
Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands (France) No 1707

1 Basic information

Official name as proposed by the State Party

Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands

Location

Marquesas Islands
French Polynesia

Brief description

Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands is a serial nominated property composed of seven component parts. Located in the centre of the South Pacific Ocean, the Marquesas Islands are one of the most isolated archipelagos from any continent in the world. Composed of twelve main islands and many more islets, the archipelago is around 360 kilometres long and is divided geographically, linguistically, and culturally into two main groups: the north group, and the south group. Except for Ua Pou, the islands are collapsed volcanos offering a landscape of imposing mountains rising from the sea, some reaching an altitude of almost 1,200 meters. The main islands feature rugged terrain with high, knife-edge ridges, dramatic cloud-draped peaks and precipitous cliffs, interspersed with deeply incised valleys. Constrained by the topography of the islands, the *Ēnata* (human beings in Marquesan) settled in the deep, steep-sided valleys, from the top of the ridges to the coast, where they built two-storey lithic platforms (*paepae*) up to six metres high. Most of the archaeological sites included in the nominated property are monumental dry-stone structures, some very large and some including petroglyphs and/or carved stone statues (*tiki*).

Category of property

In terms of categories of cultural property set out in Article I of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a serial nomination of seven *sites*.

[Note: the property is nominated as a mixed cultural and natural property. IUCN will assess the natural values, while ICOMOS assesses the cultural values.]

Included in the Tentative List

22 June 2010 as “*Les Iles Marquises*”

Background

This is a new nomination.

Consultations and technical evaluation mission

Desk reviews have been provided by ICOMOS International Scientific Committees, members and independent experts.

An ICOMOS technical evaluation mission visited the nominated property from 16 to 30 October 2023. This mission was conducted jointly with IUCN.

Additional information received by ICOMOS

A letter was sent to the State Party on 9 October 2023 requesting further information about governance arrangements.

Additional information was received from the State Party on 6 November 2023.

An interim report was provided to the State Party on 20 December 2023, summarising the issues identified by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel and the IUCN World Heritage Panel.

Further information was requested in the interim report on the protection designations for natural and cultural values, planning instruments and inventories, and potential future extensions.

Additional information was received from the State Party on 28 February 2024.

All additional information received has been incorporated into the relevant sections of this evaluation report.

Date of ICOMOS approval of this report

13 March 2024

2 Description of the nominated property

Note: The nomination dossier and additional information contain detailed descriptions of this property, its history and its state of conservation. Due to limitations on the length of evaluation reports, this report provides only a short summary of the most relevant aspects.

Description and history

The topographical and climatic conditions of the Marquesas Islands constrained human territorial occupation. The first inhabitants arrived between 900 and 1000 CE and initially settled in coastal areas, including in islands and islets that today are uninhabited. Population growth and the need to create conditions conducive to horticulture and animal husbandry led the *Ēnata* to gradually move to more fertile areas in the valleys, less exposed to the risks of the sea and flooding as well as enemy incursions.

The valleys were home to family groups organised as clans or chiefdoms. Each maintained a network of alliances that could extend across the island and beyond. On Nuku Hiva and Hiva Oa, the two largest islands in the archipelago, some valleys were large enough to accommodate several chiefdoms.

From the 14th and 15th centuries onwards, the valleys – with their abundant water resources, irrigation potential, as well as their relatively flat terrain and arable land – provided the best conditions for the development of human settlements. The territorial occupation can be understood first in relation to the ridges that encircle the valley, which delimited the territory associated with the identity of a clan or chiefdom and at the same time offered protection from other groups.

The mountain ridges were constantly under surveillance, in the event of an enemy invasion, leading to the construction of fortifications (*pā*), watchtower posts and food storage areas (*ūa mā*) there. Periods of conflict (*toua*) fuelled by a wide variety of reasons (i.e., competition for prestige, kinship, violation of religious and social restrictions, or appropriation of resources) were alternated with peaceful periods (*mou*) sealed by alliances. In addition, not all the valleys offered the same land and sea resources, which led to chiefdoms of varying importance and prestige depending on their ability to control resources and redistribute them at community feasts.

The main river or water course defined the vital axis from the valley bottom (*vao*) to the sea (*tai*) and helped structure the pattern of human settlement into three main functional areas: the coastline and lower valley; the middle valley; and the valley bottom. The coastline and areas of the lower valley were vulnerable to enemy incursions and tsunamis therefore the few existing constructions located there were often dedicated to fishing rituals. Most have now disappeared, but some remain, notably at Hohoi on the island of Ua Pou. The middle valley had the highest density of *paepae* (raised platforms) organised along the river near the house of the chief and the community centres – the *tohua*, public places used for ceremonies and festivities, as well as the *meāe*, sacred or forbidden spaces linked to religious and/or funerary activities. This was the central area for community activities as well as where agricultural crops were grown. Towards the bottom of the valley, the land became steeper, darker, and often wetter. This was often a remote, uninhabited part of the valley, which was only rarely entered.

The nominated property includes eight valleys within its perimeter. Three are located on the Nuku Hiva Island: Hatiheu; Anaho and Haatuatua; and Hakaui. Ua Pou Island includes two twin valleys – Hakaohoka and Hohoi – which share the same bay. Two other valleys are on the island of Hiva Oa: Puamau and Taaoa. The last of the valleys identified – Omoa – is located on the island of Fatu Iva.

For the *Ēnata*, the basalt rock found in abundance throughout the Marquesas Islands was not just a building material, used as a response to the constraints of the environment. In the cosmological myths, the *Ēnata* considered themselves to have descended from *pāpā*, the stratified rock, whose top stratum was considered to be the founding father (*pāpā i ūna*) and the bottom stratum represented the original mother (*pāpā i āo*). The rocks are said to have given birth to humans, one of whom was Atea (daylight), married to Atanua (dawn), sometimes considered to be the ancestor of all *Ēnata*. Some peaks

represent the memory of an illustrious chief or warrior who was petrified.

Natural rock, as well as worked and sculpted stone, is prevalent in all aspects of the built fabric throughout the nominated property. Most of the archaeological sites included in the nominated property are monumental dry-stone structures, some very large and some including petroglyphs and/or carved stone statues (*tiki*). In order of prevalence, the main types of structures are the raised lithic platforms (*paepae*), used as a base for domestic dwellings as well as public ceremonial places (*tohua*) or religious and/or funerary structures (*meāe*). Generally, two-storey high (sometimes three), the *paepae* are basically structures built in dry masonry used as the base for any building. There are also dry-stone walls of varying dimensions for agricultural terraces and water diversion.

The artistic expression of the *Ēnata* can still be seen today in lithic sculpture (*tiki*), stone engraving (petroglyphs) and carved slabs. These built elements are the only ones that have survived and are still present *in situ*. All the other materials on which artistic gestures were practised, such as wood, shells, mother-of-pearl, carved bones, can now be found in local and foreign collections and museums.

The stone figures known as *tiki* were sculpted from a single block of stone or wood. Their bodies are made up of three parts of almost equal size (head, trunk, legs). They were erected on sacred places (*meāe*) or next to the public ceremonial areas. The Marquesas Islands are also home to many petroglyphs and are said to hold the richest diversity of motifs found in French Polynesia. There are numerous petroglyph panels in which the *Ēnata* have represented their relationship with the world. From recognisable animal forms to spiral and geometric shapes, the range of images is varied and linked to the art of *patutiki*, or tattooing.

Within the nominated property, Eiao-Hatu Tu (component part 1) provides evidence of the seasonal exploitation of marine and land resources, mainly for the communities of Nuku Hiva. It includes only a few remains of small *paepae* dwellings, and some rare and modest ceremonial structures; there are no lithic structures.

