

A person wearing a red jumpsuit and a red helmet stands on a dark, jagged rock formation. Behind them is a large, bright, circular opening in a dark, textured rock wall, resembling a cave entrance. The foreground is filled with dark, sharp, and angular rocks. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the light coming from the cave opening.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



STATE PARTY

Brazil

STATE, PROVINCE OR REGION

State of Minas Gerais

NAME OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

Peruaçu Canyon

GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES TO THE NEAREST SECOND

14°54' and 15°15' S

44°03' and 44°22' W

TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BOUNDARY OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY

The Peruaçu Canyon, a proposed site for World Heritage List, has the following boundaries ofscribed based on orthophotoplanimetric maps at a scale of 1:10,000 numbers 213385, 213396, 213387, 213388, 213395, 213396, 213397, 213398, 217804, 217805, 217806, 217807, 217813, 217914, 217815, 217816, 217817, 217824, 217825, 217826, 217835, 217836, 217837, 217838, 217846, 217847, 217856, and 217857, produced in 1991 by Geonex for the National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform - INCRA and the Rural Mineira Foundation for Colonization and Agrarian Ofvelopment - RURALMINAS, and on the topographic maps of the São Francisco Valley, at a scale of 1:50,000, produced by Cruzeiro do Sul Aerophotogrammetric Services for SUVALE, in 1968, numbers SD.23-Z-C-II-1 (MI 2178-1), SD.23-Z-C-II-2 (MI 2178-2), SD.23-Z-C-II-3 (MI 2178-3), and SD.23-Z-C-II-4 (MI 2178-4): The ofscription of this perimeter begins with approximate plane coordinates, in the Datum Sirgas 2000 Z 23 S, cartographic projection: P 1 of coordinates N 8335742,06 and E 588019,36, segue por linhas retas passando pelos Ps: P 2 of coordinates N 8335180,59 and E 588256,74, follow to the P 3 of coordinates N 8335012,60 and E 588607,93, follow to the P 4 of coordinates N 8334937,05 and E 589089,86, follow to the P 5 of coordinates N 8334804,51 and E 589213,60, follow to the P 6 of coordinates N 8334598,52 and E 589175,51, follow to the P 7 of coordinates N 8334459,03 and E 588930,60, follow to the P 8 of coordinates N 8334157,08 and E 588487,87, follow to the P 9 of coordinates N 8333901,06 and E 588935,07, follow to the P 10 of coordinates N 8333573,56 and E 589201,58, follow to the P 11 of coordinates N 8333358,02 and E 589093,34, follow to the P 12 of coordinates N 8333286,05 and E 588960,23, follow to the P 13 of coordinates N 8333173,01 and E 589030,74, follow to the P 14 of coordinates N 8332855,56 and E 588895,88, follow to the P 15 of coordinates N 8332599,04 and E 588744,86, follow to the P 16 of coordinates N 8332408,55 and E 588820,81, follow to the P 17 of coordinates N 8332329,54 and E 588736,05, follow to the P 18 of coordinates N 8332181,00 and E 588736,73, follow to the P 19 of coordinates N 8332017,06 and E 588992,35, follow to the P 20 of coordinates N 8332153,58 and E 589044,12, follow to the P 21 of coordinates N 8332277,52 and E 588964,64, follow to the P 22 of coordinates N 8332338,06 and E 588968,96, follow to the P 23 of coordinates N 8332373,10 and E 589102,34, follow to the P 24 of coordinates N 8332321,05 and E 589282,55, follow to the P 25 of coordinates N 8331994,02 and E 589310,42, follow to the P 26 of coordinates N 8331866,57 and E 589371,02, follow to the P 27 of coordinates N 8331870,55 and E 589545,29, follow to the P 28 of coordinates N 8331929,02 and E 589705,82, follow to the P 29 of coordinates N 8332055,52 and E 589895,30, follow to the P 30 of coordinates N 8332279,11 and E 590050,31, follow to the P 31 of coordinates N 8332221,92 and E 590356,77, follow to the P 32 of coordinates N 8332215,07 and E 590603,15, follow to the P 33 of coordinates N 8331912,53 and E 590625,77, follow to the P 34 of coordinates N 8331636,59 and E 590618,56, follow to the P 35 of coordinates N 8331480,67 and E 590700,37, follow to the P 36 of coordinates N 8331339,03 and E 590690,81, follow to the P 37 of coordinates N 8330312,19 and E 590271,23, follow to the P 38 of coordinates N 8330271,52 and E 590254,61, follow to the P 39 of coordinates



