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**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

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

**Forty-sixth session  
New Delhi, India  
21 – 31 July 2024**

**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/46COM/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 may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

**Note:** For each section, the reports are presented in the English alphabetical order of States Parties.

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# **CULTURAL PROPERTIES**

## **EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA**

### **1. 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; March 2024: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM 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 'Heumarkt Neu' project)
- Proposed new developments, including the Wien Museum and the Winterthur Building
- Legal framework: Lack of effectiveness of the overall protection and governance of the property (issue partially resolved)
- Legal framework: Lack of appropriateness of planning controls in the 'High-Rise Concept 2014' and the 'Glacis Master Plan' (issue partially resolved)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Desirability of conservation of historic roof constructions within the property (issue partially resolved)

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

### Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1033/documents>, providing information on measures implemented in response to Decision **45 COM 7A.55**. Subsequently, a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission visited the property in March 2024 (mission report will be available at the above-mentioned link). The State Party reports on the progress of the implementation of the adopted corrective measures as follows:

- Significant progress has been made in implementing corrective measures for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger;
- In September 2023, the Vienna City Council adopted a legally binding annex to the *Viennese Building Code*, committing to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, thereby anchoring the new Management Plan in the legal system of the City;
- In November 2023, the Provincial Parliament of Vienna adopted the new *Viennese Building Code*, which includes provisions to strengthen the protection of World Heritage properties;
- A revised proposal for the Heumarkt Neu project (submitted to the World Heritage Centre in August 2023) reduced the height of the residential slab (from 56.5m to 49.9m), reduced the built volume by 20% and eliminated two storeys. A new Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) acknowledges the improvement with respect to OUV, but proposes further modifications to achieve the required outcome that does not increase the negative impact of the existing Hotel Intercontinental and supports the OUV of the property;
- An HIA assessed the building activities in the Schwarzenberg Garden and concluded that the impact on the OUV of the property would not be significant, but proposed mitigation measures to minimise or eliminate the impact. The HIA also included a comprehensive survey of the conservation of the historic gardens within the property and a series of recommendations;
- The City of Vienna completed the renovation of the Wien Museum in 2023;
- The extension of the roof cadastre to include historic metal structures is progressing;
- The amendment of the *Federal Monuments Protection Act* by the National Assembly of Austria is expected in 2024;
- Most of the corrective measures to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) adopted by the Committee have been completed;
- A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission was invited to the property in March 2024 to advise on the degree of implementation of the corrective measures.

In relation to the August 2023 design version of the Heumarkt Neu project, an ICOMOS Technical Review of the submitted design documentation and associated HIA was transmitted to the State Party on 20 February 2024. Following the Advisory mission, the World Heritage Centre received a further design revision of the Heumarkt Neu project from the State Party on 22 April 2024, proposing a further reduction of the planned residential building by two floors compared to the August 2023 design version, and a modification of the façade design of the proposed hotel component.

The HIA for the Schwarzenberg Garden has been subject to a Technical Review by ICOMOS, the results of which were transmitted to the State Party on 25 June 2024.

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

The State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies have continued to exchange views on the corrective measures to achieve the adopted DSOCR.

The adopted amendment to the *Viennese Building Code* is welcome, as is the continued extension of the roof cadastre to include historic metal structures. The forthcoming amendment of the *Federal Monuments Protection Act* by the National Assembly and a new Urban Development Strategy for Vienna, known as STEP 2035 (to replace 'STEP 2025'), are reported to include provisions for the protection of World Heritage properties. The revised and updated Management Plan for the property, which was accepted by the Committee in Decision **45 COM 7A.55**, is being implemented and the

corrective measures require that the efficacy of the Management Plan be proven in practice through monitoring and evaluation over a period of five years. The Committee may wish to reiterate that revisions to the Management Plan should address issues raised in the 2022 ICOMOS Technical Review, that the role of the site manager needs to be strengthened, and that a monitoring and evaluation programme should be established and reported on. Improving the definition of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property would provide a baseline for this process. Other remaining planning challenges include the lack of a requirement to carry out systematic impact assessments for projects that may adversely affect OUV, the need to establish a systematic process for determining projects that require notification to the World Heritage Centre, and provisions for the legal protection of historic gardens in private ownership.

