects have occurred, including an emergency project to restore buildings supported by the Arab Yemen Cement Company. This project includes restoration of 35 mud buildings, creation of job opportunities and promotion of traditional building skills in mud and woodwork for young people, deployment of corporate support, and environmental improvements. A project to document historical monuments at risk was funded by the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage in Conflict Areas (ALIPH), and a project documenting Islamic landmarks in danger was funded by ALIPH and Monumenta Orientalia 2021 through SFD. Works also occurred at the Governmental Complex and Seiyun Palace (the latter being outside the property);
- There have been limited training activities owing to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, but some online and offsite workshops have occurred including workshops on preparing the national registry, (Manama, Bahrain), and on Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention, implemented by the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage (ARC-WH, Bahrain);
- Some background was provided on the unsuccessful last stage of the Oasis project previously reported to the Committee, and the hope is expressed that it may be completed in a way that ensures better coordination and supervision to achieve the desired goals.

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

As has been the case since the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2015, the security situation in Yemen, in combination with flood damage and threats, plus a general lack of resources, continues to challenge effective heritage management and physical conservation works within the property. The efforts undertaken to conserve the site and the completed conservation projects should be acknowledged. However, many of the significant buildings and features are constructed of mud, as well as being located in a flood-prone area, and therefore remain at severe risk of major damage from natural elements and the effects of armed conflict, unless further preventive measures are undertaken.

The European Union funded project 'Cash for Work: Promoting Livelihood Opportunities for Urban Youth in Yemen,' which was implemented between 2018 and 2022 by UNESCO, has promoted livelihood opportunities for youth through urban regeneration, including the maintenance and rehabilitation of buildings. The project has provided job opportunities to 6,263 young Yemenis in the four targeted cities (Old City of Sana'a, Old walled City of Shibam, Old Town of Zabid and historic areas of Aden) and has contributed to damage assessment and conservation. Documentation and conservation works have been undertaken, and a range of training and community awareness programmes have been implemented. In the framework of this project, 76 residential houses have been rehabilitated at this property, various public spaces with associated infrastructure (water, sanitation, electricity, paving) have been upgraded, and urban furniture has been installed. In addition, the City Wall has been stabilized and restored, and Seasbana trees that used to block the flow of rainwater have been removed. In terms of capacity building, 93 beneficiaries were engaged in training activities focusing on traditional

construction techniques and the standards required in the preservation of historical sites. A new phase of the project, entitled 'Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen' has been launched with funding by the European Union. In addition, ARC-WH completed two projects at the property in 2022, through the generous funding from ALIPH and in cooperation with local partners.

While welcoming the repair and restoration projects which have occurred, and noting the further advice about the 'Shibam Oasis Development Project', it is recommended that the Committee remind the State Party of its previous request that detailed information on the works undertaken at the Governmental Complex, as well as the report 'Conservation Status of Shibam Hadramout 2018-2019, Strategy for the Management of the Historic City of Shibam', should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. The definition of boundaries remains an important step towards ensuring the protection of the property. It is therefore crucial that efforts are pursued towards the eventual submission of a minor boundary modification proposal for the property, in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines.

Further support from the international community remains essential for building capacity in preventive and conservation measures. The previously requested Reactive Monitoring mission should visit the property as soon as the situation allows.

The Old Walled City of Shibam remains subject to ascertained and potential danger, and it would be appropriate for the property to remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.50

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **44 COM 7A.27**, adopted at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021),*
3. *Commends the ongoing local and international efforts to protect and conserve the property, despite the very difficult conditions, and takes note of the conservation projects which have been completed;*
4. *Expresses its continuing concern about the damage caused to the property as a result of natural elements and the ongoing armed conflict, and that the property continues to be vulnerable, owing to the residual impact of previous flooding as well as the current security situation, ongoing social change and continuing lack of resources for both heritage management and physical conservation;*
5. *Reiterates its previous requests to the State Party to:*
 - a) *Submit information on all major projects, to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by of the Advisory Bodies,*
 - b) *Submit the report 'Conservation Status of Shibam Hadramout 2018-2019, Strategy for the Management of the Historic City of Shibam', as well as full details regarding the works undertaken at the Governmental Complex buildings, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines,*
 - c) *Elaborate proposals for a boundary clarification and a minor boundary modification in close coordination with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies, to be submitted in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines,*
 - d) *Consider ratifying the Second Protocol (1999) of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict;*

