

# ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES  
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES  
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS  
МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СОВЕТ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ПАМЯТНИКОВ И ДОСТОПРИМЕЧАТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕСТ

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Charenton-le-Pont, 21 December 2023

H. E. Mr Liborio Stellino  
Ambassador, Permanent Delegate  
Permanent Delegation of Italy to UNESCO  
50, rue de Varenne  
75007 Paris

## World Heritage List 2024

### Via Appia. *Regina Viarum* (Italy) – Interim report and additional information request

Dear Ambassador,

As prescribed by the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* and its Annex 6, the Advisory Bodies are requested to submit a short interim report for each nomination by 31 January 2024. We are therefore pleased to provide you with the relevant information outlining issues related to the evaluation procedure.

The ICOMOS technical evaluation mission to “Via Appia. *Regina Viarum*” was carried out by Mr. Sanjin Mihelic (Croatia) between September and October 2023. The mission expert highly appreciated the availabilities and support provided by the experts in your country for the organisation and implementation of the mission.

On 4 October 2023, an additional information letter was sent by ICOMOS to request further information regarding the boundaries of the nominated property, the comparative analysis, integrity and authenticity, protection, and management. Please convey our thanks to all the officials and experts for the additional information you provided on 6 November 2023 and for their continued cooperation in this process.

At the end of November 2023, the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel evaluated the cultural and mixed properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2024. The additional information provided by the State Party, together with mission and desk review reports were carefully examined by the Panel members. This process will conclude in March 2024.

We thank you and your Delegation for your availability and your participation in the meeting held on 25 November 2023 with some representatives of the ICOMOS Panel. The exchanges during this meeting were of great help for the third part of the ICOMOS Panel meeting. During this last part of the meeting, the Panel has identified areas where it considers that further information is needed.

Therefore, we would be pleased if the State Party could consider the following points:

### **Rationale for the selection of the component parts**

The nominated property consists of a series of linear component parts that bear witness to the route and fabric of the Via Appia, as well as engineering structures, service infrastructures, monuments, urban systems, towns, settlements, and agricultural landscapes that reflect the way in which the road, although originally built for military purposes, quickly became a driving force in the foundation of colonies, linked to agricultural production and trade.

For the most part, the component parts encompass remains of the main structure of the road and the anthropised landscape immediately associated with it. In a very few cases, the component parts are found beyond this main structure and along roads that branch off the main Via Appia. As in time these branches of roads leading off the Via Appia spread across an extensive area of Southern Italy, ICOMOS considers that the nomination should be confined to sites located along the main structure of the route and within the timeframe that has been defined in the nomination dossier, namely between 312 BCE - 4<sup>th</sup> century CE.

ICOMOS would appreciate if the State Party could provide further details on the rationale for selecting component parts that lie off the main Via Appia and along branch roads. Information and documentation on what were the initial intention and planning of the road during its design might help in this regard.

More precisely, this would concern the following towns:

- Lanuvium, in component part 003: *The Via Appia from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> mile, with a branch to Lanuvium*. Indeed, unlike Terracina or Capua, Lanuvium was not a specific destination directly linked to the planning or development of the route.
- Norba, in component part 004: *The Via Appia in the Pontine Plain, with a branch to Norba*. Even more than Lanuvium, Norba was located at a distance from the Via Appia and its function was not directly linked to the road. The role of the fortified city of Norba was to protect the Roman frontier against the Volscians and later guard the Pontine Plain.
- Abbey San Stefano and Torre Santa Sabina, in component part 022: *The Appia Traiana along the Adriatic coast, through Egnatia*. These two elements are extensions that lead from the main road to the coastline, and are included in the nominated property for their function of ancient landing places. However, ICOMOS considers that there is not enough evidence at this stage to justify their inclusion in this component part.

### **Integrity and authenticity**

ICOMOS considers that overall, the integrity and authenticity of the nominated property is good or very good. However, there are five component parts for which concerns regarding their integrity and authenticity have been identified by ICOMOS.

Three component parts raise the question of whether they should remain within the nominated serial property or whether their boundaries should be modified, and for these, ICOMOS would welcome clarification as regards the arguments that support their contribution to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated serial property.

- Component part 015: The *Via Appia* on the “Tarantino” sheep-track. There are very few attributes that satisfactorily convey the value of this component part. The evidence for the existence of a road are mainly sections of the *via glareata* and/or wheel ruts. The narrative that supports the justification of authenticity for this component part is associated with the traditional practice of transhumance along the Appian Way. Although this practice is deeply rooted in

history and may even predate the Via Appia, ICOMOS considers that the contribution of this component part to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value appears weak.