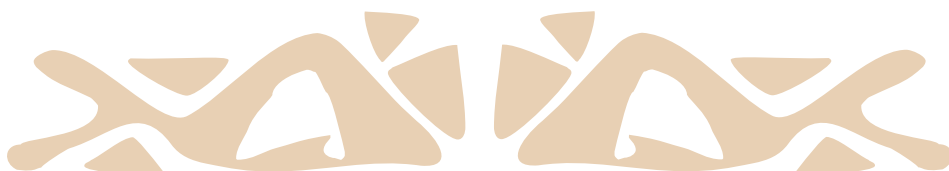
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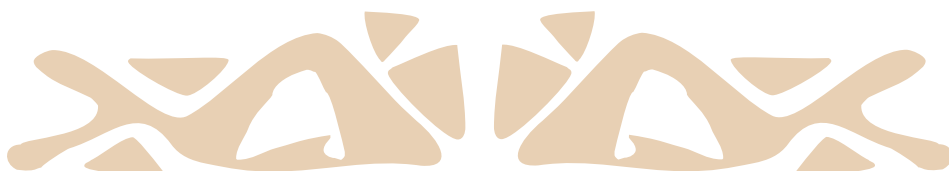
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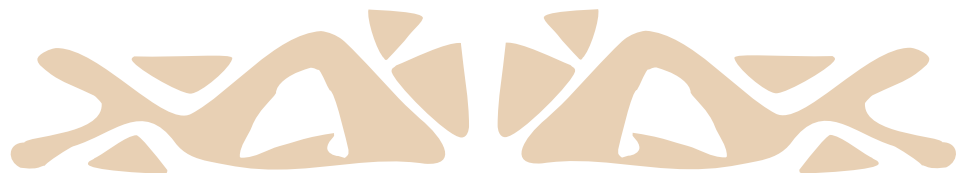
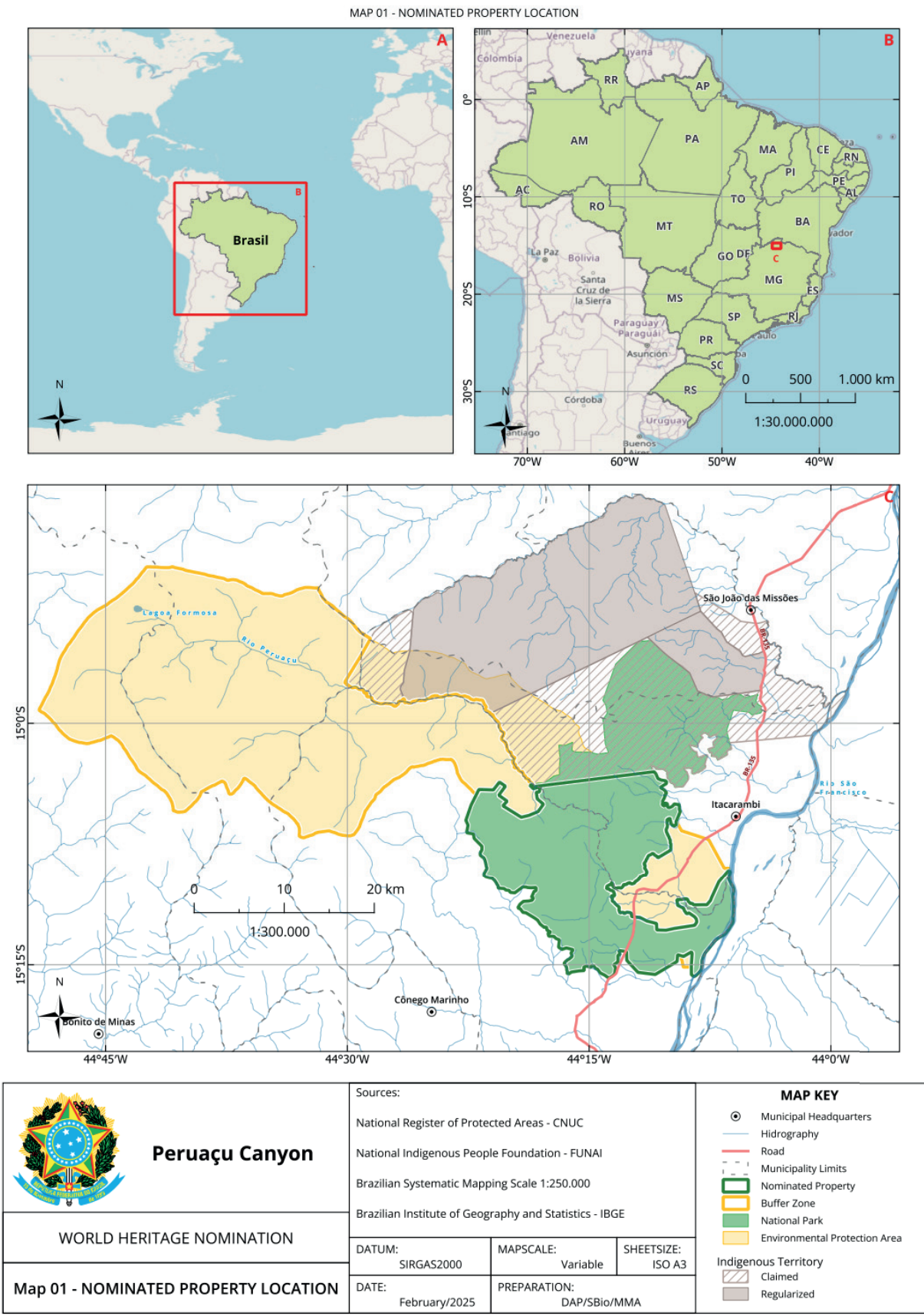
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MAP 1: MAP OF THE NOMINATED PROPERTY



