



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia World Heritage Sites

Himā Cultural Area (Reference Number 1619)

State of Conservation Report

Drafted in November 2024



List of Abbreviations

GIS	Geographic Information System
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
MASFN	Saudi French Archaeological and Epigraphic Mission to Najran
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
SoC	State of Conservation
WH	World Heritage
WHC	World Heritage Committee



1 Executive Summary

The present State of Conservation report on *Ḥimā Cultural Area* has been prepared upon the request of the World Heritage Committee to Saudi Arabia, to provide an update on the state of conservation of the property and bring forward all relevant requested information for an examination by the WHC at its 47th session in 2025.

Documentation system

A project to develop and deliver a GIS-based relational database documenting the rock art and epigraphy of the World Heritage sites of Rock Art in the Hail Region of Saudi Arabia and *Ḥimā Cultural Area* is scheduled to commence in 2025-2026. Suitably qualified contractors have been invited to tender for the work.

A Heritage Commission survey conducted in early 2024 in the area of Jabal al-Kawkab identified 86 new sites containing almost 3000 rock art figures and 7000 inscriptions. Given these results, a 5-year project to comprehensively survey the area, initially focusing on Jabal al-Kawkab, is being launched. This will form the first stage of a long-term inventorying, documentation and monitoring programme.

Monitoring programme

A monitoring programme is being implemented that includes weekly visits and compilation of dedicated forms. This includes monitoring of the conditions of infrastructures (fences) and landscape features. Condition monitoring of rock art and epigraphic features took place on the basis of an updated form. Following testing in the field, the form will be further refined prior to being officially adopted.

Staff numbers on site have been increased and local staff have attended four training courses in the past two years. Community relations have included meetings and an agreement concerning the extraction of the water from the wells. Media and scientific articles concerning the property are monitored and recorded by the Heritage Commission.

Conservation programme

Structural and conservation studies of the six *Ḥimā* wells were completed and a project to follow the recommendations of these studies are expected to take place in 2025-2026.

A project to conduct an overall condition assessment and prepare conservation management plans for the components of the property is scheduled for 2025-2026.

Heritage Impact Assessments

At the current time no development projects are expected in the site, buffer zone or wider area. In the event that projects are planned, they will be subject to HIA processes.

Buffer zone extension

The proposal for minor boundary modification to expand the buffer zone was submitted in January 2024 and approved per World Heritage Committee Decision 46 COM 8B.33.

The buffer zone is expanded to the northeast, to include Jabal al-Kawkab. On the northwestern and western sides of the previous buffer zone, the new boundary includes Jabal al-Qāra.