The ICOMOS Technical Review of the HIA for projects in the Schwarzenberg Garden, including an underground parking garage, the creation of a new restaurant building and beer garden, and the proposed construction of a new hotel wing associated with the reuse of the Schwarzenberg Palace, concluded that as the Schwarzenberg Palace and Garden are an important attribute of the property's OUV, the proposed hotel wing should not proceed as it would have a negative impact on both the Belvedere and Schwarzenberg complexes and would prevent the State Party from achieving the associated element of the DSOCR. The Technical Review makes further recommendations and suggests that the State Party should submit further details of the design of the Schwarzenberg Garden and documentation of the Schwarzenberg Palace renovation project to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies and implement the mitigation measures included in the HIA.

The Wien Museum project was completed in 2023, and although it was not modified in accordance with the recommendations of the 2018 high-level World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission, and the full design plans previously requested by the Committee were only provided with the State Party's 2024 state of conservation report, making the corrective measure related to the Wien Museum technically non-compliant, the renovated museum does not have a fundamentally negative impact on the OUV of the property.

With regard to the August 2023 design version of the Heumarkt Neu project, the corresponding HIA concluded that the structural and functional impacts were 'major positive' and 'irrelevant', while the visual impacts of the proposed design remained 'large negative' to the integrity of the property. The ICOMOS Technical Review of February 2024 concurred with the conclusions of the HIA and, while acknowledging that the further reduction in design was a positive step forward, considered that it did not result in a project variant that would enable the State Party to achieve the DSOCR (method of verification for Corrective Measure 5 under 'Protection and Management'), as it still adversely impacts on the OUV of the property and therefore proposed that there should be further design revisions.

The 2024 Advisory mission acknowledged several positive elements of the Heumarkt Neu project for the local community of the City of Vienna but advised that the benefits of the project could and should be realised without eroding the OUV of the property and emphasised that the high-rise elements remained problematic. The mission presented four design options for these latter two elements and noted that the chosen design should be developed through an iterative impact assessment process (following the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context) and should respect the authenticity and integrity of the property as a whole and not threaten its OUV. Within the four options proposed by the mission, the maximum recommended height of the future hotel building would be the same as that of the existing building and the height of the residential building is recommended to be visibly lower than that of the existing hotel. The further revised design version of April 2024 (which is the fourth design revision since 2018) proposes to reduce the height of the residential building by a further two storeys (bringing the total height down from 49.9m to 44m, whereas the original design was proposed as a 69.5m high tower). This further revised design version, although considered as a significant effort, does not propose to reduce the height of the planned new hotel slab, which remains higher than the existing building (48m compared to 38m) and its horizontal dimension is also greater than the current structure, although a slightly modified façade design is proposed. As a result, the latest proposal still fails to meet the requirements of the DSCOR.

The 2024 Advisory mission was made aware of several planned projects in and around the property, including the construction of an underground visitor centre directly in front of the Upper Belvedere Palace. An architectural competition resulted in the selection of a project in June 2024. The Advisory mission recommended that the State Party submit documentation, including an HIA, for the proposed visitor centre to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies as a matter of urgency and before any irreversible decisions are taken. The mission was also informed that an extension of the underground metro system, including new stations, which is nearing completion, has also not yet been notified to the World Heritage Centre. These projects, proposed for highly sensitive locations within the

property, which have not been notified to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, nor have they been subject to an HIA in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, illustrate that the management system is not yet functioning in a manner that guarantees the safeguarding of the OUV of the property.

The 2024 Advisory mission acknowledged that the State Party had developed a management system that, once fully implemented, should maintain the OUV of the property. It noted that, while significant progress had been made in the implementation of corrective measures, several critical measures remain to be fully implemented (including the development of a final acceptable design for the Heumarkt Neu project and the revision of the design of the proposed new hotel wing in the Schwarzenberg Garden). The property should therefore remain on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee may therefore wish to commend the State Party for its efforts to work towards achieving the adopted DSOCR and encourage it to continue the full implementation of the corrective measures, including the monitoring of the adequacy of the management system to protect the OUV of the property, and the processes for assessing impacts on heritage and determining projects that require notification to the World Heritage Centre.