Nuku Hiva (component part 2) is the largest island in the northern group. This component part is important for the density and size of its archaeological remains, some of the most imposing in the archipelago. The Hatiheu valley is home to a particularly well-developed ceremonial architecture, demonstrating the competition between chiefs for greater prestige. It is also home to the highest density of petroglyphs in the archipelago, displaying a great variety of motifs.

Within Ua Pou (component part 3), the twin valleys of Hakaohoka and Hohoi exemplify the typical Marquesan valley development and settlement density, with dozens of *paepae*. These structures are spread out along a vertical axis, from the sea to the remotest ridges, and along a main

watercourse dividing the area into *tapu* (sacred or forbidden places) and community zones.

Ua Huka (component part 4) is included in the nominated property exclusively for its marine area and natural values.

Within Hiva Oa-Tahuata (component part 5), the Taaoa valley includes a great variety of archaeological remains. The ceremonial complex formed by the *tohua* Upeke and the *meâe* Pata is a major site on the island, due to its imposing size (200 x 140 metres) and the richness and diversity of its features: massive *paepae*, sculpted *keetû* (basalt tuff) slabs, a large stone engraved with a *tiki*, petroglyphs and the presence of a *tuu* (restored sacred offering space). The Puamau valley, known as the “*tiki* valley” is an emblematic site for Marquesan lithic arts and architecture. Within this area, twenty lithic sculptures have been identified, some among the largest stone *tiki* in Polynesia.

According to oral tradition, the Fatu Uku Island (component part 6) was once populated but was suddenly destroyed by a cataclysm provoked by the anger of Tanaoa, the youngest son of Meihano of Hiva Oa. This component part contains several archaeological structures clinging to the cliffs. The function of these remains, whether funerary sites or sacred platforms dedicated to the gods, is still unknown.

Fatu Iva (component part 7) presents an atypical organisation of archaeological structures compared to those found in the rest of the archipelago. This component part also includes some of the largest petroglyphs in the Marquesas Islands.

The first Polynesians, enriched by their experience of island exploration, arrived in the Marquesas Islands after long maritime journeys, carrying with them food plants, tree cuttings and animals (pigs, rats, dogs, chickens) to colonise their new environment. The territorial occupation of the first *Ēnata* had negative impacts on native flora and fauna, which are evident through changes in vegetation in the inhabited valleys dominated by *mei* (breadfruit tree), *ihî* (Oceania chestnut tree), *èhi* (coconut tree) or *meika* (banana tree). It took several centuries for the *Ēnata* to begin building lithic platforms.

In the 17th century, the intensification of agricultural production, centred on plants introduced from Polynesia, in particular the widely consumed *taò* (taro), necessitated the construction of terraces fed by elaborate irrigation systems. The houses were surrounded by low-walled gardens planted with different staple crops.

The Spanish navigator Alvaro de Mendaña y Neira was the first European to enter the southern part of the archipelago in 1595, naming it the Marquesas Islands in honour of the Viceroy of Peru. James Cook made a brief stopover there in 1774, and in the years that followed the archipelago was visited by numerous navigators.

As a result of the contact with Europeans, the *Ēnata* populations started collapsing partly because of new

diseases (smallpox, tuberculosis, dysentery, syphilis, etc.). It is estimated that nearly ninety-five percent of the population perished, constituting the most violent demographic shock in the entire Pacific. At the same time, the consumption of alcohol, the introduction of muskets and, more generally the shift in the balance of power intensified, leading to an increase in inter-tribal conflicts, with dramatic consequences: destruction of harvests, exile or disappearance of entire clans.

Colonisation was accompanied by the evangelisation of the *Ēnata* by Catholic missionaries. In 1863, the first regulations were promulgated to reorganise their lives and customs along Christian lines: dancing, singing, tattooing, use of *pani* (coconut oil) and flower ornaments were all banned. Such rules and influences gradually led to the fragmentation of local culture, the rejection of traditional practices and the erosion of Indigenous knowledge. With depopulation, the traditional settlements in the heart of the valleys were abandoned, with the survivors gradually regrouping in the new villages closer to the coastline, around which the modern settlements are now located.

The violent demographic decline and abandonment of ancient settlement sites following European contact meant that a complete and diverse collection of archaeological structures, remained in place under a thick canopy of vegetation. Numerous stories, myths and legends related to real or cosmological landscapes, remain today. Combined with the knowledge passed down from generation to generation, these oral traditions express, a coherent body of information on the life of the *Ēnata* chiefdoms in all their dimensions, from the origins of the world to their relationship with the environment.

The area of the seven component parts totals 345 749 ha, with buffer zones totalling 6 841 ha.

State of conservation

The abandonment of ancient settlement sites has protected them from human activity and has allowed archaeological evidence to remain *in situ*. Starting in 1987, the organisation of the first *Matavaa* (the Festival of the Arts of the Marquesas Islands), gave rise to an interest in traditional places, linked to the desire of using authentic venues for such major cultural gatherings. Therefore, for the second *Matavaa* in 1989 in Nuku Hiva, two archaeological sites were restored: the *paepae* of Vaekehu in Taiohae (outside of the nominated property) and the *tohua* of Hikokua (within the nominated property). This mobilisation around the festivals triggered a scientific and cultural interest that was accompanied by the start of conservation campaigns in the 1980s, supported by the local authorities.

To some extent, the dense vegetation helps protect the archaeological remains. However, in certain circumstances, depending on how fast the vegetation grows, it can also cause damage through by collapsing or falling of part of the built structures. Yet, the removal of these roots is not necessarily a solution, as it can lead to the creation of voids threatening the stability of the

structure. In addition, clearing archaeological sites of vegetation exposes the stone structures, and in particular the lithic statuary and petroglyphs, to weathering effects; this was the case at Īpona (within the Hiva Oa-Tahuata component part), where all the vegetation was removed, exposing the *tiki* and causing them to deteriorate. On the other hand, from a visual point of view, the vegetation cover often presents an obstacle to the perception of the archaeological remains by the visitors.

The introduction of domesticated animals (especially goats) to uninhabited islands to provide food for occasional boats has led, in some cases, to the development of large herds allowed to roam freely, which has contributed to the damage to the archaeological remains. Soil erosion linked to over grazing can be aggravated by fire or the presence of invasive species such as the acacia (*Acacia farnesiana*). These small trees are widespread on the islands Eiao, Ua Pou and Nuku Hiva. As heliophilous pioneers, they can rapidly colonise open and degraded areas and form very dense canopies. At the same time, they lead to the total absence of undergrowth, causing significant run-off during rainy periods, leading to discrete but widespread erosion. ICOMOS notes that the component part of Eiao-Hatu Tu presents problems of erosion due to overgrazing by feral goats and the almost complete absence of vegetation.

The *Ēnata* cultural practices have suffered from the effects of modernisation. Changes in lifestyle and family structure affected the transmission and continuity of Indigenous knowledge. The loss or transformation of myths or beliefs through a decline in the use and mastery of the Marquesan language also contribute to changes in the perceptions and relationships between humans and their environment. The loss of Indigenous knowledge emerged as one of the greatest concerns for local communities during the nomination process.

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation of the nominated property is satisfactory. Many of the unrestored sites have shown that, although hidden in the jungle or amidst introduced vegetation, most have appropriate levels of archaeological integrity, with some stones dislodged by tree roots and other natural processes, but no serious irreversible damage at this stage.

Factors affecting the nominated property

Based on the information provided by the State Party and the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, ICOMOS considers that the main factors affecting the nominated property, as a cultural heritage property, are invasive species, erosion linked to the presence of feral animals, potential natural disasters (notably tsunamis), and the effects of climate change (i.e. incremental sea-level rise and increasingly frequent and more prolonged droughts).

