

**REPORT ON THE JOINT WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/ICOMOS
REACTIVE MONITORING MISSION TO
OLD TOWN OF GHADAMÈS, LIBYA**

FROM 23 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2025



Old Town of Ghadamès © ICOMOS / T. Grandin

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to Old Town of Ghadamès would like to extend its appreciation to the Libyan authorities for kindly facilitating the mission, the objectives of which could not have been achieved without their kind support and full involvement.

The mission is sincerely appreciative to all representatives and authorities in Ghadamès, who extended their substantive support in undertaking the field visits and organizing meetings with all stakeholders. In this regard, the mission team is grateful to Mr. Yakoub Ibrahim Dawi, Mayor of Ghadamès, Mr. Abdel Salam al-Mahdi Hiba, Chairman of the Ghadamès City Promotion and Development Agency, Mr. Abdel Qader Mohammed Omar, Head of the Committee to Remove Ghadamès from the List in Danger, Mr. Mansour Abdel Salam Mansour, Ghadamès Antiquities Supervisor, as well as the team concerned with the property, members of the community and other stakeholder representatives, for accompanying the mission during the site visits, their hospitality, and extensive fruitful discussions and invaluable information provided. Gratitude is also extended to all the participants, experts and professionals, for their engagement and for sharing their expertise during the instructive meeting at the Ghadamès Municipality Council.

The mission is also grateful to H.E. Mr. Salih R.A. Abdullah, Permanent Delegate of Libya to UNESCO, the Libyan National Commissions for Education, Culture and Science, and H.E. Dr. Mohamed Faraj Al-Fallos, Chairman of the Department of Antiquities of Libya and his team, particularly, Mr. Ziad Siala, Dr. Moukhtar Ibrahim, and Dr. Mohammad Ali, for their kind support, facilitation and the fruitful exchanges.

Special thanks are also extended to the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, and particularly, Ms. Hanna S. Tetteh, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Ms. Stephanie Koury, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Officer-in-Charge, and Mr. Aeneas Chuma, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator a.i., Ms. Olga Mokrova, Chief Security Advisor for Libya, and the many members of UNSMIL and UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes who supported the various aspects of the missions.

Moreover, the mission is grateful to the kind support of the UNESCO Office for the Maghreb, in particular Mr. Eric Falt, Director and UNESCO Representative to Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania and Tunisia, as well as his team, including Mr. Ming Kuok Lim, Advisor for Communication and Information for the immense support in organizing and accompanying the mission.

Mission Representatives

May Shaer, UNESCO World Heritage Centre
Thierry Grandin, ICOMOS International

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the Old Town of Ghadamès, Libya, was undertaken in conjunction with the Reactive Monitoring missions to the Archaeological City of Sabratha and the Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna, from 23 to 28 February 2025. The mission to the Old Town of Ghadamès was carried out in accordance with Decision **46 COM 7A.23** of the World Heritage Committee (New Delhi, 2024), with the main purpose of assessing the overall state of conservation of the property and progress made in the implementation of corrective measures aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). The mission took into consideration its terms of reference and previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee. A site visit was conducted, and meetings were held with the relevant authorities.

Accordingly, the mission **assessed the overall state of conservation of the property, having particular regard to identified attributes of the property which support Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), particularly the restoration activities undertaken to the built fabric, and the oasis.** Various maintenance, conservation and restoration activities have been implemented, whether on the built heritage, public areas, the 'Ain al-Faras basin and irrigation system, and green areas. The mission concluded that the property, with its attributes that convey its OUV, is well maintained, and that authenticity and integrity have been well retained.

In terms of **progress in the implementation of corrective measures aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)**, the mission was able to confirm the status of progress achieved. For executing the various corrective measures, the Ghadames City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA) has acquired sufficient financial resources to repair damage, undertake conservation measures, determine a long-term strategy for protection and addressing risks, reinforce capacities, and ensure operation of the irrigation system. Since 2022, financial resources have increased, reaching to levels similar to those before the armed conflict. Nevertheless, ensuring a structural return of budgets, including capital budgets, in the long-term has been a challenge faced in the implementation of corrective measures, and should remain a priority to be pursued.

As regards **any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property**, the mission was informed of a possible project in the setting of the property, which would not impact the protected views. Nevertheless, it would be imperative that all major projects planned within the boundaries of the property, its buffer zone or larger setting be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for technical review.

The mission considers that the corrective measures to achieve the DSOCR have been substantially accomplished and the DSCOR has been achieved. This conclusion is reinforced by the strong commitment that has been demonstrated by all stakeholders to protect and conserve the OUV of the property, with the close participation of the local community.

Notwithstanding, it would be crucial that ensuring adequate resources should remain a priority for maintaining the ongoing momentum in conducting maintenance, conservation and adequate management of the property. Further commitments to budgetary allocations are required to allow for comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation projects, within a long-term view.

Moreover, the mission recommends the following:

Recommendation 1 (financial resources): Ensure adequate budgetary allocations that are sufficient for maintaining the OUV of the property, with further financial commitments that would allow for comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation projects, beyond regular maintenance and emergency interventions. The perennity of a well-established management plan is associated with available resources for implementation. Ensuring the return of the capital budget structure to levels equivalent to those in place before the armed conflict, would help in undertaking comprehensive rehabilitation projects.

It is also recommended for the State Party to continue with the ongoing efforts in seeking international support and increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support.

Recommendation 2 (maintenance, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation): Compile a conservation guidance manual for the property that provides an illustrated description of the complete processes for maintenance, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation, from digging trenches for foundations, to stone sourcing, building foundations, moulding mud brick and building earthen walls, forming architectural details and decorative motifs for the upper parts of walls, construction of ceilings, floor slabs and terraces, interior plasterwork and decorative motifs, exterior plasterwork, alley paving/coatings, carpentry, joinery and metalwork. This would ensure that the repair of the damages to the fabric will follow previously approved and tested methods and techniques, and will guarantee the preservation of the integrity of the property.

At the same time, this manual could include guidance on integrating modern adaptations in historical buildings, such as the installation of electrical networks, switches and sockets, according to best practices and professional standards. Rehabilitation projects, especially those built with earthen material, pose challenges in combining traditional materials and construction methods with integrated modern infrastructure networks. The construction of the infrastructure networks, in particular the electrical supply, could be improved, complying to professional best practices.

In addition, it would be important to establish and include the required safety measures to be adhered to, for personnel and work sites, during the execution of interventions, particularly when working in a dusty environment or on scaffoldings.