CRITERIA UNDER WHICH PROPERTY IS NOMINATED (ITEMIZE CRITERIA)

(VII) - to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance; (VIII) - to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE NOT APPLICABLE

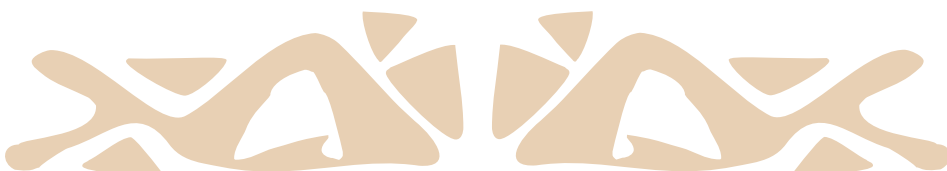
NOT APPLICABLE

DRAFT STATEMENT OF OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

A) BRIEF SYNTHESIS

The Peruaçu Canyon, located in the northern part of the state of Minas Gerais, southeastern Brazil, covers an area of 38,003 hectares. The property encompasses a large canyon, caves, archaeological sites, and rich biodiversity, forming a collection of rare beauty. Almost 500 cavities have already been cataloged in the property, including enormous caves adorned with diverse and rich speleothem decorations. The Janelão Cave features galleries with parabolic sections and passages with widths and heights exceeding 100 meters. The cave preserves the world's largest stalactite: the Perna da Bailarina, which is about 28 meters long. The Peruaçu River Canyon, 21 km long, is one of the largest in the world within a karstic valley, resulting from the collapse of ancient galleries. It has a vertical drop of over 200 meters and successive collapse dolines, witnesses to the canyon's unique evolutionary process. The designated area grants representation to karstic sites under carbonate rocks in a semi-arid climate in the tropics.