### **Draft Decision: 46 COM 7A.1**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A.Add.3,*
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, 44 COM 7A.32, and 45 COM 7A.55** adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,*
3. *Commends the State Party on the progress made in implementing the adopted corrective measures required to achieve the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and previous decisions of the Committee, including the amendment of the Viennese Building Code, the extension of the roof cadastre to include historic metal structures, and the forthcoming amendment of the Federal Monuments Protection Act;*
4. *Notes the findings and recommendations of the 2024 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission and encourages the State Party to fully implement them with a view to completing the corrective measures and achieving the DSOCR;*
5. *Also notes that the corrective measures require that the efficacy of the Management Plan be demonstrated in practice through monitoring and evaluation over a period of five years, reiterates its previous advice that the revisions to the Management Plan should address issues raised in the 2022 ICOMOS Technical Review, and further notes that other management issues that remain to be addressed include strengthening the role of the site managers, establishing and reporting on a monitoring and evaluation programme, and improving the definition of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property;*
6. *Acknowledges the submission of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for projects in the Schwarzenberg Garden and also encourages the State Party to implement both the mitigation measures contained in the HIA and the recommendations of the relevant ICOMOS Technical Review, including not proceeding with the current design for the construction of a new hotel wing associated with the reuse of the Schwarzenberg Palace,*

*but to further develop alternatives and to submit further details of the design for this project and for the rehabilitation of the Schwarzenberg Garden, as well as documentation on the Schwarzenberg Palace renovation project, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*

7. *Appreciates the continued efforts of the State Party and other actors to further revise the design plans for the Heumarkt Neu project, including the submission of a fourth revision of the original design, with a view to reducing the negative impacts of the proposal on the OUV of the property and the attributes that convey it;*
8. *Further encourages the State Party to follow up on the findings and recommendations of the 2024 Advisory mission for the Heumarkt Neu development, to consider the four design options proposed by the mission, to develop the final project design through an iterative impact assessment process in accordance with the 2022 Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, in order to achieve the relevant DSOCR element, and to submit the resulting revised design and HIA to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
9. *Regrets that at an architectural competition for a new underground visitors centre for the Upper Belvedere Palace was awarded without the project being notified to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines or an impact assessment being undertaken in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 118bis, and requests the State Party to submit documentation on this project, including an HIA following the methodology of the 2022 Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decisions are taken on its implementation that may be difficult to reverse;*
10. *Also regrets that the project for the extension of the metro system with new stations in the property was not communicated to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and further requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies with details of the project, its current status and any impact assessments on the OUV of the property, in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines;*
11. *Notes furthermore that a number of the adopted corrective measures remain to be implemented and therefore encourages furthermore the State Party to continue their implementation in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, with a view to achieving the DSOCR;*
12. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2025**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and on the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session;*
13. ***Decides to retain Historic Centre of Vienna (Austria) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

## **ARAB STATES**

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

See Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A.Add.4

### **25. Hebron/AI-Khalil Old Town (Palestine) (C 1565)**

See Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A.Add.4

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

See Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A.Add.4



## **NATURAL PROPERTIES**

### **AFRICA**

#### **54. 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 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4087>

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

Corrective measures identified

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

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures

Adopted, see page <https://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: Joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2024: Joint World Heritage Centre / 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
- Water pollution (ground water and surface water) due to mining

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

### Current conservation issues

On 1 February 2024, the State Party of Senegal submitted a State of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/documents> providing the following information:

- Implementation of the corrective measures formulated by the 2015 Reactive Monitoring Mission is continuing;
- Illegal gold panning, although significantly reduced, remains, along with poaching and stray livestock, one of the main infractions observed in the property;
- Significant efforts have been made to improve park management, notably through the strengthening of enforcement measures and the development of actions to limit stray livestock;
- Since 2016, an ecological monitoring protocol using camera traps covering 83% of the total area of the property was implemented to map the distribution of large and medium-sized wildlife and to determine the threats they face.
- In 2023, a survey of carnivores in the property identified a total of 29 lions over one year old, with an estimated population density of 0.53 lions over one year old per 100 km<sup>2</sup> and 24 wild dogs (lycaons) over one year old, with an estimated population density of 0.46 lycaons over one year old per 100 km<sup>2</sup>;
- A National Action Plan for lycaons is currently being drawn up thanks to IUCN funding;
- In 2023, several direct and indirect elephant sightings were made in the eastern part of the property, notably in the area of influence of the Petowal Mining Company (PMC) gold mine in Mako, adjacent to the property;
- According to a study published in 2021, the derby eland population in the property is estimated to be 195 individuals, with an estimated population density of 0.138 individuals/km<sup>2</sup>;
- Annual ecological monitoring in the influence area of the Mako mine has confirmed the presence of several key species, including lions, panthers, elephants, chimpanzees, buffalo, elands and roan antelopes;
- Water quality monitoring activities continue at key surveillance sites upstream and downstream of the PMC gold mine in Mako, along the Gambia River and its tributaries within the operational zone.
- Efforts to combat the invasive species *Mimosa pigra* are ongoing, notably through the restoration of four significant ponds between 2022 and 2023.
- The Mansadala quarry is still active, and the operating companies have hired an environmental auditing firm to assess the impacts caused and propose restoration plans for the sites already exploited;
- All measures have been taken by the Gambia River Basin Development Organisation (OMVG) to minimize or reduce the negative impacts of the Sambangalou hydroelectric dam on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- No environmental approvals have yet been issued for the Barrick Gold mining project.

A joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission took place from 26 to 30 March 2024, and the report will be available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/153/documents>

### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party has made significant efforts to improve the state of conservation of the property, by effectively implementing recommendations from the 2015 mission and making substantial progress toward achieving Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).

The State Party, with the support of its partners, has made considerable efforts to rehabilitate impassable tracks in order to improve the mobility of patrol teams within the property and build the capacity of its staff in the use of technological tools such as SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool), CYBERTRACKER, and CTAP (camera traps), among others. These tools, coupled with robust

ecological monitoring, have been used to collect essential data on the wildlife, improving the knowledge of the current population size of emblematic species in the property. However, data on population dynamics, in particular the actual population, demographic structure and population growth rate, which can be used to determine the viability of each species in the property, are lacking. The mission reported that, with the exception of the elephant, the other characteristic species of OUV, notably chimpanzees, Derby elands, lions and lycaons, are well represented in the property. However, apart from the lycaons, the rate of encounters with the other characteristic species of OUV decreased overall between 2021 and 2023. The situation is even more concerning as regards elephants, for which no direct sighting data are available for the same period, although indirect sightings seem to indicate that the species is still present. However, the situation of the characteristic species of OUV remains concerning, especially considering that the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (x) alone.

The mission also noted that the 2019-2023 Development and Management Plan had expired and needs to be updated as a matter of urgency.

Nevertheless, significant strides have been made in anti-poaching measures on land, air and water, thanks to the acquisition of vehicles, aircraft and boats, as well as the recruitment and training of a large number of eco-guards for the property. The mission also noted that the management team continues to improve its relations with local populations through environmental education and awareness-raising activities, as well as the promotion of community development initiatives. These efforts have produced significant results in the fight against poaching and illegal gold panning, resulting in the arrest of offenders and the seizure/destruction of their equipment. However, although the mission noted that illegal gold panning is declining slightly, it remains, along with poaching and logging, a very serious threat to the property's OUV.

Transhumance and livestock incursions continue to represent threats to the integrity of the property, with animals observed around 10 km inside the property, near the pits resulting from the exploitation of the Mansadala quarry. To counter these threats, the State Party has installed pastoral boreholes in village land bordering the property and drawn up a bushfire management plan. Similarly, the State Party has organized a tripartite workshop (Senegal, Mali, Mauritania) on transhumance issues, and the mission notes that the implementation of the actions resulting from this workshop must be accelerated.

The lack of significant progress in mitigating the adverse impacts of extractive activities and infrastructure development within and around the property continues to be of grave concern. The mission noted with dismay that the Mansadala basalt quarry remains operational despite the State Party's commitment to its closure since 2011, and rehabilitation efforts for the excavation pits have yet to commence. This poses a substantial threat to the integrity and maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, necessitating immediate action. On a positive note, the Barrick Gold mining project has not commenced, and no environmental approval has been granted due to ongoing disputes with Sabadola Gold Operations (SGO). However, the mission emphasized that the environmental approval should not be contingent upon the resolution of these disputes. The Committee has expressed significant concerns regarding the many potential major negative impacts identified in the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) of the project. Regarding the Sambangalou Dam, the mission noted that construction activities are progressing on-site. In addition to supplementary environmental and biodiversity studies, the mission team received a copy of the ESIA report. Preliminary analysis and on-site inspections by the mission staff did not reveal direct negative impacts of the Sambangalou Dam on the property's OUV. However, once the reservoir behind the dam is filled, potential indirect negative effects are anticipated, particularly on the distribution of large and medium-sized mammalian fauna and the alteration of park habitat due to changes in the hydrological regime of the Gambia River. It is imperative to conduct a thorough analysis of the ESIA report by IUCN, as requested by the Committee, to ensure the effective consideration of the property's OUV in light of the potential negative impacts of the project, as indicated in the preliminary assessment of the supplementary environmental and biodiversity studies of the property.