6. Commends the outcomes of the first phase of the UNESCO-EU Cash for Work project in Yemen, the launch of the new EU-funded UNESCO Project 'Youth Employment through Culture and Heritage in Yemen', as well as in the implementation of the Japan-funded project 'Building Climate-resilient Communities in Historic Cities in Yemen through Strengthened Disaster Risk Management and Awareness';
7. Reiterates the need for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to advise on repair and conservation works, and to contribute to the processes required to enable the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, including the implementation of corrective measures, as soon as the situation in Yemen allows;
8. Continues to urge all parties involved in the conflict to refrain from any further action that would cause damage to the cultural heritage of Yemen and the OUV of the property, and to fulfil their obligations under international law, in particular the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, by taking all possible measures to protect such heritage, especially sites on the World Heritage List and those included in the Tentative List of Yemen, and appeals to all States Parties to cooperate in the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflict as per the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347;
9. Reiterates its previous calls to the international community to provide technical and financial support, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage, including funding for capacity building and first-aid restoration and protection measures;
10. Requests 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. Decides to retain Old Walled City of Shibam (Yemen) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

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.2

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2001

Criteria (ii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2017-present

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

The current planning controls: adopted developments and lack of adequate planning rules

Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger

Proposed and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision **44 COM7A.32**

Corrective measures identified

Proposed and adopted by the World Heritage Committee in its Decision **44 COM7A.32**

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted by the World Heritage Committee, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/7695> and <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/2021/whc21-44com-7A.Add-en.pdf>

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1033/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1033/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2002: ICOMOS Expert Mission to the “Historic Centre of Vienna”; May 2002: World Heritage Centre Mission to the “Historic Centre of Vienna”; September 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the “Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn” and the “Historic Centre of Vienna”; November 2015: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the “Historic Centre of Vienna”; November 2018: joint high-level World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the Historic Centre of Vienna

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing: High-rise construction projects in Central Vienna (proposed Vienna Ice-Skating Club – Intercontinental Hotel – Vienna Konzerthaus project)
- Proposed new developments, including the Wien Museum, the Winterthur Building and the Schwarzenberg Gardens
- Legal framework: Lack of effectiveness of the overall governance of the property (*issue resolved*)
- Legal framework: Lack of appropriateness of planning controls in the ‘High-Rise Concept 2014’ and the ‘Glacis Master Plan’ (*issue partly resolved*)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Desirability of conservation of historic roof constructions within the property (*issue partly resolved*)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1033/>

Current conservation issues

On 1 February 2022, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1033/documents>, providing information on measures implemented in

response to Decision **44 COM 7A.32**, and reporting on progress with implementation of the adopted corrective measures (with some revisions to the original timeline) as follows:

- Progress has been made with implementation of corrective measures to achieve the adopted Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). The Viennese Municipal Council has anchored the World Heritage status in the Viennese Building Code by incorporating protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of World Heritage properties within a legal provision. The National Assembly has adopted a resolution commissioning the Federal Government to enhance the legal protection of World Heritage;
- A new Management Plan has been adopted by the Viennese Municipal Council in November 2021, following revision, in response to technical review by ICOMOS (of August 2021), to incorporate the corrective measures and DSOCR, and to acknowledge that some developments since inscription of the property do not support its OUV. An official decree by the City of Vienna in December 2021 approved competences for World Heritage management in line with measures included in the Management Plan, affording the highest priority to protection and preservation of World Heritage;
- In March 2021, the City of Vienna initiated a process to facilitate the revision of the Heumarkt Neu project design. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was commissioned in accordance with **Decision 44 COM 7A.32** and with advice about the process from the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS International. The HIA concludes that the proposed revised project design no longer causes 'severe' impacts to the OUV of the property but assesses that 'large' impacts remain from a number of important viewpoints. The HIA was submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS;
- An HIA for the proposed new building in Schwarzenberg Gardens is in progress and will include the revision of the care-plan for Schwarzenberg Gardens, a status report of the historic gardens in the Belvedere-Complex and recommendations for enhanced legislative protection of historic gardens generally. Construction works at the Wien Museum are proceeding in accordance with the previously considered plans and the Museum should re-open at the end of 2023. Neither new construction nor conversion are proposed for the neighbouring Winterthur Building, but the bridging structure between the Winterthur Building and Wien Museum was due to be removed during 2022;
- The roof cadastre has been published in print and online and has been included in the digital Viennese Culture Cadastre to make it accessible to a wider public, and its extension to iron and composite constructions is currently underway. The roof cadastre is intended to serve as a basis for dealing with historic roofs in the framework of the future management of the property.

In November 2022, ICOMOS provided further comments and recommendations for its improvement in the form of a technical review for the revised and updated Management Plan, which was submitted by the State Party with its state of conservation report in February 2022, available at the above-mentioned web address (the first version of the Management Plan was reviewed by ICOMOS in August 2021). The new ICOMOS technical review was transmitted to the State Party on 16 November 2022. A response to the 2022 ICOMOS technical review was sent by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre on 21 March 2023, highlighting that a number of the recommendations improving the management system of the property were already in place, and noting opportunities for future review.

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

In 2021, the World Heritage Committee adopted a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and 20 corrective measures divided into three categories (five related to 'Protection and Management', twelve related to 'Attributes', and three related to 'Integrity and Authenticity'), which was an important step towards the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The State Party and the City of Vienna have made progress in implementing the adopted corrective measures. The State Party proposes a slightly revised timeline to complete their implementation by 2024. According to the analyses of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, of the corrective measures related to 'Protection and Management', one is fully implemented (the development and adoption of the updated Management Plan for the property) and the others are advancing. Of the corrective measures related to 'Attributes', two seem to be fully implemented (the development of new high-rise buildings within the property is no longer permitted, and the legal provisions have been amended to give priority to the preservation of historic/original building

stock), two are not yet completed (both relating to the revised Heumarkt Neu project and the achievement of a design with no adverse impact on the OUV), and implementation of the others is underway. Of the three corrective measures related to 'Integrity and Authenticity', two seem to have been fully implemented (both concerning the interpretation of the retrospective OUV of the property), and implementation of the third, concerning contemporary interventions, is underway. It is commendable that the State Party continues to work towards the full implementation of all corrective measures in order to achieve the DSOCR.

The incorporation of World Heritage conservation into the Viennese Building Code is an effective and important provision, which will be further supported through enhanced legal protection of World Heritage at the national level. The preparation and adoption of the Management Plan and its implementation through an official decree by the City of Vienna provide appropriate statutory priority to protection of World Heritage. These changes comprise a significant safeguard against the approval of future developments that may have an adverse impact on the OUV of the property. A new urban development plan for Vienna (which will also replace the 'Glacis Master Plan') is still under preparation and the amendment of the National Monument Protection Act to incorporate World Heritage requirements, is planned for 2024.

The elaboration of the Management Plan for the property has proceeded in accordance with the process requested by the Committee. The 2021 technical review of the draft Management Plan identified areas in which substantive changes were needed to afford primacy to conserving the attributes which support the property's OUV, to embody the adopted DSOCR and corrective measures, and to incorporate provisions for amending legislation, planning controls and guidelines, in line with the decisions of the Committee and the recommendations of recent mission reports. The revised and updated Management Plan, which has been adopted, responds positively to the recommendations of the 2021 technical review, although the 2022 technical review of the updated Management Plan identified opportunities for further improvement. The State Party has indicated that a methodology for mapping and classifying additional attributes which support the OUV of the property is yet to be developed. It is important to note that Corrective Measure 4 under 'Protection and Management' further requires that the Management Plan is accepted by the World Heritage Committee and that its efficacy should be proven in practice through monitoring and evaluation over a period of five years.