Recommendation 3 (monitoring): Continue monitoring of the property to identify and mitigate potential risks, in addition to pursuing maintenance activities, in line with the Management and Risk Preparedness Plans. It is essential to complete the rehabilitation of all needed water reservoirs, as part of preparedness in case of fires. In this regard, it is recommended to establish a protocol for site maintenance with a list of regular tasks to be undertaken through routine inspection visits, addressing the potential impact of environmental factors, specific weather conditions and natural disasters.

Recommendation 4 (implementation of the Management Plan): Establish an action plan to accompany the Management Plan, compiling all of the Management Plan's actions and proposed projects. The action plan would indicate whether individual actions and projects should be implemented in the short, medium or long term, with a classification according to their urgency, and specifying any availability of resources for implementation. This would support resourcing efforts and contribute to monitoring implementation.

Recommendation 5 (irrigation of the oasis): In recognizing the vital role of local natural resources for maintaining the property and its OUV, continue the commendable efforts in maintaining these resources and reviving the oasis, in collaboration with the civil society and

farm owners, including through the continued maintenance of the irrigation system and repair of the remaining channels. This would contribute to the sustained long-term irrigation of the oasis and hence to maintain the integrity of the property that is essential to its OUV.

Recommendation 6 (management of the buffer zone): Formal adoption and implementation of the amended land use regulations integrating the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, together with the proposed charter for the management of the buffer zone. This would enable addressing the effective management of the buffer zone and ensuring that any development would not negatively impact the OUV of the property.

Recommendation 7: Submit all major projects planned within the boundaries of the property, its buffer zone or larger setting to the World Heritage Centre for technical review, together with an impact assessment prepared in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context.

Recommendation 8 (tourism development): Initiate the preparation of a sustainable tourism management plan that ensures a holistic approach to tourism management at the property, its buffer zone and wider setting. The sustainable tourism plan should take into consideration the social and urban environment of the old town and establish the threshold of what is desirable to achieve. Noting that tourism is essential, however, it would need to avoid any negative social or cultural impacts, including on the urban environment. Services must be adapted to the needs of visitors, including facilities, informative and interpretive panels, and street furniture, such as barriers or waste receptacles to be installed in appropriate locations. This plan should be prepared through stakeholder participation, particularly with the involvement of the community in defining the services and cultural values, including the OUV, to be promoted.

I. THE PROPERTY

Inscription History

The Old Town of Ghadamès was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986 as a cultural property under criteria (v). In 2016, due to concerns ensuing from the prevailing conflict in Libya it was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. In its Decision **40 COM 7B.106**, the World Heritage Committee considered that the optimal conditions required to ensure the conservation and protection of the property's Outstanding Universal Value were not present anymore and that the latter was consequently threatened by ascertained and potential danger (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016).

The clarification of the property's boundaries was adopted by the Committee by Decision **42 COM 8D**, at its 42 session (Manama, 2018). The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was adopted at the Committee's extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021), recorded in Decision **44 COM 8E**, and its minor boundary modification proposal was adopted at the Committee's extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023) in Decision **45 COM 8B.59**. Based on its minor boundary modification, the property covers 287.59 ha and its buffer zone covers 271.3 ha.

Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Brief synthesis

The Old Town of Ghadamès is an exceptional example of desert urban settlement and architecture demonstrating the extraordinary human response to living in an incredibly harsh environment. Located in the pre-Sahara between the Great Erg sand sea and the Al Hamada el-Hamra stone plateau, the settlement is constructed around the Ain al-Faras spring (locally called ghusuf). The old town's circular shape, the layout of its built fabric, and the design of its buildings have been determined by climatic conditions and by the management of its water, and are interwoven with the surrounding palm groves. The urban ensemble is protected by the reinforced outer walls of the houses. These features together mitigate the impact of the arid climate and meet the particular socio-cultural needs of the inhabitants.

Ghadamès is one of the oldest and most celebrated Saharan cities, called the 'Pearl of the Desert', (Jawhart Al-Sahra) by Arab sources. It has played a key role in the cultural and economic life of the region as an important and peaceful hub for caravan trade as part of the trans-Saharan network. From at least the late first millennium BCE it was occupied by indigenous peoples, called the Phazanii, and has been a point of interchange between major cultures and religions from the Garamantes and Romans who called it Cydamae, the Byzantines, Christianity, the Islamic conquest, Ottoman control, visits by European explorers in the 19th century and subsequent interventions during the colonial period and WWII. Throughout, it has maintained its own particular customs and practices.

Around Old Town of Ghadamès, archaeological remains in stone, including Roman- period defences and the largest mausolea in the region, attest to the importance, wealth and status of the early occupants. Meanwhile, within the property, the surprising urban structure, and the medieval traditions of mud architecture and handicrafts survive intact to the present day. The outstanding system of dwellings, mostly built over two storeys, give privacy and movement to women via the terraces above them, while public mostly covered spaces below afford meeting places for men and children. The city's history and society have been shaped by the environment and the harmony between them remains central to its unique character and continuous survival. The complex balance between natural, urban and architectural features within this ecological system makes the settlement increasingly vulnerable to changes to the water supply, humidity, temperature, agriculture, built environment and population size.

Criterion (v): *Ghadamès is an outstanding settlement in the Saharan pre-desert renowned for its exceptional built heritage, erected thanks to long-lasting traditional practices resulting from the particular demands of the harsh climate. For at least 2,000 years, the city has played an important role in the trans-Saharan trade network. It has been a crossroads for the major cultures of the African continent and the Mediterranean basin, while also developing its own unique architecture and traditions related to its historic origins and subsequent interactions. The dwellings are outstanding in their design, combining form and function to create comfortable living spaces which allow gender segregation and privacy as well as communication beyond the household, in addition to protection from the desert winds and the thermal fluctuations typical of the desert climate. The balance between the inhabitants and the environment has been fundamental to the development of the city's unique urban character, but is also an important factor in its vulnerability to human and climatic change.*

Integrity

The city has been continuously inhabited attesting to its long historical integrity. A balanced environmental system has been maintained between the built fabric, water system and palm groves. The significant architectural structures and attributes, as well as the original urban layout, have been retained. Alongside important archaeological remains, its historical, cultural, architectural, and functional integrity survives to date. The water system has been restored over time but still functions and continues to be managed by the local community following a unique social system recorded in manuscripts. The necessary balance within the urban organisation as a whole makes the settlement vulnerable to human and climatic change, and requires regular maintenance.