ICOMOS notes that the most serious current problem related to invasive species is posed by the acacia, which regenerates extremely densely following what seems to

be total die-off during extended dry periods. There are extensive areas of acacia infestation which, from a distance, may appear to be completely dead following a long drought, but which, on closer examination, reveal vigorous regrowth at ground level. At present, none of the archaeological sites in the nominated component parts is threatened with serious irreversible damage by acacia or other invasive plants, but this is a factor that requires constant monitoring.

Droughts in combination with feral animal activity is more problematic. The lack of water can encourage feral animals to move closer to archaeological sites, most of which are close to water sources. At present, feral animals – including goats, which cause considerable damage in some areas – appear to have limited direct impact on the archaeological sites, as most of them are massive constructions or, in the case of petroglyphs, form part of large blocks of basalt and are therefore, in both cases, are resistant to current feral animal activity.

Natural disasters, particularly tsunamis, are not a constant threat, as most archaeological sites are located well inland partly for this reason. Today, they are further protected from the sea by the presence of modern villages. Thus, while tsunamis and other unpredictable natural phenomena remain factors likely to affect the nominated property, the measures that managers can take to exercise effective control over these phenomena are limited.

The impacts of climate change, which can already be observed and are likely to increase in the future, are linked to the slow rise in sea level and, in the nearer future, to increasingly frequent and prolonged droughts. Unless there is an unforeseen natural disaster producing a sudden and extreme rise, it is unlikely that sea-level rise will cause serious irreversible damage to coastal sites (e.g. dune sites and house platforms of fishermen) anytime soon. Droughts should have limited negative impact on the stone structures and petroglyphs thanks to the dense basalt stones that are highly resistant to damage caused by natural phenomena specific to the tropics (i.e. no freezing/thawing cycles). Increased dryness might help preserve the built fabric by inhibiting biological activity such as lichen growth on the stone. This is a particular concern with *tiki* and petroglyphs. However, drought can have an impact on stone structures and petroglyphs by reducing protective vegetation cover which increases wind and rain erosion.

The impact of urban and other development is limited because the Marquesas Islands are very isolated and sparsely populated. Fires set for personal use or accidental fires are a periodic risk. Almost all the inhabitants of the archipelago are concentrated in the few small modern villages on each island and especially in the two main (but still very small) towns: Taiohae on Nuku Hiva; and the “second capital” Atuona, on Hiva Oa. They are both located outside the nominated property. At present, pressures from tourism are low. The total annual tourist load from all sources across all islands is only

about 10,000 people (slightly more than the total population of the Marquesas Islands).

ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation is satisfactory and that factors affecting the nominated property are invasive species, erosion linked to the presence of feral animals, potential natural disasters (notably tsunamis) and the impacts of climate change (i.e., gradual sea level rise and increasingly frequent and prolonged droughts).

3 Proposed justification for inscription

Proposed justification

The nominated property is considered by the State Party to be of Outstanding Universal Value as a cultural property for the following reasons:

- The nominated property shows the extraordinary adaptability of a Polynesian society that arrived by sea around the year 1000 CE on one of the most isolated archipelagos of high islands with steep valleys in the world.
- The topographical and climatic constraints of the Marquesas Islands led the *Ēnata* to build two-storey lithic platforms in dry masonry (*paepae*) on the slopes of the steep valleys. This type of construction is unique in the world and characterises a culture and a know-how of a human society that has adapted to its environment.
- Despite the demographic shock and acculturation to European contact, an important corpus of myths, legends and historical accounts, combined with the knowledge transmitted from generation to generation, represent a coherent set of information on the life of the *Ēnata* chiefdoms in all their dimensions, from the origins of the world to their relationship with the environment.

Based on the nomination dossier and the additional information, the key attributes of the nominated property can be grouped as follows: the built elements bearing testimony to the way of life of the *Ēnata* as well as to their adaptation to a challenging natural environment and to the limitations of available construction materials and to their artistic expressions (i.e. *paepae*, *tohua*, *tohua and mēae*, *tiki*, petroglyphs, dry-stone walls, defensive structures); the location, distribution and patterns of those built elements within the territory and all other elements allowing an understanding of the territorial occupation within deep steep-sided valleys, and from the sea to the tops of the mountains, as well as land-use and settlement structure; the built and natural features expressing the social organisation of the *Ēnata* in clans or chiefdoms and the area or extension of the territory associated with it; the natural features associated with the settlement patterns (i.e. the rivers, endemic as well as introduced species); the myths, beliefs, oral traditions and other information sources about the past way of life of the *Ēnata*.

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis as presented in the nomination dossier is structured into two main parts. ICOMOS notes that the annexes provided with the nomination dossier include three additional documents with information pertaining to the comparative analysis, which together total 183 pages. ICOMOS analysis presented here refers mainly to the way in which the comparative analysis is included in the nomination dossier, even though the information included in the annexes has also been considered.

The first part of the analysis compares the nominated property with other Austronesian chiefdoms in the Pacific and Southeast Asia region. This region is considered to be the contextual geo-cultural area of the Austronesian migration that populated all the Pacific islands, including the Marquesas archipelago. Therefore, these islands are considered to share a common cultural background. This part of the comparative analysis considers a total of twenty-one heritage places, of which seven are inscribed on the World Heritage List: Taputapuātea (France, 2017, criteria (iii), (iv) and (vi)); Papahānaumokuākea (United States of America, 2010, criteria (iii), (vi), (viii), (ix) and (x)); Rapa Nui National Park (Chile, 1995, criteria (i), (iii) and (v)); Nan Madol: Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia (Micronesia (Federated States of), 2016, criteria (i), (iii), (iv) and (vi)); Rock Islands Southern Lagoon (Palau, 2012, criteria (iii), (v), (vii), (ix) and (x)); Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the *Subak* System as a Manifestation of the *Tri Hita Karana* Philosophy (Indonesia, 2012, criteria (iii), (v) and (vi)); and Chief Roi Mata's Domain (Vanuatu, 2008, criteria (iii), (v) and (vi)). In addition, three heritage places included in Tentative Lists and eleven not belonging to either of these lists were also examined.

The second part of the comparative analysis compares the Marquesas Islands mainly with other forms of island settlement in the world, but also takes into account isolated societies on mainland territories. For this part of the comparative analysis, a total of twenty-three places were identified, of which eighteen are inscribed on the World Heritage List and five are not.

Both parts of the comparative analysis do not examine in detail the nominated property against each of the identified comparators but present generalised comparisons based the following parameters: human organisation and living spaces; monumental residential architecture; ceremonial architecture; lithic statuary; petroglyphs; and oral tradition. A significant part of the comparisons is presented using supporting tables, providing a short description of each of the identified comparators and a simple indication of whether they include (or not) the established parameters. General narratives summarising how the nominated property differentiates or stands out against the identified comparators based on the parameters identified are then presented. The conclusions of both parts of the comparative analysis are then resumed in a summary table.

ICOMOS notes that the information included in the section relative to the comparative analysis within the nomination dossier does not include the necessary information regarding the selection of component parts, which can be found in the annexes of the nomination dossier.

Despite this point and taking into account that the nominated property is proposed as a mixed property, ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis presents a structured approach that clearly explains the rationale and the selection of the seven component parts. ICOMOS also considers that the comparative analysis outlines the reasons that make the nominated property stand out in terms of the geo-cultural area (e.g. Polynesia) as an exceptional testimony of the way of life and building traditions of the *Ēnata*, of their interaction with the environment, and of their territorial occupation of the Marquesas Islands – one of the most remote archipelagos in the world – until the 19th century, when French colonisation led to important social, cultural and demographic changes.

ICOMOS considers that the comparative analysis justifies consideration of this property for the World Heritage List.