The forthcoming HIA for the Schwarzenberg Gardens development and status report of the Historic Gardens in the Belvedere-Complex are welcome and should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decisions on the implementation of any project are taken. The proposed enhanced legislative protection of historic gardens also reflects greater focus on heritage conservation, and it is hoped that as a result of the new legislation appropriate protection will be provided to the Schwarzenberg Gardens.

It would be appropriate to remind the State Party of the Committee's previous requests to submit the final plans for the Wien Museum, including technical details and additional visualisations, in particular that of a new entrance, to the World Heritage Centre for review. Once fully operational within the planning and management framework, the implementation and expansion of the roof cadastre will make further important contributions to the conservation of the property.

The Committee has previously welcomed the decision not to proceed with the Heumarkt Neu development as originally planned, and the process to develop and assess alternative variants to the design. Through Reactive Monitoring and Advisory missions in 2012, 2015 and 2018, and consistent Decisions since 2013 (Decisions **37 COM 7B.71**, **39 COM 7B.94**, **41 COM 7B.42**, **42 COM 7A.5**, **43 COM 7A.45** and **44 COM 7A.32**), the Committee has expressed concern that the project would adversely affect the OUV of the property. The DSOCR for the property, which was adopted as proposed by the State Party (Decision **44 COM 7A.32**), requires that the: *Revised design of the Heumarkt Neu project is implemented, respecting the integrity and authenticity of the OUV of the property as a whole as measured through an independent Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), based on the results of the HIA 2019 and following its methodology.*

The method of verification for corrective measure 5 ('Protection and Management' section), also adopted as proposed by the State Party, requires that the: *The new HIA concludes that the revised Heumarkt Neu project does not adversely impact upon the OUV of the property and has undergone a Technical Review by ICOMOS International. The latter assessed the revised design to be consistent with the requirements of safeguarding the OUV of the property.*

In March 2021, the City of Vienna initiated a mitigation process to enable a revised design of the building project Heumarkt Neu with the aim to prevent the impending 'conclusive threat' to the OUV of the

property. Compared to the previous 2018 design, the dimensions of the complex have been modified, mainly in the area of the second slab, whose absolute height has been reduced by 9.8 metres, while its horizontal dimensions have been enlarged. Such modifications were proposed in a context where the building as planned in 2018 had been approved by the Municipality of Vienna, and the building permit would remain valid – allowing, from a legal point of view, construction activities to start at any time – and where, according to the current legislation, the envelope of approved buildings can only undergo minor changes after approval, and their height and volume can only be modified to a very limited extent. Through a separate process, following the judgment of the European Court of Justice of 25 May 2023, the Vienna Administrative Court is now to assess whether the Heumarkt Neu project, as an urban development project under the national thresholds of a land area of at least 15 ha and a gross floor area of more than 150,000 m², can be exempted from the requirement of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The judgment also refers to the location of the project as a particularly relevant factor in assessing the need for an EIA when the project is located within a World Heritage site.

The new (2021) HIA has been subject to Technical Review by ICOMOS, which acknowledged that the assessment is rigorous, authoritative and compliant with the methodology of the 2019 HIA. The new HIA concludes that the proposed revised project design no longer causes ‘severe’ impacts to the OUV of the property but does conclude that ‘large’ impacts remain related to the visual integrity of the property’s OUV. The new HIA notes that: *‘the New Proposal Heumarkt Neu 2021 should not be seen as a “solution”. Rather, it should be seen as an approach to find a compromise which intends to suggest a “way out” in a very difficult situation which was characterised by a very limited latitude to develop alternatives’*. The revision of the project therefore does not satisfy the method of verification for Corrective Measure 5 under ‘Protection and Management’ insofar as it still adversely impacts upon the OUV of the property (which the new HIA assesses as ‘large’ impacts from a number of relevant viewpoints). Therefore, it would appear that a solution would necessarily involve a more significant reduction in floorspace, and a concomitant reduction in scale, an outcome that faces many challenges in the complex circumstances of the proposed Heumarkt Neu development.