The architectural nature of the settlement, including its streets, public squares, mosques, open spaces and orchards, remains the same, even the parts of the outer wall circuit which have been restored. The architectural elements, such as openings, gates, and entrances, are often decorated with unique motifs and fittings. The building materials are recycled, facilitating maintenance and restoration. The integrity of the intangible attributes associated with the city's traditional crafts and cultural practices has been maintained by conserving the original construction system unique to the urban settlement: stone foundations for mud brick walls, woodwork, masonry and palm wood casings. The liming of the walls inside and across large outdoor spaces brightens them and highlights the distinctive and intricate, incised and painted decorative patterns. Despite recent impacts from a fire event and heavy rains, altogether the outstanding attributes of this settlement retain sufficient integrity.

Authenticity

The Old Town of Ghadamès has maintained a high level of authenticity by not making changes to the design, materials and workmanship of its buildings, and preserving the balanced environmental system. This results from an awareness of the Ghadamès community of the urban and architectural value of the city and the importance of the continuity of its cultural traditions, which continues to influence the design of modern housing outside of the historic city. The settlement's originality lies in its attributes which preserve the Outstanding Universal Value in terms of space and setting, form and design, material and essence, use and function, craft traditions and techniques, language and other forms of intangible heritage. Although no resident dwells permanently in the Old Town of Ghadamès, the city's inhabitants continue to gather and use the houses and spaces of the old town.

The historic fabric retains its form shaped by the combination of unique architectural structures, which consist of compact domestic roofs with high parapets, and covered streets and alleys, both with regular roof openings (tinawt / klava), creating an upper level of terraces reserved for women and children. The use of traditional construction techniques (mud bricks, palm trunks and other traditional building materials) continues in present-day maintenance thereby preserving historic methods and the form and function of the fabric. Local intangible attributes are manifested in cultural practices, traditional construction techniques of mud brick, the water management system following a socially-led organisation of the neighbourhoods,

and a strong sense of place and identity. These have been retained throughout the evolution of the city as a sub-Saharan crossroads during Roman, Byzantine, early Islamic and Ottoman periods through to colonial times and its current status as a modern city in the Libyan Desert. An invaluable manuscript tradition represents a precious source of information and attests to Ghadamès' history and management.

Protection and management requirements

Measures to protect and manage the Old Town of Ghadamès have been established and are being implemented. To guarantee effective protection, the immediate and wider setting needs to be understood and protected.

The old town, including all of its individual monuments, archaeological sites, and natural and cultural heritage, is legally protected and assured by the community of Ghadamès through the provisions of Law No. 3/1994 and its Executive regulations/1995 issued by the General People's Congress. Effective protection is guaranteed through collaboration between the local authority, the development partners and the Department of Antiquities, the Urban Planning Department, local City Council, civil society associations and the Tourist Police, and the Committee for Management, Implementation of the Conservation and preservation strategy of the five Libyan World Heritage properties. Since 2000, international collaborations and local coordination committees have been established to maintain and conserve the historic fabric.

This management system is reinforced by a ten-year management plan, which caters to several key issues in relation to the property including the safeguarding of traditional construction techniques and the potential impact of climate change. Proactive and planned maintenance of the historic water system was initiated in 2008 and is crucial to sustain the Outstanding Universal Value. Natural and human-driven risks include heavy rains and fire: these require management through ad-hoc risk-management and prevention systems.

Key Decisions of the World Heritage Committee

There were no decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee concerning this property between the date of its inscription on the World Heritage List in 1986 and the date of its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2016.

Upon inscribing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2016 (Decision **40 COM 7B.106**), the Committee commended the State Party's strong commitment for the conservation of its properties but expressed its utmost concern about the damage incurred and the threats to the five World Heritage properties in Libya. It considered that the optimal conditions were not present anymore to ensure the conservation and protection of the OUV, threatened by both ascertained and potential danger. It requested the State Party to systematically gather information relating to damages, to the extent possible, and for the State Party to invite a mission to Libya, as soon as security conditions permit, to evaluate the state of conservation of the properties and facilitate the elaboration of an action plan for their restoration, in consultation with the State Party. It also requested the preparation the corrective measures and the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), once a return to stability is effective in the country.

In 2017, the Committee noted with concern the absence of detailed information on the state of conservation of the property (Decision **41 COM 7A.40**). It requested the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of the evolution of the situation at the property and the measures undertaken for its protection and conservation. It reiterated its call for increased international financial and technical support to implement the short- and medium-term measures identified during the 2016 International Meeting on the Safeguard of Libyan Cultural Heritage. The Committee also reiterated its request for the State Party to invite the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS to carry out a mission as soon as security conditions permit. These requests were reiterated in the following sessions.

In 2018, the Committee adopted the clarification of the property's boundaries by Decision **42 COM 8D**. As regards state of conservation, the Committee commended the State Party's efforts to elaborate the strategy to protect Libyan World Heritage properties despite the prevailing situation (Decision **42 COM 7A.25**). It noted with appreciation the commitment and efforts of the Department of Antiquities (DoA) and the local authorities in undertaking maintenance and conservation measures and the engagement of the local community in contributing to maintaining the property's OUV. The Committee encouraged the finalization of a minor boundary modification proposal in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies. This request was reiterated in the following sessions.

In 2019, the Committee commended the State Party's conservation efforts, urging continued work to the extent possible (Decision **43 COM 7A.26**). It requested the State Party to keep it informed on the evolution of the situation at the property, and of any plans for major restoration or new constructions, including works at buildings affected by the 2017 heavy rains. The Committee encouraged the submission of an International Assistance request to support the development and implementation of comprehensive conservation actions, including the finalization of a management plan. It also requested the State Party to develop a DSOCR and a set of corrective measures with a timeline for their implementation and to collaborate with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies for this purpose. The Committee acknowledged the State Party's invitation for a Reactive Monitoring mission and encouraged it to be undertaken once security conditions permit.

In 2021, the Committee adopted the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (Decision **44 COM 8E**). In addition, in Decision **44 COM 7A.14**, the Committee commended the State Party for its fundraising and conservation efforts despite challenging conditions and urged continued work. It welcomed progress on the proposal for minor boundary modification, requesting its continuation and submission in line with Paragraph 164 of the *Operational Guidelines*. The Committee adopted the corrective measures, a timeframe for their implementation, and the DSOCR, and requested to regularly informed of the situation at the property and measures undertaken in implementing the corrective measures. It invited the State Party to continue efforts the development of a Management Plan, including a risk-preparedness and conservation plan, following the technical review by ICOMOS.