Concerning the section of National Route 7 inside the property, the mission observed that despite commendable efforts by the State Party, eight collisions involving some ten individuals were recorded in 2023. The State Party is encouraged to continue implementing these measures to further reduce the number of collisions and to establish a protocol for the care of injured animals to reduce post-accident mortality.

In view of the above, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN commend the significant efforts made by the State Party in implementing the corrective measures. While acknowledging the substantial progress

made in achieving some of the indicators, they believe that further actions are needed to achieve all DSOCR indicators.

They recommend that the property be retained on the List of World Heritage in Danger, so that the following fundamental conditions can be fully met: (a) Urgently update and implement the property's Management and Development Plan to include an operational ecological monitoring plan focusing on the characteristic species of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), (b) Reverse the current declining trend observed in the characteristic species of OUV, (c) Immediately and definitively close the Mansadala basalt quarry, with a validated and implemented rehabilitation plan, (d) Provide necessary and sufficient assurances to the World Heritage Committee to mitigate the potential indirect negative impacts on the property arising from changes in the hydrological regime caused by the filling of the reservoir behind the Sambangalou Dam. Furthermore, the mission puts forward several key additional recommendations for the State Party.

### **Draft Decision: 46 COM 7A.54**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A.Add.3,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **44 COM 7A.50** and **45 COM 7A.13**, adopted at its 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and 45th (Riyadh, 2023) extended sessions, respectively,*
3. *Notes the results of the joint UNESCO/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission conducted in March 2024 and commends the actions taken by the State Party in effectively implementing various recommendations and corrective measures stemming from the 2015 mission, as well as the significant progress made in achieving some of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR);*
4. *Recalling that the property is inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of criterion (x) alone, notes with concern the overall decreasing trend in the encounter rate of the characteristic species of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), with the exception of lycaons, and the persistent lack of data concerning the viability of the populations of these species, and in particular elephants in the property;*
5. *Notes with appreciation the strengthening of anti-poaching measures, combining land, air and sea methods, as well as the continuing improvement in relations with local populations, but expresses its concern at the persistence of poaching, illegal gold panning and logging, which continue to represent very serious threats to the maintenance of the property's OUV;*
6. *Regrets that the Mansadala basalt quarry is still open, and that the rehabilitation of the pits resulting from the exploitation has not started despite the Committee's previous decisions and the State Party's commitments to closing it. This represents a substantial threat to the integrity and maintenance of the property's OUV;*
7. *Also recalling the DSOCR indicators as updated by the 2015 Reactive Monitoring mission, requests the State Party to fully satisfy the following fundamental conditions for the property's removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger:*
  - a) *Urgently update and implement the property's Development and Management Plan, ensuring that it incorporates an operational ecological monitoring plan targeting the characteristic species of OUV,*

- b) *Reverse the predominantly downward trend observed in the property's characteristic species of OUV,*
  - c) *Immediately and definitively close the Mansadala basalt quarry, with a validated and implemented rehabilitation plan;*
  - d) *Provide the World Heritage Committee with the necessary and sufficient guarantees for the mitigation of the potential indirect negative impacts on the property arising from the modification of the hydrological regime caused by the filling of the reservoir behind the Sambangalou Dam;*
8. *Also requests the State Party to implement the main additional recommendations made by the 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission;*
  9. *While noting that the construction of the dam in Sambangalou is continuing, notes the availability of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) report on the project, and recalls the need for a thorough analysis of the ESIA report by IUCN to draw conclusions on the effective consideration of the property's OUV in light of the potential negative impacts of the project, as indicated by preliminary analysis of the supplementary environmental and biodiversity studies of the property;*
  10. *Commends the State Party on the various measures taken to reduce accidents with wild animals on National Route 7 through the property, but expresses its concern at the persistence of collisions involving vehicles, resulting in the death of some ten animals in 2023, and encourages the State Party to continue implementing these measures to further reduce the number of collisions and to establish a protocol for the care of injured animals to reduce post-accident mortality;*
  11. *Notes that the Barrick Gold mining project has not yet started and that no environmental approval has been issued for it, and also recalls the concerns previously expressed about the many major potential impacts identified by the project's ESIA report;*
  12. *Thanks the donors who continue to support the conservation of the property, in particular the Government of Norway through its funding to the World Heritage Fund to support the improvement of the state of conservation of the property;*
  13. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2025**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, in particular on the progress made towards fully meeting the fundamental conditions for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session;*
  14. ***Decides to retain Niokolo-Koba National Park (Senegal) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***