Criteria under which inscription is proposed

The property is nominated on the basis of cultural criteria (iii), (iv) and (vi) and natural criteria (vii), (ix) and (x).

Criterion (iii): *bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the nominated property shows the extraordinary adaptability of a Polynesian society, that arrived by sea around the year 1000 CE, to one of the most isolated archipelagos of high islands with steep valleys in the world. This society flourished until its first contact with the Europeans. The territorial, spatial, social and spiritual organisation of this society is considered by the State Party to be illustrated by the richness, diversity, concentration and monumental character of the architectural structures built within the valleys.

ICOMOS considers that evidence of the organised character and distinctive qualities of the *Ēnata*, as a society or civilisation, over many centuries, is clearly found in the nominated property. As a whole, the serial nominated property provides an exceptional testimony to their territorial occupation of the Marquesas archipelago, to their adaptation to a challenging natural environment and to the limitations of available construction materials, to their patterns of settlement within deep steep-sided valleys as well as to their social and spiritual organisation in chiefdoms. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that this criterion has been justified.

Criterion (iv): *be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that the topographical and climatic constraints of the Marquesas Islands led the *Ēnata* to build two-storey lithic platforms in dry masonry (*paepae*) – both for domestic dwellings and ceremonial architecture – on the slopes of the steep valleys, which can be up to six meters high. The State Party considers that this type of construction is unique in the world and characterises a culture and a know-how of a human society that has adapted to its environment.

ICOMOS notes that, in the comparative analysis, the State Party acknowledges that stone platforms were widely used throughout the Polynesian region. ICOMOS considers that the justification provided by the State Party mainly distinguishes the *paepae* within the nominated property from similar types of construction within the identified comparators for two main reasons: its use both by the elites as well as by common people and the construction in two levels. ICOMOS considers that none of these reasons is sufficient to justify why the *paepae* should be considered an outstanding type of building or construction in terms of its construction techniques, form, design or use of materials.

ICOMOS also notes that the justification of this criterion requires that the nominated property must in some way demonstrate that it is associated with a defining moment or moments – or significant stage(s) in human history. The nominated property may have been prompted by that moment, or may reflect its impact. ICOMOS considers that the nominated property reflects largely a long timeframe ranging from the arrival of the first inhabitants between 900 and 1000 CE and the decline of the *Ēnata* civilisation after the colonisation of the islands by Europeans settlers in the 19th century. Hence, the development of the nominated property occurred over centuries and cannot be said to have been driven by the events of a specific historical period, particularly when it is unclear when the construction of the *paepae* became widespread.

ICOMOS considers that on its own, this criterion has not been justified. However, it considers that some of the justifications provided can be incorporated into the justification of criterion (iii) and enrich the understanding of the nominated property as an exceptional example of the way of life and building traditions of the *Ēnata*, in one of the most remote archipelagos in the world.

Criterion (vi): *be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;*

This criterion is justified by the State Party on the grounds that, despite the demographic shock and acculturation to European contact, oral literature has preserved many

stories about real and cosmological landscapes through the writings of the first visitors and the first ethnographic work carried out in the late 19th century. Combined with the knowledge transmitted from generation to generation, today these collections represent an important corpus of myths, legends and historical accounts expressing, in an implicit way, information on the life of the *Ēnata* in all their dimensions, from the origins of the world to their relationship with the environment.

ICOMOS notes that the starting point for justifying this criterion must be that the events, traditions, ideas, beliefs, artistic or literary works are of outstanding universal significance. Then the way these events, traditions, ideas, beliefs, artistic or literary works are demonstrated directly or tangibly in the nominated property needs to be clearly set out. First, ICOMOS notes that the justifications provided for criteria (iii) and (iv) reflect a timeframe largely between the 10th and the 19th century and to an understanding of the *Ēnata* as a civilisation, whose way of life has largely disappeared. The built areas included within the nominated property are now considered mainly as archaeological sites and are no longer used as living places. Nor are there current traditional practices specifically associated with those archaeological sites.

ICOMOS notes that in the summary table presenting the conclusions of the comparative analysis, the State Party acknowledges that the oral traditions share a common background with all Pacific islands. ICOMOS also considers that present day myths, legends and beliefs are related to the whole territory of the Marquesas Islands and are not directly and tangibly expressed by the attributes of the nominated property, in a substantial way. ICOMOS therefore concludes that this criterion has not been justified. However, as for criterion (iv), ICOMOS considers that some of the arguments presented in this criterion are best placed under the justification of criterion (iii).

ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets cultural criterion (iii) but that criteria (iv) and (vi) have not been demonstrated. However, some of the justifications provided for the latter criteria can enrich the justification of criterion (iii).

Integrity and authenticity

Integrity

Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the nominated property and its attributes. For a serial property this must be analysed at two levels: at the component part level and for the nominated property as a whole.

The delineation of the boundaries of the component parts is linked with the territorial occupation of the valleys. For the most part, the component parts include almost the entirety of the valley from the coast to the ridge lines. The major rivers associated with the valleys are included within the area of the component parts because they form

the axis linking the mountains and valley bottoms to the sea, as well for their functional and spiritual importance.

While most of the main archaeological sites are known, the lack of a complete inventory of the archaeological remains for the whole territory of the Marquesas Islands, makes it difficult to evaluate whether there are areas which, in the light of future research possibilities, should be included within the nominated property.

Based on information included in the nominating dossier and collected during the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, there are stone structures, defensive ditches, food storage pits and other features, including planted food trees and other useful plants, that are reported or suspected in remote high-altitude areas. Some of these areas are very hard to reach on foot but during the technical evaluation mission were occasionally detectable using binoculars at lower elevations. Some of the structures included there were built as refuges for times of traditional warfare.

ICOMOS also notes that the delineation of the component parts is largely influenced by the need to protect the natural values of the nominated property. This is particularly evident in the component part of Ua Huka, which includes only marine areas. However, those areas are not affected by adverse effects of neglect or development that could pose a threat to the conditions of integrity of nominated property from a cultural heritage perspective.

The eight valleys included in the nominated property are considered to be the most notable for the density and size of the lithic remains. ICOMOS considers that the rationale for the selection of the component parts and how each contributes to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property as a whole in a substantial, scientific, readily defined, and discernible way is sufficiently explained in the nomination dossier. Together, the seven component parts provide a full representation of the way of life of the *Ēnata* and of the social, spatial, and functional links associated with their territorial occupation of the Marquesas Islands.

ICOMOS considers that the archaeological sites included in the nominated component parts exhibit satisfactory integrity. Overall, the nominated property does not suffer from adverse effects of development, especially since the Marquesas Islands are extremely remote and large areas of the nominated property have limited transport and other infrastructure, owing to the low population numbers and vertiginous terrain.

ICOMOS considers that the integrity of the whole series as well as the integrity of each of the component parts has been demonstrated.

Authenticity

Most archaeological remains within the nominated property have not been subject to past interventions and are unrestored. Although not in a pristine state as is to be expected, they are entirely authentic in form, design, materials and substance. ICOMOS considers that the majority of the archaeological sites, at least those at lower elevations, are known to researchers, heritage managers and the owners of the land on which they occur, but generally not by the wider local population. The spirit and feeling of the places where the archaeological remains are located, and their representation of their ancestral activity are still very strongly felt by present day Marquesans.