In 2023, the Committee approved the minor modification to the boundary and buffer zone of the property in its decision **45 COM 8B.59**, and recommended to the State Party to consider amending the land use regulation to integrate the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, developing the special regulations for the property and its buffer zone based on the Law n.3/1994 and the Law on Urban Planning as a matter of urgency, and developing and adopting an agreement among all relevant institutional actors involved at different levels in the protection and management of the property.

As regards state of conservation, the Committee commended the State Party for mobilizing partners and undertaking conservation activities, particularly for implementing corrective measures towards achieving the DSOCR and requested continued efforts (Decision **45 COM 7A.36**). It encouraged the finalization of a Management Plan and requested to be kept informed on ongoing activities, including the Visitor Centre project at Dan Al-Alaaly building. It also called for increased international support for implementing the identified corrective measures. This request is reiterated in the following session.

In its latest 46th session in 2024, the Committee commended the State Party's conservation efforts, particularly in implementing the corrective measures for achieving the DSOCR and requested continued work in this regard (Decision **46 COM 7A.23**). It noted the completion of a Management Plan, taking into account the ICOMOS technical review, including a Risk Preparedness Plan and incorporating sustainability measures for green areas, and requested more information about implementation in terms of resources and timeline. The Committee

noted with appreciation the amendment of land use regulations to integrate the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone. In addition, the Committee welcomed the completion of the rehabilitation of the Visitor Centre and capacity-building activities, requesting to be kept informed of progress. It noted with appreciation the actions addressing green scale insect infestation in the palm groves, requesting the State Party to implement and monitor the proposed remedial measures and to report their efficacy.

II. SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

Legislation

At the time of inscription of the property on the World Heritage List in 1986, the primary legislation governing its protection was Law No.2/1984. Since 1994, the old town, including all of its individual monuments, archaeological sites, and natural and cultural heritage, is legally protected and assured by the community of Ghadamès through the provisions of Law No. 3/1994 and its Executive regulations/1995 issued by the General People's Congress. Law No.3 of 1994 for the Protection of Antiquities, Museums, Old Cities and Historical Buildings provides a framework for the preservation, protection, and management of cultural heritage sites across the country.

In regard to old cities, and historical neighbours and buildings, Article 38 of Law No.3 of 1994 prohibits any works, construction, or activities that may result in or cause damage. Public bodies concerned with main infrastructure, public facilities, and environmental services, must manage and maintain networks for providing services in ancient cities and neighbourhoods, in accordance with the technical and historical specifications approved by the competent body under the procedures and controls set out in the implementing regulations. Moreover, Article 29 prohibits disturbances to the integrity and features of ancient cities and neighbourhoods, as well as their architectural fabric while performing maintenance, restoration, or reconstruction works. It also prohibits defacement of architectural elements of historical buildings while performing maintenance or restoration activities.

Law No. 3 of 2001 on urban planning provides a framework for urban development, while contributing to environmental protection, and preserving natural, archaeological, historical sites and local architectural character.

Management System and Management Plan

In 2007, the Ghadames City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA) was established by government decision No. (401), and entrusted with the responsibility of preserving, protecting and managing the city. The GCPDA is the competent authority responsible for the management of the World Heritage property. Its activities comprise undertaking studies and plans, project implementation, maintenance and development works, among others. A diagram illustrating the structure of the GCPDA can be found in Annex 8.

The property's Management Plan (2024-2030) was prepared through stakeholder engagement and participation. It mentions that effective protection is guaranteed through collaboration between the local authority, the development partners and the Department of Antiquities, the Urban Planning Department, local City Council, civil society associations, Tourist Police, Agricultural Police and the Committee for Management and Implementation of the conservation and preservation strategy of the five Libyan World Heritage properties.

The management system is reinforced by this Management Plan, which caters to several key issues in relation to the property including the safeguarding of traditional construction

techniques, and addressing the potential impact of climate change. The plan also incorporates action for the sustainability of green areas within the property and its buffer zone.

Moreover, the management plan identifies natural and human-induced risks that may pose threats to the property. These various risks have been addressed in a Risk Preparedness Plan that was developed in 2023, while also acknowledging the existence of traditional knowledge systems in mitigating impacts.

Land Use Regulations

An amendment to the land use regulations within the boundaries of the Old Town of Ghadames, was undertaken by the GCPDA in 2023 to integrate the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, in order to ensure protection of OUV. These regulations include protection of important views and historical features in the buffer zone, creating environmental balance by increasing green areas, and controlling urban pressure, among other considerations. In addition, the GCPDA has prepared a charter for the management of the buffer zone, to be signed by the main stakeholders for its formal adoption.

International Culture Conventions

Libya is State Party to several international conventions related to cultural heritage, which contribute to the integrated management of the property. The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) was ratified on 13 October 1978. Other UNESCO Culture Conventions were ratified by Libya, as follows:

- 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and its First Protocol (19 November 1957)
- 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (9 January 1973)
- 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (20 July 2001)
- 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (09 January 1973)
- 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (23 June 2005)
- 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (10 November 2023)

III. THE MISSION

Following the invitation by the State Party, the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the Old Town of Ghadamès was undertaken in accordance with Decision **46 COM 7A.23** of the World Heritage Committee (New Delhi, 2024). It was organized in conjunction with the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions to the Archaeological Site of Sabratha and the Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna, from the 23 to 28 February 2025. The main purpose of the mission to Old Town of Ghadamès was to assess the overall state of conservation of the property and the progress made in the implementation of corrective measures aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), and to discuss with the State Party the challenges faced and actions required to protect the property.

Annex 1 comprises the full terms of reference of the mission and the complete decision of the World Heritage Committee.

The mission team was composed of May Shaer, representing the World Heritage Centre, and Thierry Grandin, representing ICOMOS. The mission was accompanied by Eric Falt, Director of the UNESCO Office for the Maghreb and UNESCO representative to Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania and Tunisia, and Ming-Kuok Lim, Advisor for Communication and Information at the UNESCO Office for the Maghreb.

The mission visited the property on 26 and 27 February 2025 and carried out an assessment of its state of conservation and the actions undertaken, particularly with regard to progress in the implementation of corrective measures. The mission did not have an opportunity to visit the new city, which is located south of the property, but was able to have a drive along the perimeter of the boundaries of the property and have an overall view of the delineated buffer zone.