Investigations into the 114 archaeological sites cataloged in the park present evidence of human occupations developed in different phases dating back to the Pleistocene, as early as to 12,000 B.P. These ancestral peoples left a lasting legacy that to this day continues to influence the ambience of the park, marked by extraordinarily well-preserved rock art. Predominantly composed of deciduous xerophytic forests, the park is located in an ecological transition zone between the Cerrado and Caatinga biomes, with enclaves of the Atlantic Forest, providing rich and unique biodiversity to



the site. The attributes which justify the site's nomination present a high degree of conservation, as the entire property is fully integrated into a formally established protected area by the Brazilian government since 1999, The Cavernas do Peruaçu National Park, managed by the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation, an agency linked to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. Access and tourist visitation are controlled, and management is carried out in a participative manner in collaboration with the community and other government entities.

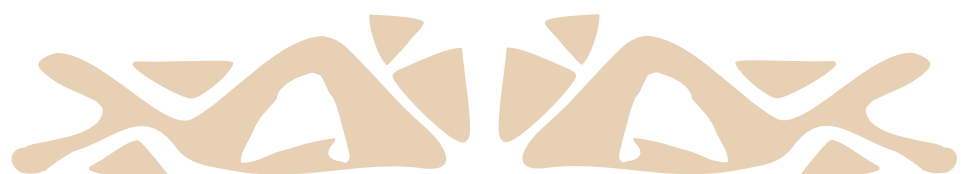
B) JUSTIFICATION FOR CRITERIA CRITERION

(VII): to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.

The Peruaçu Canyon comprises a vast canyon, caves, archaeological sites, and rich biodiversity that together form the ambience of the area, resulting in a landscape of exceptional beauty. The Janelão Cave features impressive passages, with widths and heights exceeding 100 meters. Within it, immense skylights allow the entry of sunlight, enabling vegetation to flourish in the vast chambers, contrasting with the striking and quasi-gothic appearance of the rock formations. On the edge of the Macacos doline, lies the world's largest stalactite: the Perna da Bailarina, which is about 28 meters long. There is a set of nearly 500 cataloged cavities and over 114 archaeological sites that record cycles of human occupation dating back to up to 12,000 B.P. Many of these sites display spectacular and extraordinarily well-preserved rock art. Situated in the Brazilian semiarid region, with a predominance of deciduous xerophytic forests, the property is in an ecological transition zone between the Cerrado and Caatinga biomes with enclaves of Atlantic Forest, all of which provide rich and unique biodiversity to the site.

CRITERION (VIII): to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;

The Peruaçu River Canyon is one of the most remarkable examples in the world of a karst valley developed through the collapse of ancient galleries. Throughout its 21 kilometers, it features a vertical variation of over 200 meters and successive collapse dolines, as well as colossal caves at various levels, with magnificent and diverse speleothem decorations, cliffs, towers, limestone arches, karren, natural bridges, and stone forests. The karst



evolved over carbonate rocks, in an area with relative tectonic stability, the São Francisco craton. With its genesis linked to the local fluviokarst, the canyon is believed to have developed underground until its opening process occurred in the Plio-Pleistocene. Global climatic changes in the Quaternary are thought to have generated the deepening of the local base level, leading to decompression and causing significant collapses along the fluviokarst, from the Middle to Upper Pleistocene.

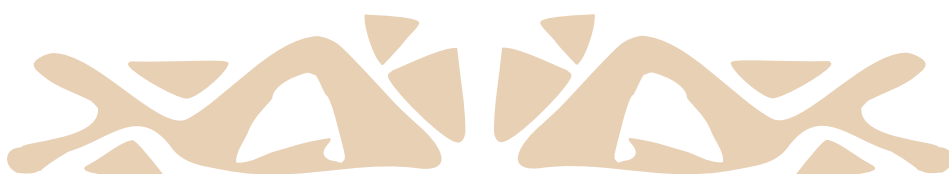
C) STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY (FOR ALL PROPERTIES)

The Peruaçu Canyon covers an area of 38,003 hectares. The entire proposed site is sheltered by the Cavernas do Peruaçu National Park, an integrally protected area under Brazilian legislation established in 1999. The karst in the region involves a significant set of about 500 cavities, including sinkholes, various caves, and a large collection of associated formations that express the diversity of the karstic environment and are well-preserved. The entire extent of the Peruaçu River Canyon is included in the site. In the 144 cataloged archaeological sites, the associated rock art is in exceptional condition, often sheltered from the sun and rain by cave entrances. They represent a complete sequence of the region's occupation since its first inhabitants.