The restoration of some archaeological sites, some of which was motivated by the Matavaa festival, has been for the most part carried out under the supervision of professionals. Based on information gathered by the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, some interventions have required informed creative judgement about the placement of certain *tiki* or the building of protective measures such as shelters for vulnerable *tiki* and petroglyphs. This is most obviously the case at the iconic *mēae* lipona on Hiva Oa. Overall, all restorations adhere to the original form, design, materials and substance of the sites, albeit sometimes with unobtrusive modern toilets discretely located on their peripheries. A handful of concrete blocks representing the pieces of sacred red volcanic tuff used in specific parts of *tohua* and *mēae* are included in the *tohua* Mauia on Ua Pou and the *tohua* Upeke on Hiva Oa. In both cases, this was because of the difficulty in acquiring the sacred tuff and the limited resources available for the restorations. Local people and heritage managers know about these substitutions, which are clearly identified in the nomination dossier and were openly drawn to the attention of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission. The colour of the concrete approximates that of the tuff, but the replacement blocks look like concrete rather than the distinctive tuff and there is no attempt to pass them off as original.

ICOMOS considers that the authenticity of the whole series as well as the authenticity of each of the component parts has been demonstrated.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that both the conditions of integrity and authenticity of the whole series and of the individual component parts have been met.

Boundaries

The nomination dossier explains in detail how the boundaries of the component parts have been delineated and the parameters used. From a cultural heritage perspective, the boundaries of the component parts in inhabited islands were initially delineated in relation to the valleys formerly occupied by the *Ēnata* chiefdoms. Within these valleys, the major rivers are also located in the nominated property because of their functional and spiritual importance. They form the axis linking the mountains and valley bottoms to the coast and the sea. These initial

boundaries were then adjusted to the boundaries of the General Development Plans (PGAs) for the islands of Nuku Hiva, Ua Pou and Hiva Oa in order to follow as closely as possible what is today the only reference document in terms of planning and development.

As for the delineation of the boundaries of the component parts in uninhabited islands, for the marine areas, the perimeter has been set at three nautical miles from the coast to take into account the slope of the volcanic plateau of the islands forming the seven component parts of the nominated property. From a cultural point of view, this delineation of the coastal marine area is said to be consistent with the practices and customs of the ancient *Ēnata* chiefdoms. The geomorphology of the islands made it difficult to travel by land between valleys, therefore movements by sea were favoured. Oral tradition attests to the links maintained between chiefdoms and the maritime journeys.

The nomination dossier also explains that the delineation of the buffer zones is the result of a two-step process. First through the identification of threats, of which the most important were considered to be fires, human activities, and feral animals. Several zoning areas were then identified, depending on the uses, desired practices, and function of the areas concerned. Those zoning areas were organised in different typologies according to the following aspects: forestry; agriculture and livestock; landscape protection (aimed at protecting viewpoints) and visitor reception areas; and urbanisation and development (for instance, to address issues related to the construction of infrastructure close to the nominated property).

As already mentioned previously, ICOMOS considers that the delineation of the boundaries of the nominated property and that of the buffer zones are largely based on the needs to identify and protect the natural values. This is particularly evident from the fact that the component part of Ua Huka is included in the nominated property exclusively for its marine area, which does not contribute to the proposed Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property from a cultural perspective. The component part of Eiao-Hatu Tu includes only a few remains of small *paepae* dwellings and modest ceremonial structures. Likewise, the archaeological remains in Fatu Uku Island are scarce and their function is largely unknown. In addition, certain areas have not yet been the object of a truly exhaustive survey or detailed archaeological inventory.

ICOMOS acknowledges the difficulties in delineating the boundaries for a serial mixed nominated property. While the boundaries proposed seem to have been largely influenced by the natural values of the nominated property, there are no areas included within its perimeter that pose problems in relation to the conditions of integrity and authenticity from a cultural heritage perspective. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries of the nominated property and its buffer zones are adequate.

Evaluation of the proposed justification for inscription

In summary, ICOMOS considers that the nominated property justifies consideration for inscription on the World Heritage List under criterion (iii). While criteria (iv) and (vi) are considered not to be justified on their own, certain aspects of their respective justification help reinforce the justification of criterion (iii). Taking into account that Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands is nominated as a mixed property, ICOMOS considers that the boundaries proposed are adequate. Hence, the integrity of the nominated property, as defined by the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, is demonstrated. Conditions of authenticity are also met.

4 Conservation measures and monitoring

Documentation

The lack of inventories and documentation about some areas of the nominated property has already been noted and is acknowledged by the State Party in the nomination dossier. Whereas the main archaeological sites are said to be known, some archaeological remains have not been subject to adequate inventory processes, especially those located in areas which are difficult to access.

ICOMOS also noted that the first strategic objective of the management plan submitted with the nomination dossier is “to improve the knowledge and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage”. Within this objective, action 14.5 defines that the inventory of archaeological sites in the nominated property is to continue until 2039.

In its interim report, ICOMOS asked the State Party how the inventory process was envisaged, and how it would be linked with the designation under the Heritage Code of the main archaeological sites included in the nominated property. Questions were also asked on the development of the General Development Plan (see section on management system below).

In the additional information provided in February 2024, the State Party reiterated its intention to complete the inventory process – in multiple phases – by 2039, as expected in the management plan. A list of the sites to be given priority until 2026 was provided, along with the expected budget available to cover the inventory campaigns. However, ICOMOS notes some discrepancies between the programme for inventory campaigns and the calendar in the provisional expected budget to do so. The State Party also included information on the provisional budget to carry out restoration campaigns in some of the archaeological sites between 2025 and 2035.

ICOMOS considers that the additional information provides some clarity on the overall intentions of the State Party to move forward with the inventory process. However, ICOMOS stresses the importance of

articulating this process with the designation under the Heritage Code of all the main archaeological sites located in the nominated property, with the development of the General Development Plan, as well as with other processes being undertaken in relation to the natural values of the nominated property. ICOMOS understands the complexity of articulating those processes simultaneously and that some of these will require considerable time. Therefore, ICOMOS considers that a clearer and more detailed roadmap to complete those processes is needed. ICOMOS also considers that further efforts are needed to complete the inventory and designation processes in a shorter period of time than the one currently proposed: based on the additional information, these processes are expected to last more than a decade.

Conservation measures

There is currently no ongoing programmatic management of the archaeological sites within the nominated property beyond continuing inventory projects associated with scientific research or impact mitigation. Restored sites are monitored by heritage management authorities and actively maintained by local communities (though some more frequently than others).

ICOMOS notes that there is very limited funding for heritage management and maintenance in general. Most of the latter work is voluntary, undertaken particularly in connection with *Matavaa* festival, but in some instances, tourists are charged small entry fees which help support upkeep.

In the additional information provided in February 2024, the State Party included some details about the provisional budget to undertake restorations campaigns between 2025 and 2035. ICOMOS considers that the budget proposed is modest but is likely sufficient to cover basic needs since there are no major conservation issues requiring urgent attention, if complemented by regular maintenance work. Therefore, ICOMOS advises to establish a regular maintenance programme for the archaeological sites, particularly those open to the public.

Monitoring

For cultural heritage, the monitoring programme included in the nomination dossier distinguishes two categories of sites: so-called ‘pilot sites’ considered to be the most important or that are open to visitors; and ‘reserve sites’, which refer to lesser known sites, often difficult to access and which are protected by the vegetation cover.

The identification of monitoring indicators is defined in relation to the groups of attributes of the nominated property defined by the State Party as: the valley and its organisation from the top of the ridges to the coast and the sea; the artistic stylistics and monumental lithic arts (*tiki* and petroglyphs); the domestic architecture; the ceremonial architecture (*tohua* and *mèae*); and oral tradition.

ICOMOS considers that the distinction between what is defined as an indicator and what are called 'details' is unclear. ICOMOS considers that the monitoring programme should be revised to define a clear set of indicators, what methods are to be used to collect data in relation to those indicators (e.g., sampling, interviews, surveys, observations). ICOMOS also advises to base the monitoring programme in a well-established baseline, against which changes can be identified, as well to identify indicator thresholds that clearly define when action is needed.