On 26 February 2025, the mission was received by Mr. Yakoub Ibrahim Dawi, Mayor of Ghadamès and Chief of the City Council, as well as Mr. Abdel Salam al-Mahdi Hiba, Chairman of the Ghadamès City Promotion and Development Agency (GCPDA) and Mr. Abdel Qader Mohammed Omar, who accompanied the mission during the site visit. In particular, the mission had the opportunity to visit the 'Ain al-Faras basin and the rehabilitated buildings including the recently restored Dan Alaaly building, which will serve as a visitor centre. This first site visit was followed by a meeting at the municipality, which was attended by numerous stakeholders and members of the community. The list of the participants in this meeting can be found in Annex 4.

On 27 February 2025, the mission made a second visit to the site led by Mr. Mansour Abdel Salam Mansour, Ghadamès Antiquities Supervisor, Mr. Abdel Salam al-Mahdi Hiba, and members of the GCPDA team. The mission walked along the pathways of the old town, and visited public and green areas, as well as several houses, such as Dan Do Younes house, the exterior of Dan Hadour house and Dan Sahnouna. (Annex 3 comprises the programme and itinerary, and Annex 4 provides the list of people met).

The terms of reference for the mission comprised the following (Annex 1):

1. Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property, having particular regard to identified attributes of the property which support its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), with particular regard to the restoration activities undertaken to the built fabric, and the oasis.
2. Progress in the implementation of corrective measures aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).
3. Challenges faced in the implementation of corrective measures, if any.
4. Any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property.
5. Any other matter that may be relevant.

IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY

In 2016, the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to the conflict situation prevailing in the country at the time, when the Committee considered that the optimal conditions required to ensure the conservation and protection of the property's Outstanding

Universal Value were not present anymore. Apart from armed conflict, other factors affecting the state of conservation of the property have been identified and include heavy rainfall, fire, the need for a management plan, in addition to human and financial resources.

While no direct impact of the conflict has been reported at the property, nevertheless, it was indirectly affected due to reduction in financial resources between 2014 and 2018, and hence the GCPDA was not able to intervene in a timely manner to address the damage caused by heavy rainfall in 2017 and 2019. In addition, energy supply and water availability affected the operation of water pumps for wells, which is necessary to preserve the palm groves of the oasis, an essential feature of the property. Hence, those impacts and threats were addressed in the elaboration of the DSOCR framework and related corrective measures. Accordingly, the DSOCR was adopted by the Committee in Decision **44 COM 7A.14** (Annex 5), comprising the following corrective measures:

- Ensure long-term structural return of budgets to levels equal to those before the armed conflict for (a) emergency maintenance and (b) capital projects.
- Provide additional interim budgets to repair the damage due to the budget constraints between 2014–2018.
- Resume preservation, restoration and maintenance activities to recover the attributes of the property OUV.
- Determine a long-term strategy including protection from any repetition of similar threats to the property's attributes.
- Establish a stable mechanism to ensure continued water supply to the palm groves of the oasis.
- Repair the damage due to the electricity shortage crisis and due to fires, 2014–2018.
- Ensure continued operation of irrigation system in the future.
- Determine a long-term strategy to protect, conserve and maintain the irrigation system along with an emergency back-up plan.

For each of the adopted corrective measures, indicators were identified for verification of progress achieved.

The issues discussed below are closely connected to the above-mentioned corrective measures and their respective indicators, illustrating the progress accomplished in the implementation of these corrective measures to achieve the DSOCR.

Issue 1: Financial Resources

As a main factor that has indirectly impacted the property due to the conflict situation, and essential in relation to the corrective measures, is the issue of ensuring sufficient financial resources. This factor has been progressively addressed by the State Party. According to information provided to the mission team, the GCPDA highlighted that, although no 'capital budgets' were provided between 2021 and 2024, the total budgets allocated to the property have increased since 2022, particularly in 2023 and 2024, where the overall budget exceeded the minimum necessary allocation for the property, and reaching to levels similar to those before the armed conflict. This has allowed the adequate continued maintenance and conservation activities at the property, substantially improving its state of conservation.

Hence, progress has been achieved in ensuring a return of budgets, which has allowed for maintenance and conservation actions, and there have been additional resources to address the damage due to the budget constraints between 2014 and 2018. Nevertheless, ensuring

sustainable adequate financial resources should remain a priority, and it would be important to maintain this momentum, with a further commitment to budgetary allocations to allow for comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation projects, beyond regular maintenance and emergency interventions.

Moreover, the State Party has been active in forming partnerships for further support. Through the project 'Managing Libya's Cultural Heritage' (MaLiCH), funded by the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage (ALIPH), several actions have been implemented with the support of King's College London, in partnership with the Libyan Department of Antiquities, the GCPDA, and the Nile Palace Foundation in Cairo. Support was provided in the implementation of several activities, including capacity building, documentation and conservation of Dan Al-Alaaly building to be used as a visitor centre, and the mapping of attributes, among others.

In addition, through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support was provided to the Municipality of Ghadames to install solar-powered streetlights around the old city, with funding from the European Union's Trust Fund for Africa.

Recommendations

It is recommended to ensure continued adequate budgetary allocations that are sufficient for maintaining the OUV of the property, with further financial commitments that would allow for comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation projects, beyond regular maintenance and emergency interventions. The perennity of a well-established management plan is associated with available resources for implementation. Ensuring the return of the capital budget structure to levels equivalent to those in place before the armed conflict, would help in undertaking comprehensive rehabilitation projects.

It is also recommended for the State Party to continue with the ongoing efforts in seeking international support and increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support.

Issue 2: Preservation, Restoration and Maintenance of the Built Heritage

Known as the "pearl of the desert", the old town situated within an oasis, was historically a vital part of a caravan trade network and a social and cultural hub for the region. In addition to the settlement's neighbourhoods, the old town is surrounded by palm groves and orchards, protected by walls. The modern city is located south-west of the property.

The mission visited a major part of the property and received comprehensive guidance and explanation enabling assessment of the current state of conservation, by examining the physical condition of structures, effectiveness of preservation efforts, and any ongoing or potential threats.

Overall, corrective measures addressing the resumption of preservation, restoration and maintenance activities to recover the attributes of the property's OUV have progressed well. This could be noted whether in approaching the property or experiencing its urban form, buildings and interiors. It is reflected in a well preserved urban fabric, including streets paved with stone or a sand layer, public areas, and houses that appeared stable with well-maintained ceilings and roofs.