The Park's vegetation comprises Cerrado areas (12,649.36 ha), Caatinga (25,224.88 ha), and Atlantic Forest (4,225.92 ha), as well as transition ecotones between Cerrado and Caatinga (8,139.44 ha). All these elements are interconnected and express the processes involved in shaping the Canyon landscape over time. The Peruaçu River basin upstream of the Park is protected by a Sustainable Use Protected Area, managed at federal level: the Cavernas do Peruaçu Environmental Protection Area (APA), covering 143,866 hectares that make up the site's Buffer Zone, with 100,354 hectares. The main headwaters of the Peruaçu River are protected by the Veredas do Peruaçu State Park, covering 31,000 hectares and managed at state level. The main threats to the Park's integrity arise from human occupation and the use of water resources in the Peruaçu River basin upstream of the Park, through livestock farming and agriculture. Ensuring the perenniality of water resources in a semi-arid environment is the greatest challenge for the long-term maintenance of the area.

D) STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY FOR PROPERTIES NOMINATED UNDER CRITERIA (I) TO (VI)

Not Applicable



E) REQUIREMENTS FOR PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

The Peruaçu Canyon is fully inserted in Cavernas do Peruaçu National Park, established by the Federal Decree of September 21st, 1999, which set the boundaries of the Park, coinciding entirely with the nominated Property. The Park is administered by the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio), a federal agency linked to the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and an integral part of the Brazilian National Environmental System (SISNAMA). Management and administration are implemented to ensure the preservation of extraordinary natural beauty, geodiversity and biodiversity. The Park belongs to the group of integral protection, whose main objective is nature conservation. The Environmental Protection Area (APA) Cavernas do Peruaçu, established by Federal Decree No. 98,182 on September 26th, 1989, covering 143,866 hectares, constitutes the 100,354 hectares of the Buffer Zone of the Property. Both areas are managed in an integrated manner by ICMBio, with unified teams, equipment, and resources. The APA poses the greatest management challenges, especially concerning the protection of the Peruaçu River Basin. The administration of the Cavernas do Peruaçu National Park follows the zoning stipulated in its Management Plan, approved by IBAMA Ordinance No. 90 on December 28th, 2005. This plan defines the rules and spatial organization of the Park. Management is carried out with the support of an Advisory Council, established by Ordinance No. 96 on December 17th, 2004, composed equally of members from the government and representatives of civil society, ensuring a participatory and integrated management. The objectives of the advisory council are to provide transparency to Protected Area management through social control, to contribute to the development and implementation of the Management Plan, and to integrate the Protected Area with communities, the private sector, research institutions, NGOs, the government, as well as other Protected Areas in the vicinity. Since 2022, there is a unified council for the Park (core zone) and the APA Cavernas do Peruaçu (buffer zone).

The Cavernas do Peruaçu National Park, covering 56,448 hectares, is adjacent to two Indigenous Xacriabá Territories, which were recognized in 1987 and 2003 and together cover 52,955 hectares, home to approximately 12,000 Indigenous people. These territories do not overlap with the Park.

However, there is another area claimed by the same ethnic group, currently under adjudication process, which, if officially recognized, would partially overlap with the Park, covering 18,544 hectares. These lands are not inhabited.



NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION OF OFFICIAL LOCAL INSTITUTION/AGENCY/ORGANIZATION

Institution/Agency/Organization: Ministry of Environment and Climate Change - Biodiversity Secretariat, Departament of Protected Areas: DAP/SBio/MMA

Address: Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco B, Brasília – DF ZIP CODE: 70068-900

Tel: DDD (61) Phones/Fax: 2028-2039 / 2028-2192 / 2028-2056

E-mail: dap@mma.gov.br

Web address: <https://www.gov.br/mma/pt-br>