ICOMOS notes the separation of the monitoring programmes for the nominated property from a cultural and natural heritage perspective, and the institutional division associated with it (i.e., divided between the Department for Culture and Heritage and the Department for the Environment). While ICOMOS understands the logic and practicalities of separating certain aspects of the monitoring programme, it considers that a common database to group the data collected is needed, to gather a clear overview of state of conservation of the nominated property as a whole and as a mixed property, with interconnected cultural and natural values. Hence, it recommends that the Management Coordination Unit – the main institution responsible for managing the nominated property – be made responsible for managing such database.

Overall, ICOMOS considers that the monitoring programme should be strengthened.

ICOMOS considers that further efforts are needed to complete the full inventory of all the archaeological remains within the nominated property, which should also document the state of conservation of the recorded sites, as a basis to identify needed conservation actions. In ICOMOS' view, this process should be completed in a shorter period than currently proposed (currently expected to take place until 2039). A programme for regular maintenance for the archaeological sites, particularly those open to the public, should also be put in place. The monitoring programme must be based on a clearly-defined and easy-to-measure set of indicators and supported by a data information system, allowing to group data collected by different institutions. Overall, ICOMOS considers that the monitoring programme should be revised to reflect the interconnections between the cultural and natural values of the nominated property and to enable the use of the data collected to inform management decisions based on the understanding of the state of conservation of the nominated property as a whole.

ICOMOS also considers that it would be advisable that the monitoring system is adapted for easy integration of its outcomes into the Periodic Reporting questionnaire.

5 Protection and management

Legal protection

The legal protection of cultural heritage in the Marquesas Islands is ensured by the Loi de Pays n°2015-10 of 19 November 2015, which comprises a Heritage Code of French Polynesia, of which Book VI relates to historic monuments, sites and protected spaces. The aim of this law is to increase the levels of legal protection for major archaeological sites in French Polynesia.

Only a few sites within the nominated property have been designated as cultural heritage sites under decree no. 865 a.p.a. of 23 June 1952: the *tohua* Naniuhi in the Hatiheu valley (Nuku Hiva); the *tohua* Pohaoupao and the entrenched camp of Anaotako in the Hakaui valley (Nuku Hiva); the *tohua* Upeke and *meàe* Pata in the Taaoa valley (Hiva Oa); the *meàe* Ìpona in the Puamau valley (Hiva Oa); and the Hanavave valley (Fatu Iva). Certain areas of the nominated property are legally protected under the Environment Code. In addition, the nomination dossier explains that certain heritage protections are also offered by the existing General Development Plans (*Plans généraux d'aménagement* or PGAs) covering parts of the islands of Nuku Hiva, Ua Pou and Hiva Oa. These plans, created under the national French Polynesian Planning Code, are currently limited in scope as well as geographical coverage.

In the additional information provided in November 2023, the State Party notified ICOMOS about the decision taken by the six communes – one in each of the main inhabited islands – to develop a single PGA for the whole archipelago. In its interim report, ICOMOS enquired about the expected timetable for the development, approval and start of the implementation of this plan. In addition, the State Party was asked to clarify how that planning instrument could support an integrated approach to the protection of the cultural and natural heritage.

The State Party informed ICOMOS that the development and approval of the PGA was expected to be completed by the end of 2025. It also clarified that, although the plan cannot directly integrate cultural and natural heritage protection, it offers a tool to integrate different public policies related to construction, agriculture, energy, and natural resource exploitation.

The State Party also submitted an order (*arrêté* n°134/CM of 9 February 2024) stating its commitment to designate five additional archaeological sites under the Heritage Code within the next five years. No further information was provided as to when the other archaeological sites, either considered as "pilot" or part of the "reserve" are expected to be designated.

ICOMOS appreciates the assurances of the State Party to continue with the designation process to fully recognise the cultural significance of the archaeological sites and ensure their legal protection. However, ICOMOS reiterates that the designation process needs to be clearly articulated with the ongoing inventory processes and the development of the

General Development Plan. In addition, since the expected timeframe for the designation process of each of the five sites identified is linked with the documentation of their state of conservation, ICOMOS considers that this process must also be considered in relation to its recommendation to strengthen the monitoring programme.

Therefore, ICOMOS considers that at present, the legal protection of the nominated property is weak – particularly when other instruments that could complement the protection, such as the General Development Plan, are still under development. ICOMOS also notes that the designation of the main archaeological sites under the Heritage Code addresses essentially the main physical attributes of the nominated property but that its proposed Outstanding Universal Value is deeply linked with the territorial occupation of the valleys and their spatial organisation. Hence, rules and regulations at the landscape level are critical. The development of General Development Plan is fundamental in this regard, as well as for management purposes towards the buffer zones.

ICOMOS recommends that any future designations of areas within the nominated property as protected areas for their natural values take into consideration the cultural values of those areas as well.

Management system

The shared governance of the nominated property and its buffer zones is entrusted to a management committee, co-chaired by the French Polynesian Minister for Culture, the Environment and Marine Resources (MCE), and the President of CODIM – *Communauté de communes des îles Marquises* (Community of Mayors of the Marquesas Islands). Daily management is delegated to the coordination unit, responsible for implementing the management plan, centralising information and coordinating action, and leading the network of six World Heritage local associations (one per island), among other tasks. The coordinator of the Unit will be employed and based at CODIM and will be supported by a coordinator (*coordonateur Pays*), based in Tahiti, who is responsible for mobilising the various technical departments. In addition, the Management Coordination Unit can call upon the services of the Department for the Environment (DIREN) and the Department for Culture and Heritage (DCP).

In a letter requesting additional information sent in October 2023, ICOMOS enquired about the legal status and powers of the coordination unit namely to enforce rules and regulations, to request technical support from other institutions or to revise the management plan. The State Party confirmed that the unit is already in place and confirmed it is funded until 2026. However, ICOMOS considers that the explanations provided did not fully address ICOMOS' concerns regarding the powers of the coordination unit. ICOMOS also noted that the nomination dossier includes limited information about the available human and financial resources for the unit to operate. Based on the information obtained during the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, at that point, the unit was only composed of the coordinator and an assistant. ICOMOS

considers that human capacity is limited – especially in light of the high number and complexity of the actions included in the management plan that the unit will be responsible for implementing – and should be reinforced.

ICOMOS considers that the management plan, while well structured, is quite ambitious in terms of scope and timeframe (2024-2039). It is structured around three strategic objectives, declined into eleven operational objectives, twenty-four so-called actions, and almost a hundred of so-called operations. The implementation of those operations is dependent on a diversity of actors. ICOMOS considers that effective implementation of the management plan will require considerable coordination between those actors, as well as considerable oversight by the coordination unit, especially when the management plan is not a legally binding instrument. Therefore, ICOMOS recommends that the role, responsibilities, and institutional powers of the coordination unit are clearly defined and documented. ICOMOS also recommends establishing institutional agreements or protocols between the different actors responsible for implementing the management plan, especially between the coordination unit, the DCP and the DIREN to ensure collaboration regarding different management processes, namely the implementation of the management plan but also the monitoring of the state of conservation of the nominated property, and the inventory process.

The timeframe of the management plan covers a fifteen-year period, which means that parts of it are essentially of a strategic nature. Therefore, ICOMOS recommends that the implementation of management plan is facilitated through and complemented with the development of annual, biennial or even triennial work plans.

ICOMOS considers that the development of the General Development Plan must take into account the content of the management plan. It is important that these two planning instruments, although of a different nature and scope, are well integrated and that their provisions are complementary.