- Component part 016: *Tarentum*. While ICOMOS fully understands the historic significance of Tarentum as the second largest city in Italy at the time, and one of the key evolutionary points of the Via Appia on its gradual advance towards the Adriatic Sea, ICOMOS nevertheless considers that what remains cannot be said to convey that significance. The destructions of 927 CE and of the 20th century, as well as the energetic construction process throughout the history of the city, have together reduced the integrity and authenticity of the attributes.
- Component part 020: *The Appia Traiana from Aecae to Herdonia*. In this case, the central part of the component part is visually impaired by a wind farm, and overall, ICOMOS does not consider that the nominated component part conveys the significance of ancient Aecae for which nothing visible remains. The ancient city presumably lies below the modern-day town of Troia, and the remaining links with the Via Appia comprise only five flagstones discovered under the modern street of Via Regina Margherita.

The last two component parts to which ICOMOS wishes to draw the attention of the State Party are portions of the road which, while contributing to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the serial nominated property, are in a poor state of conservation, with factors affecting their integrity and for which urgent conservation measures are required:

- Component part 010: *The Via Appia from Sinuessa to the Pagus Sarclanus*. The integrity of the component part is compromised to an extent by the poor physical condition of many of the attributes.
- Component part 019: *The Appia Traiana from Beneventum to Aequum Tuticum*. Although some attributes are well preserved, such as the Ponte delle Chianche, most of the attributes of this component part are in a rather poor state of conservation. The deterioration process is active and poses a threat to its integrity.

Therefore, ICOMOS would appreciate if the State Party could provide information on the conservation measures in place or planned to mitigate the identified factors affecting these two nominated component parts.

### **Boundaries**

With regard to the boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zones, ICOMOS appreciates the efforts made by the State Party to delineate consistent boundaries to ensure that the nominated property benefits from an additional layer of protection, in addition to the legal protection in place for most of the component parts.

Nonetheless, ICOMOS notes that slight changes could be considered as regards the delineation of the boundaries or buffer zone of three component parts:

- Component part 008: *The Via Appia, from the 83<sup>rd</sup> mile to Formiae*. ICOMOS considers that it would be advisable to reduce the western boundary of the component part, as this part of the site does not include enough attributes to convey the proposed Outstanding Universal Value. The Tomb of Cicero near Formia could mark the western boundary of this component part.
- Component part 011: *Ancient Capua*. ICOMOS considers that the buffer zone could be extended to the east, in the municipalities of Curti and San Prisco, to allow planning that could mitigate impaired visual integrity.
- Component part 013: *The Via Appia on the route from Beneventum to Aeclanum*. ICOMOS considers that a slight extension of the buffer zone at the eastern end of the site would be

advisable to avoid the buffer zone overlapping the eastern boundary of the nominated component part.

### **Conservation**

As already mentioned, ICOMOS notes that some archaeological sites forming part of the serial nominated property are in a poor state of conservation and require urgent conservation measures and monitoring. ICOMOS would welcome further clarification on the long-term sustainable sources of funding that will be mobilised by the State Party for the conservation of the nominated property, following the current development plans, which are associated with European funding.

The management plan describes the strategy for implementing a programme of continuous maintenance work on the cultural and landscape assets, as well as the development of regular monitoring.

The action plan includes a thirty-six-month budget for ongoing monitoring of the state of conservation of the component parts and the definition of intervention methods. However, the action plan does not include detailed programmed provisions, costed and prioritised over time, for urgent conservation work on the nominated component parts that are in a poor state of conservation as identified in the nomination dossier. ICOMOS would appreciate receiving further information on this point, as well as on the necessary measures and their timetable for carrying out the concrete urgent conservation actions, taking into account the Risk Map system owned by the Ministry of Culture, and the budgets allocated to these actions.

### **Management system**

The responsibilities of each stakeholder are clearly defined in the nomination dossier, as are the plans to create a cross-functional body to coordinate the management plan. The effectiveness of the management will depend on the attributions and resources that are given to this structure in charge of coordinating and managing the plan, as well as on the coordination with the *Soprintendenze*, the regional heritage offices of the Ministry of Culture. Considering the successive stages planned to define the legal framework of this structure, its role, and its responsibilities, as part of a participative process, ICOMOS would appreciate if the State Party could provide information as regards the timetable that has been set for the transfer of the management of the plan from the Ministry of Culture prefiguration structure to the *ad hoc* institution.

### **Risk mitigation plan**

Natural hazards and those associated with development or land abandonment are the main factors identified by the State Party as potentially affecting the nominated serial property. The nomination dossier envisages the creation of a plan and a model for risk assessment, prevention, and management. The implementation of this plan is planned after a two-year start-up period. ICOMOS would appreciate if the State Party could provide detailed information on the functional link that will exist between this plan and the body responsible for implementing the entire management plan (i.e. the envisaged Foundation); if immediate measures are already planned, budgeted and if their pilot phase has been envisaged pending the creation of this future management body.

### **Tourism management**

The State Party has developed a Strategic Plan for Tourism, a planning tool aiming to provide strategic guidelines to the State and local authorities. The regions have developed regional Strategic Plans for Tourism and seven tourist districts (grouping public and private stakeholders) that are acting at local level. In addition, a detailed action plan is provided covering major issues such as sustainable communities, environment and landscape, attractiveness, accessibility and tourism. In this context,