Upon arriving at the property, one passes through green areas, irrigated by canals branching off from 'Ain Al-Faras spring, the source for the establishment of the settlement. The old town is composed of different neighbourhoods, with public squares, covered alleys and cul-de-sacs of low ceilings and built-in masonry benches, ventilated through high shafts providing light,

with temperatures that differ around 17°C from the outside environment. The houses, known as *dan*, are characterized by the use of space inside the different rooms, usually distributed along three floors. The roofs are connected, providing terraces and upper passages that are exclusively used by women. Hence, the urban form is characterized by two segregated pathway systems: the ground level was traditionally assigned for use by men, while roof passages were designated for women.

Although the population of Ghadames is currently living in the modern city, the community maintains a close attachment to the property. They continue to effectively use water and agricultural resources of the oasis, in addition to regularly visiting their former neighbourhoods, especially during the summer, for social events and religious practices. There are 21 mosques in the property, including seven that open each Friday, five prayer halls that are open throughout the week, and a number of open areas suitable for performing prayers. The community and other visitors also gather in the old town for special holidays or family events, particularly during the summer season due to its climate that is more moderate than the modern city.

The mission was informed that, prior to the conflict that started in 2011, several attributes of the property already required urgent attention and that conservation actions had begun in 2007 with the establishment of the GCPDA. With the onset of the conflict in 2011, and despite challenges, the GCPDA continued its efforts with the available resources. Since the adoption of the DSCOR for the property, interventions have focused on the identified priority areas. According to the GCPDA, by now, the state of conservation of the property has greatly improved since 2007, i.e. even in comparison to the situation in 2011, when the conflict erupted.



Figure 1: View of the property from a roof terrace © UNESCO / M. Shaer



Figures 2 and 3: Roof terrace (left) and covered alley at ground level (right) © UNESCO / M. Shaer



Figure 4: Panoramic view of rooftops used as terraces and paths © ICOMOS / T. Grandin

Buildings at the property still substantially employ local raw materials for construction, based on local natural resources, available skills, recycling, and collective labour. Foundations are made from limestone from the area, houses are built with "adobe", i.e. sun-dried earth brick, and ceilings are made of palm wood beams and branches, providing a moderate and temperate climate.



Figure 4: Local production of brick (outside the boundaries of the property) © UNESCO / M. Shaer

Moreover, exterior renders of buildings are traditionally made with a rough clay-based mortar, sometimes showing impressions of palms or hands. The top parts of walls have a smooth coating of a lime-based thin render, while interior decorations, especially in the main reception room of the house, are composed of gypsum-based patterns. These construction practices are based on the principle of reuse and recycling of materials, reflecting an economic and ecological approach. In addition to preserving heritage buildings, their continued use contributes to preserving ancestral skills and knowledge associated with traditional methods, ensuring this heritage is transmitted through generations.



Figures 5 and 6: White decorative plastering © ICOMOS / T. Grandin



Figure 7: Decorative elements (base of an arcade) © ICOMOS / T. Grandin



Figure 8: Wooden ceiling © UNESCO / M. Shaer

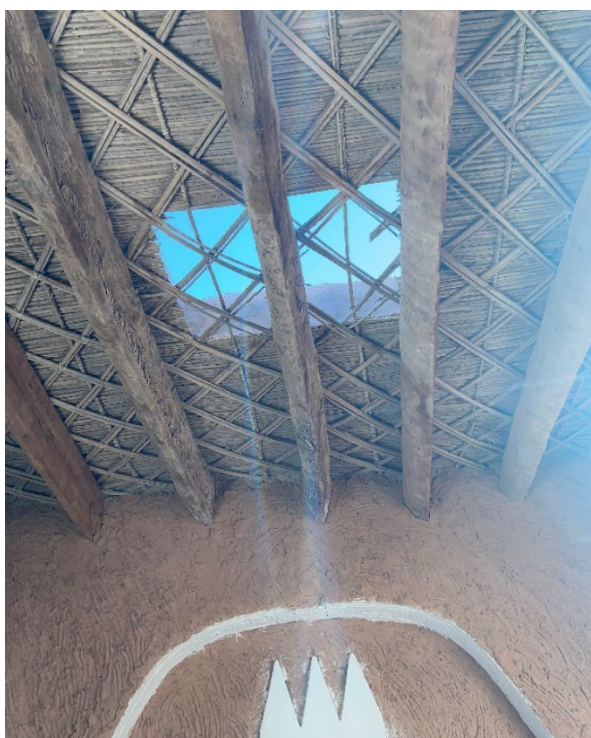
The main sources for essential construction materials found at the property, including the farms with palm groves, mud, water, and vegetal fibres, together present an exceptional historic urban landscape.

Moreover, local traditions and aspects of intangible cultural heritage, are still practiced until today, and are very closely associated with the property's built heritage and farms. In some ways, it appears that these traditional practices have also contributed to the preservation of the property, which in turn seems to be essential for the continuity of these traditions. This is not only reflected in the built houses, but also in the maintenance of water resources, water channels and irrigation network, as well as the maintenance of green areas and local eco-systems.

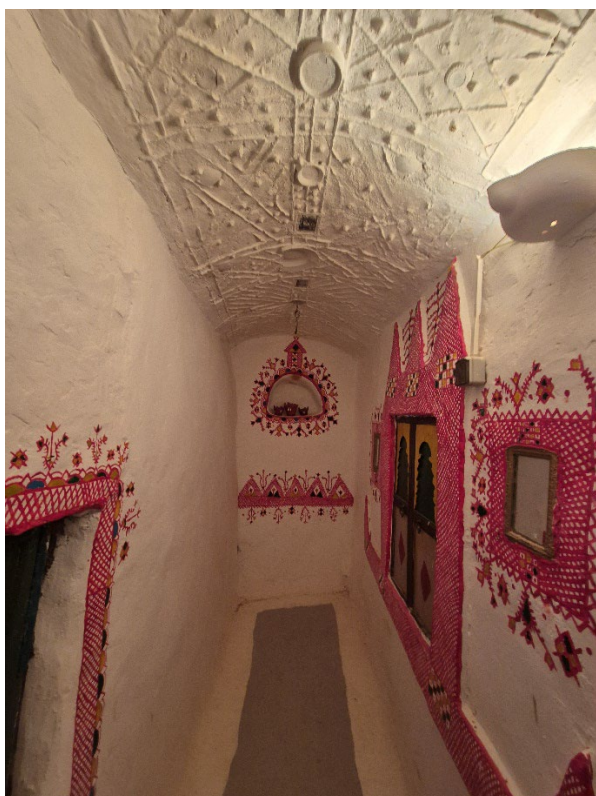


Figures 9 and 10: Cultural and traditional practices and industries © UNESCO / M. Shaer