Visitor management

Due to the archipelago's isolation, the Marquesas are far from main tourist routes. With less than 10,000 visitors a year, tourism is not a negative factor at present. Based on information included in the nomination dossier, Nuku Hiva and Hiva Oa are the most popular islands. Visitors, particularly cruise passengers, are very often accompanied by a local guide. The direct pressures from tourism are mainly limited to wastewater discharge, waste management in the archipelago and the pressures associated with the flow of tourists visiting the main cultural sites. Tourists may at times visit or come in touch with archaeological sites that are not open to the public, while hiking or horse riding.

Based on the observations of the ICOMOS technical evaluation mission, only some of the main archaeological sites have information/interpretation panels, generally modest. Most archaeological sites in the nominated

property are not presented or interpreted at all. ICOMOS considers that it is important to strengthen interpretation and visitor management in general. In addition, if the nominated property were to be inscribed on the World Heritage List as a mixed property, ICOMOS considers that the interconnected character of the cultural and natural values of the nominated property should play a central role in interpretation strategies. While ICOMOS considers that criterion (vi) has not been justified on its own, as stipulated above, the oral tradition, myths, legends and historical accounts related to the nominated property and the Marquesas Islands in general should equally be included in the interpretation of the nominated property.

Community involvement

World Heritage associations have been established in all six communes and there have been and continue to be public information sessions, workshops, and regular calls for questions regarding the nomination. Community groups (i.e. adults, youth, children) are aware of the nomination process, largely because of continuing outreach programmes.

ICOMOS considers that the inclusion of the local World Heritage associations in the governance arrangements for the nominated property is commendable and that the State Party should ensure their rights are respected and their voice heard during decision-making processes.

ICOMOS also notes the additional information provided by the State Party in November 2023 about the *kahui*, a customary instrument for community-based management of mainly natural resources. ICOMOS recommends that the State Party gives due consideration as to how the more formal public administration aspects of the management system could be strengthened by customary practices. ICOMOS also recommends that local communities are empowered and provided with the necessary resources to actively engage in the protection and management of the nominated property.

Effectiveness of the protection and management of the nominated property

ICOMOS considers that, at present, the legislative and regulatory measures for the protection of the nominated property are weak. However, ICOMOS notes that the extent and severity of the factors affecting the nominated property are currently limited. The State Party is putting measures in place to reinforce the legal protection within a period of three to five years. ICOMOS also notes that the State Party has provided legal documents which prove that those measures are already under way.

Existing complementary measures for the buffer zones must be strengthened. The development of the General Development Plan is fundamental in this regard.

Governance arrangements are well conceived but are untested and some elements must be reinforced. Coordination between different institutions is key to ensure the implementation of the management plan and it is essential to ensure that the coordination unit has the necessary capacity and powers to fulfil its mandate as the

main operational body to manage the nominated property and the buffer zones.

ICOMOS considers that if the nominated property were to be included in the World Heritage List as a mixed property, it is fundamental that the management system reflects the interconnected character of the cultural and natural values of the nominated property. This requires integrated approaches at the technical, institutional and policy levels. In summary, ICOMOS considers that the existing protection and management mechanisms are sufficient to address current management challenges and that the State Party is undertaking measures to strengthen the management system in the short- and medium-term.

6 Conclusion

Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands bears an exceptional testimony of the territorial occupation of the Marquesas archipelago by the *Ēnata* (human beings in Marquesan), between the 10th and the 19th centuries, to their adaptation to a challenging natural environment and to the limitations of available construction materials, to their patterns of settlement within deep steep-sided valleys as well as to their social and spiritual organisation in chiefdoms. However, ICOMOS considers that the two-storey lithic platforms in dry masonry (*paepae*) – used both for domestic dwellings and ceremonial architecture – cannot be considered as representing an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble which illustrates a significant stage in human history. Stone platforms were widely used throughout the Polynesian region and the evidence provided does not justify why the *paepae* can be considered an outstanding type of building or construction in terms of its construction techniques, form, design or use of materials. In addition, the development of the nominated property occurred over centuries and cannot be said to have been driven by the events of a specific historical period, particularly when it is unclear when the construction of the *paepae* became widespread. ICOMOS considers that some of the arguments presented under criterion (iv) are best used to strengthen the justification of criterion (iii).

ICOMOS also considers that criterion (vi) is not justified. As concluded by the State Party in the comparative analysis, the oral traditions of the Marquesas Islands share a common background with all Pacific islands. In addition, ICOMOS notes that the justifications for criteria (iii) and (iv) reflect a timeframe largely between the 10th and 19th centuries and to the testimony of a society whose way of life largely disappeared, as a result of the violent demographic decline following European contact, and which led to the abandonment of ancient settlement sites. These sites are now considered mainly as archaeological sites and are no longer used as living places. Nor are there current traditional practices specifically associated with the archaeological sites located within the nominated property. The present-day myths, legends and beliefs relate to the whole territory of the Marquesas Islands and

are not directly and tangibly expressed by the attributes of the nominated property. Like for criterion (iv), ICOMOS considers that some of the arguments presented for the justification of criterion (vi) are best placed under the justification of criterion (iii).

ICOMOS considers that the state of conservation of the nominated property is satisfactory and that the boundaries of the nominated property and of the buffer zones are adequate, considering that the property is nominated as a mixed property.

The basic elements of the management system are in place but some aspects need to be reinforced. ICOMOS considers that all main archaeological sites located in the nominated property need to be designated under the Heritage Code and that the complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on the use and development in the buffer zones must be strengthened. The completion of the General Development Plan, applicable to the entire territory of the six communes is a priority and must be completed by 2025, as envisaged by the State Party.

Governance arrangements must also be reinforced in two ways. First, the mandate, powers and technical capacity of the coordination unit must be strengthened so that it can effectively act as the main institution responsible for the daily management of the nominated property. Second, collaboration between different institutions is essential to effectively manage the mixed nominated property and institutional arrangements requiring sharing of information and joint decision-making should be reinforced. Collaboration between the coordination unit, the Department for Culture and Heritage (DCP) and the Department for the Environment (DIREN) is essential, especially to ensure the implementation of the management plan and to effectively monitor the state of conservation of the nominated property.

The inventory process should be completed in a shorter timeframe than currently expected and should be clearly articulated with processes to designate the main archaeological sites (and not only those opened to the public) under the Heritage Code. ICOMOS considers that the State Party needs to formulate a detailed roadmap to complete both those processes, in conjunction with the development of the General Development Plan.

The implementation of the management plan will need to be closely monitored to be effective, given the complexity and high number of actions/operations it contains. Therefore, ICOMOS recommends that implementation is supported with the development of annual or biennial workplans as well as by mid-term reviews approximately every four to five years.

Overall, ICOMOS considers that integration of cultural and natural heritage is required in relation to all aspects of the management system for the nominated property to be effectively managed as a mixed property: recognition of the interconnected character of the cultural and natural values of the nominated property, identification of the

attributes that reflect that interconnected character, establishment of joint monitoring programme for the state of conservation, integrated interpretation and presentation of the cultural and natural significance of the nominated property.

In conclusion, ICOMOS considers that the nominated property meets all the necessary requirements to be included on the World Heritage List from a cultural heritage perspective.

7 Recommendations

ICOMOS recommends that the World Heritage Committee adopts the following draft recommendations, noting that this will be harmonised as appropriate with the draft recommendations of IUCN regarding their evaluation of this mixed site nomination under the natural criteria and included in the working document WHC/24/46.COM/8B.

Recommendations with respect to inscription

ICOMOS recommends that Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands, France, be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of cultural **criterion (iii)**.

Recommended Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

Located in the centre of the South Pacific Ocean, the Marquesas Islands are one of the most isolated archipelagos from any continent in the world. The geomorphology of the islands is largely characterised by steep mountains, dramatic cloud-draped peaks and precipitous cliffs, interspersed with deeply incised valleys. Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands is a serial property composed of seven component parts bearing an exceptional testimony to the territorial occupation of the Marquesas archipelago by a human civilisation that arrived by sea around the year 1000 and developed on these isolated islands until contact with Europeans and the annexation of the archipelago by France in 1842.

