



Um er-Rasas

State of conservation report 2024

1. Executive summary

The current State of Conservation report for Um er-Rasas (Kastrom Mefa'a) responds to Decision 45 COM 7B.142 of the World Heritage Committee. The report addresses the following points:

- A review of the previous management plan led to the formation of a permanent, multidisciplinary site management committee to ensure the sustainable development of Um er-Rasas. The committee will set annual milestones, engage local communities, and develop an integrated tourist trail. A revised and updated management plan, incorporating updated goals and priorities, will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee.
- A 2023 report by UNESCO Jordan office proposed interventions for the Stylite Tower, including a temporary shelter and metal hoop reinforcements. The DoA team raised concerns about the visual and structural impact of the proposed interventions and recommended further studies, focusing on minimal intervention and alternative covering methods to preserve the tower's integrity. Continuous monitoring and risk mitigation measures are being considered
- The DoA has monitored the Castrum over the past two years, with no major new collapses noted in the southern wall. Despite limited resources, a long-term restoration plan is being developed for the southern wall and gates, with work expected to begin within the next two years.
- The DoA initiated a design project for the rehabilitation of the 6 churches with a pilot project on the Lions church to assess sheltering alternatives. The initial outcomes raise concerns about visual impact and high costs. As a result, the focus shifted to temporary seasonal shelters to balance protection with aesthetic preservation. An annual event will also be established to showcase the mosaics and enhance public appreciation of the site's heritage.
- The DoA is enhancing site security as part of a national initiative by establishing a CCTV system, adding 50 cameras to the site, and integrating it with a system from the Public Security Department. In addition to six guards are stationed at the site, effectively preventing illegal excavations.
- The DoA conducted a survey to review the buffer zone boundaries of the site, identifying inaccuracies in the original previous version. The boundaries were reassessed based on the site's actual extent and recent acquisitions, with the updated version finalized through comprehensive surveying and GIS technology.