Numerous handicrafts are still practiced, many of which are essential to maintaining and restoring architectural features and decorative arts, such as painted carpentry; interior decorative patterns in gypsum-based coloured renders, known as the *zanjafoor*; rugs; and pots. Other traditional crafts or features are closely connected to practices associated with specific spaces or special events celebrated in the old town, such as objects made of palm leaves and coloured fabrics, everyday or ceremonial clothes and shoes; food preparation and presentation of dishes; and traditional uses and customs of everyday life, reception, and passing through the alleys, among others. The diverse cultural values that are associated with the property and its OUV, have all been contributing to maintaining authenticity in the various conservation, restoration and reconstruction interventions.



Figures 11 and 12: Zanjafoor (left), and an example of an interior of a room with plastering showing hand imprints and a roof opening for light and ventilation when needed (right) © ICOMOS / T. Grandin



Figures 13 and 14: Interior finished room (left) exterior courtyard (right) © UNESCO / M. Shaer

Substantive conservation work has been undertaken to address the degraded built fabric, which according to the data provided amounts to maintenance of 80% of the roof terraces and roof pathways, as well as the exterior walls affected by rain and wind, restoration of dilapidated houses, including large 'palaces' and mosques, in addition to public squares, alleys, and cul-de-sacs, as well as 36km of fences along the main lanes of farms.



Figures 15 and 16: Alleyway leading to a restored mosque (left) and an open garden/square used for recreation (right) © ICOMOS / T. Grandin



Figures 17 and 18: Exterior and interior of one of the stabilized houses © UNESCO / M. Shaer

Conservation works have been executed at structures impacted by the heavy rainfall in 2017. According to the GCPDA, interventions were also carried out at structures that were affected by rain in 2019, and although comprehensive restoration works have not been executed at those buildings, threats have been removed, and they currently do not pose serious risks. The

mission visited one of the houses and noted that interventions were undertaken to repair and stabilize the structure, while overall rehabilitation has not been completed.

Moreover, Dan Al-Alaaly building has been rehabilitated for use as a visitor centre and cultural hub to preserve the rich heritage of Ghadames, while promoting engagement within the local community. Works were undertaken through the support of the above mentioned MaLiCH project, funded by the International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage (ALIPH). In quoting a statement mentioned in the State Party's state of conservation report of 2024: "What began as a conservation project has been transformed into a community-led initiative where local residents document and co-design the heritage aspects they value most. This collaborative approach has fostered a sense of ownership and pride among the community while preserving traditional knowledge for future generations..."

While the structural rehabilitation works were carried out by men, the project partnered with the Women's Training Centre in Ghadames, where local craftswomen incorporated traditional *zanjafoor* interior wall painting into the centre's spaces, as is the traditional practice in this city. This project received the ICCROM-Sharjah Award for Good Practices in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management in the Arab Region, in its 4th Cycle (2023-2024).

It is clear that there is substantive local experience that has been accumulated in terms of conservation and rehabilitation of structures at the property. The use of traditional materials and techniques has continued, engaging different skills. It would be important to have all this knowledge compiled in one manual that outlines all of these techniques as best practices for the long-term sustainable conservation and management of the property, ensuring that all of this traditional knowledge continues to be practiced. It is also important to give further attention to the execution of construction details associated with modern installations and facilities for the adaptive reuse of buildings, such as electricity networks and various fittings.



Figures 19-21: Vulnerable structure (left), modern adaptations that could be improved (top right), and example of well-built masonry fence whose coping could have been made with traditional mortar (bottom right) © ICOMOS / T. Grandin

While noting the need for regular maintenance work at the property, and its vulnerability to environmental factors, it would be important to have an adopted protocol for site maintenance that compiles the list of regular tasks to be undertaken through routine inspection visits.

Recommendations

It is recommended to compile a conservation guidance manual for the property that provides an illustrated description of the complete processes for maintenance, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation, from digging trenches for foundations, to stone sourcing, building foundations, moulding mud brick and building earthen walls, forming architectural details and decorative motifs for the upper parts of walls, construction of ceilings, floor slabs and terraces, interior plasterwork and decorative motifs, exterior plasterwork, alley paving/coatings, carpentry, joinery and metalwork. This would ensure that the repair of the damages to the fabric will follow previously approved and tested methods and techniques, and will guarantee the preservation of the integrity of the property.

At the same time, this manual could include guidance on integrating modern adaptations in historical buildings, such as the installation of electrical networks, switches and sockets, according to best practices and professional standards. Rehabilitation projects, especially those built with earthen material, pose challenges in combining traditional materials and construction methods with integrated modern infrastructure networks. The construction of the infrastructure networks, in particular the electrical supply, could be improved, complying to professional best practices.

In addition, it would be important to establish and include the required safety measures to be adhered to for personnel and work sites during the execution of interventions, particularly when working in a dusty environment or on scaffoldings.

Issue 3: Long Term Strategy: Site Management, Risk Preparedness, and Capacity Building

The property's Management Plan (2024-2030) has been finalized, reflecting the recommendations by ICOMOS on an earlier draft. It was prepared through a stakeholder participatory process, demonstrating a strong commitment by the participating entities and individuals. This management plan is meant to be a reference document, providing an outline of guidelines for conservation, restoration and rehabilitation work, and mentions that "regular monitoring and maintenance as well as legal and regulatory protection are most appropriate to preserve the earthen heritage" structures, and that "importance must be given to the dissemination and transmission of information, expertise and knowledge between generations. Conservation interventions should be minimal, and they should prevent further degradation". The plan also provides guidance on use and development of the property, awareness raising, education and community participation, research and studies, monitoring and follow up. The plan presents a set of proposed projects, yet ensuring the availability of needed resources for its implementation has not been clarified.

The involvement of the local community in the preservation and management of the property was evident during the mission, which is crucial for its sustainable conservation and management. The stakeholders who the mission met showed a strong will to preserve the site and an understanding of the property's OUV, as well as the necessity of maintaining its authenticity and its integrity. This was demonstrated in the actions undertaken in site maintenance and conservation interventions.