Throughout this period, the Ènata - "human beings" in Marquesan – were organised into chiefdoms and settled in the valleys, which, from the top of the ridges to the coast and the access to the sea, constitute the unit of spatial and symbolic organisation of the Ènata chiefdoms. Due to a demographic decline and the abandonment of the human settlements, the archaeological remains were maintained in place, and many are now enveloped in a thick forest cover.

Criterion (iii): Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands bears an exceptional testimony to the territorial occupation of the Marquesas archipelago by the Ènata between the 10th and the 19th centuries, to their adaptation to a challenging natural environment and to the limitations of available construction materials, to their patterns of settlement within deep steep-sided valleys as well as to their social and spiritual organisation in chiefdoms.

The topographical and climatic constraints of these volcanic islands led the Ènata to build two-storey lithic platforms in dry masonry (*paepae*) on the slopes of steep valleys, reaching heights of up to six metres, and used as the basis of both domestic and ceremonial architecture (*tohua* and *meàe*). This architectural richness and diversity, was accompanied by the development of an artistic expression very specific to the archipelago, combining sculpture (*tiki*) and engraving (petroglyphs) as evidence of the close relationship between human beings and their environment. The eight valleys included within the property are considered the most notable for the density and size of the lithic remains.

Integrity

The valley constituted the territorial unit of the chiefdoms, and the boundaries of the component parts of Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands reflects this by including the whole territory of the valley from the top of the ridges to the coastline and the adjacent marine area, except for of the modern settlement areas, which are included in the buffer zone.

Together, the seven component parts provide a full representation of the way of life of the Ènata and of the territorial, spatial, social and spiritual organisation of their societies until the 19th century. The abandonment of ancient settlement sites has protected them from human activity and has allowed archaeological evidence to remain *in situ*.

Only certain sites in the Hatiheu, Taaoa and Puamau valleys have been cleared and restored. The restoration of certain *tohua* for festivals (Matavaa) was an opportunity to return them to their original use as community squares for festivities and other gatherings. Most of the archaeological sites are protected by their isolation from modern human activity and by dense vegetation cover. However, the legibility and structural integrity of some of sites is affected by the growth of acacia and jambolana trees, with some stones dislodged by the tree roots and by erosion linked to the presence of feral animals.

The impacts of climate change, namely slow sea level rise and increasingly frequent and prolonged droughts, are already observed and are likely to increase in the future, along with other unforeseen consequences.

Authenticity

Most archaeological sites in Te Henua Enata – The Marquesas Islands have not been subject to past interventions and are unrestored. The sites are entirely authentic in form, design, materials and substance. Past restorations of some archaeological sites, some motivated by the Matavaa festival, have been for the most part carried out under the supervision of professionals.

The spirit and feeling of the places where the archaeological remains are located, and their representation of their ancestral activity, are still very strongly felt by present day Marquesans. Despite the demographic shock and subsequent acculturation to

European traditions and practices, the oral transmission of stories, myths and legends within families, combined with the writings of the first visitors and ethnographic work undertaken in the late 19th century, have helped maintain important knowledge about the history and social meanings of those places.

Protection and management requirements

The complete inventory of the archaeological remains and the designation of the main sites as historic monuments under the Polynesian Heritage Code is an overarching requirement for the protection and management of the property. The General Development Plan (PGA), applicable to the entire territory of the six communes of the Marquesas Islands, is essential to determine rules and regulations at the landscape level, both in the property and the buffer zones. Effective management planning must also be ensured through the integration of the provisions of the General Development Plan with those included in the management plan for the property.

The shared governance of the property and its buffer zones is led by a management committee, co-chaired by the French Polynesian Minister for Culture, the Environment and Marine Resources, and the President of CODIM – *Communauté de communes des îles Marquises* (Community of Mayors of the Marquesas Islands). The day-to-day management is delegated to the coordination unit, responsible for implementing the management plan, centralising information and coordinating action, and leading the network of six World Heritage local associations (one per island), among other tasks. Adequate financial and human resources is required for the coordination unit to fulfil its mandate and responsibilities.

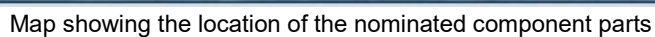
Regular maintenance and control of vegetation in the architectural sites is essential to prevent deterioration and structural damage as well as to deal with climatic hazards. Control and monitoring of invasive species, through measures to prevent their introduction and spread, early detection, and eradication is a common priority for the conservation of the cultural and natural values of the property. Measures to support sustainable agricultural areas adjacent to the property, to limit and contain fire outbreaks and to restrict the areas accessible to stray animals will enhance the conservation of the property.

Expectations for the long-term conservation and management of the mixed property depend on the integration of cultural and natural heritage across different elements of the management system: recognition of the interconnected character of the cultural and natural values of the property, identification of the attributes that reflect that interconnected character, establishment of joint monitoring programme for the state of conservation, integrated interpretation and presentation of the cultural and natural significance of the property, institutional collaboration and participatory decision-making processes. The effectiveness of such integrated management system should be assessed and improved over time.

Additional recommendations

ICOMOS further recommends that the State Party give consideration to the following:

- a) Complete the designation of all main archaeological sites within the property under the Heritage Code,
- b) Complete the inventory process within a shorter timeframe than expected and preferably by 2030,
- c) Make use of the inventory process to document the state of conservation of the recorded sites and identify needed conservation actions,
- d) Establish a regular maintenance programme for the archaeological sites, particularly those open to the public,
- e) Developed a detailed roadmap to complete the inventory and designation processes in an integrated way and link it with the development of the General Development Plan,
- f) Consider further strengthening action against invasive alien species, including through further funding,
- g) Consider in future the potential extension of the marine boundaries of the property to enhance coverage and protection of marine habitats,
- h) Strengthen complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on the use and development in the buffer zones,
- i) Complete the development and approve the General Development Plan by the end of 2025,
- j) Integrate the provisions of the General Development Plan to those of the management plan for the property and ensure that their provisions are complementary,
- k) Support the implementation of the management plan through the development of annual or biennial workplans as well as by mid-term reviews, approximately every four to five years,
- l) Strengthen the human capacity and institutional powers of the coordination unit to effectively fulfil its mandate as the main operational body to manage the property and the buffer zones,
- m) Strengthen and/or establish institutional agreements or protocols between the different actors responsible for implementing the management plan, especially between the coordination unit, the DCP and the DIREN,
- n) Enhance the monitoring programme for the state of conservation of the property and define an easy to use set of indicators (clearly linked with the attributes of the property), methods to be used to collect data in relation to those indicators, a well-established baseline against which changes on the conditions of the attributes can be identified, as well as indicator thresholds that clearly define when action is needed,
- o) Establish a common data management system, as part of the monitoring programme, to group the data collected by different institutions, in order to gather a clear overview of state of conservation of the property as a whole, and as a mixed property, and use it to inform integrated management decisions,
- p) Ensure the participation of the local World Heritage associations in management and decision-making processes and that their rights are respected, and their voice heard, during such processes,
- q) Give further consideration as to how the more formal public administration aspects of the management system could be strengthened by customary practices and instruments such as the *kahui* and the *tapu*,
- r) Establish integrated approaches for the interpretation and presentation of the property that recognize the interconnected character of its cultural and natural values, including the oral tradition and the myths, legends and historical accounts of the Marquesas Islands,
- s) Submit to the World Heritage Centre by 1 December 2025 a report on the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session in 2026.



Map showing the location of the nominated component parts