The ICOMOS technical review of the HIA has thus concluded that: *the exhaustive attempts to reduce the negative impact of the proposed project through amendments to the current proposal has unfortunately demonstrated that it is not feasible to achieve a result that meets the State Party’s own stated goals, the specific DSOCR adopted by the Committee at the State Party’s request, nor the protection and transmission of the OUV of the property. This situation arises because the total floor space of the new development has not been reduced, which results in an inappropriately large built form.*

The commendable efforts to implement many of the corrective measures, *inter alia* through changes in building regulations that will prevent new developments from being considered without assessing their impact on the OUV of the World Heritage property, and modifications to the approved Heumarkt Neu 2018 project, represent progress in achieving the DSOCR. With regard to Corrective Measure 4a under ‘Attributes’ in particular concerning the Heumarkt Neu project, the Committee may wish to provide specific guidance to the State Party to make further progress in this direction, in relation to the determination of its height, floorspace and built form. In this regard, the State Party may be encouraged to apply the modelling used to assess the visual impact, which informed the previous HIAs, to review the options, such that acceptable thresholds can be identified and in turn inform a further revised design.

Draft Decision: 45 COM 7A.55

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions 37 COM 7B.71, 39 COM 7B.94, 40 COM 7B.49, 41 COM 7B.42, 42 COM 7A.5, 43 COM 7A.45, and 44 COM 7A.32, adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively,*

3. Commends the State Party on the progress made in implementing many of the adopted corrective measures and previous Committee decisions, with the aim to enhance the management system of the property, in particular:
 - a) anchoring the World Heritage status of the property in the Viennese Building Code as the most important legal planning tool of the City of Vienna,
 - b) elaboration, adoption and publication of a new Management Plan for the property,
 - c) initial steps towards enhanced legal protection of World Heritage in Austria,
 - d) the forthcoming Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Schwarzenberg Gardens and related recommendations for greater legal protection of historic gardens,
 - e) ongoing development of the roof cadastre;
4. Encourages the State Party to continue with the implementation of the adopted corrective measures in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, with a view to achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), in accordance with the established timetable to which the State Party has proposed slight revisions;
5. Accepts the revised and updated Management Plan for the property, notes that the corrective measures adopted require that the efficacy of the Management Plan be proven in practice through monitoring and evaluation over a period of five years, and requests the State Party to ensure that subsequent revisions address the matters raised in the 2022 ICOMOS technical review and to report on the proposed monitoring and evaluation process;
6. Reminds the State Party of the Committee's previous requests to submit final plans and designs for the Wien Museum to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
7. Acknowledges the efforts by the State Party and many other institutions and organisations to mitigate the negative impact of the proposed Heumarkt Neu project through design amendments, and undertaking an HIA of the revised proposal using a methodology which is rigorous, authoritative, and compliant with the previous HIA, but regrets that this process has not resulted in an outcome, which achieves the DSOCR, including the verification requirements of the corrective measures;
8. Also notes that while redevelopment is possible on the Heumarkt Neu site, a project that does not adversely impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property must necessarily involve further reduction, and therefore invites the State Party to consider alternative approaches which could deliver a further revised scheme with significantly reduced height, floorspace, and built form, in line with previous Committee decisions as well as the DSOCR and its corrective measures for the property;
9. Further notes that the determination of a reduced height, floorspace and built form for a further revised Heumarkt Neu development could be pursued through the modelling used to assess visual impact, which informed the previous HIAs, so that thresholds informing a further revised design which does not adversely impact on the OUV of the property can be identified;
10. Requests 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. ***Decides to retain the Historic Centre of Vienna (Austria) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2

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

See Document WHC/23/45.COM/7A.Add.2