The property is vulnerable to various risks, including rain and flooding, fire and natural deterioration. The natural decay of buildings, caused by the action of rain, potential ground

deformations and movements, and temperature fluctuations, necessitates regular maintenance every 5 to 10 years. If not properly drained, heavy rain could cause major damage, and hence mitigation measures should be developed to reduce impact, in the event of such a threat.

A Risk Preparedness Plan has been developed, which comprises information about identified risks and responses, while acknowledging traditional knowledge systems and their impact on mitigating impacts. With the use of wood in roofs and carpentry, fire could be a risk factor for the built heritage, as well as for the palm groves. Five water reservoirs have been established to address risks of fire, and are connected in case one of them does not function. Nevertheless, it would be imperative to complete the execution of the other eight, since, according to the sub-division of areas, 13 reservoirs are needed. In addition, a movable pump has been provided in case of need.

A noteworthy example of immediate response and mitigation of potential future threats is in the case of infestation of palm leaves by green scale insects. It prompted immediate action to reduce effects, while also implementing a relevant practical training course.

Moreover, the GCPDA has highlighted the importance of continued capacity building, and several training activities have been executed, including some implemented through the MaLiCH project, such as mapping of attributes of the property, heritage management, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV/drone) surveying and photogrammetric methods.

During 2024 alone, staff participated in several training activities, such as a Global Positioning Systems (GPS) course (June 2024, Tripoli), an International Workshop on the Restoration of Heritage and Historic Monuments and Ancient Mosques in Libya (October 2024, Tripoli), Leaders of Excellence workshop (September 2024, Istanbul), and a course in public service affairs (October 2024, Ghadames).

The Management Plan, Risk Preparedness Plan and regular capacity building activities, all collectively helped to accomplish progress in implementing corrective measures, contributing towards long-term conservation and management and achieving the DSOCR. In addition, protection of the property from future threats has been strengthened through the continued engagement of stakeholders, constant monitoring to address risks, and regular site maintenance.

The commitment of the State Party for the sustainable management of the property is clearly demonstrated by all of these actions undertaken through local initiatives and resources and inclusive participatory processes. It is important to sustain these actions through regular sufficient resources and targeted budgetary allocations. The Management Plan outlines a set of project proposals to be implemented between 2024 and 2030 if the necessary budgetary allocations become available. For fundraising purposes, it would be helpful to compile all actions and proposed projects in the form of an action plan, indicating the projects that are implemented regularly or for which resources are available, and others classified in terms of their urgency and required timeframe, whether in the immediate short, medium or long term.

Recommendations

It is recommended to continue monitoring of the property to identify and mitigate potential risks, in addition to pursuing maintenance activities, in line with the Management and Risk Preparedness Plans. It is essential to complete the rehabilitation of all needed water reservoirs, as part of preparedness in case of fires. In this regard, it is recommended to establish a protocol for site maintenance with a list of regular tasks to be undertaken through routine inspection visits, addressing the potential impact of environmental factors, specific weather conditions and natural disasters.

It is also recommended to establish an action plan to accompany the Management Plan, compiling all of the Management Plan's actions and proposed projects. The action plan must indicate whether individual actions and projects should be implemented in the short, medium or long term, with a classification according to their urgency, and specifying any availability of resources for implementation. This would support resourcing efforts and contribute to monitoring implementation.

Issue 4: Maintaining the Irrigation System and Palm Groves

The adopted corrective measures comprise a number of measures to address the damage to the significant setting of the property due to irrigation constraints. These corrective measures address the establishment of a mechanism to ensure continued water supply to the palm groves of the oasis, repairing the damage due to the electricity shortage crisis and due to fires (2014-2018), ensuring continued operation of irrigation system in the future, and determining a long-term strategy to protect, conserve and maintain the irrigation system along with an emergency back-up plan.

Significant progress could be noted by the mission, where it appeared that the issue of managing water resources and distribution was a main priority that has been addressed and is crucial to sustain the OUV.

The water basin of 'Ain Al-Faras has been rehabilitated, with five productive wells operational, and according to the information received, 18 km of irrigation channels cleaned and rehabilitated, focusing on the main ones (80%), while maintenance work is to be initiated for the secondary ones. The maintenance of water pumps and reservoirs of the green area was also carried out.



Figure 22: 'Ain al-Faras: rehabilitation of the water basin © UNESCO / M. Shaer



Figure 23: View of a green area with palm groves © UNESCO / M. Shaer

In addition, the mission was informed that overall, 36 km of fences along the main farm lanes have been maintained, and the green area has been revived. The effects of the fire in 2019 were removed in the orchards of Mazigh Street, and the area has been cleaned of palm waste in cooperation with the civil society and farm owners. Moreover, The GCPDA provided incentives to farm owners by offering to bear 75% of the cost of replanting palm seedlings for those wishing to revive their damaged farms. This resulted in having a cultivated area of 200.27 hectares by 2020, representing 80% of the green area of the property. Recently, the infestation of palm trees by green scale insect that was reported in 2024 has been addressed to a certain degree, and a training was undertaken in this regard.

Moreover, the Risk Preparedness Plan that has been prepared refers to traditional knowledge systems and their impact on mitigating the impact of emergencies, where civil committees manage the distribution of irrigation water in the agricultural area, and members of the local community share the responsibility of inspection to ensure that there is no danger from fire and contribute to extinguishing it in case of emergency.

Recommendations

In recognizing the vital role of local natural resources for maintaining the property and its OUV, it is recommended to continue the commendable efforts in maintaining these resources and reviving the oasis, in collaboration with the civil society and farm owners, including through the continued maintenance of the irrigation system and repair of the remaining channels. This would contribute to the sustained long-term irrigation of the oasis and hence to maintain the integrity of the property that is essential to its OUV.

Other Issues: Potential Development and Tourism Management

The GCPDA has been communicating to the local community, raising awareness about the status of the World Heritage property, as well as its boundaries and buffer zone that were adopted in 2023. A large banner showing a map with boundaries has been installed at a main road crossing before accessing the property.

An amendment to land use regulations within the boundaries of the Old Town of Ghadames, was completed in 2023 to integrate the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, in order to ensure protection of OUV. This document is very relevant as it addresses the protection of important views and historical features in the buffer zone. It aims to create an environmental balance by increasing green areas and controlling urban pressure, in addition to other considerations.

According to the GCPDA, owners of properties and farms located within the buffer zone of the property were informed that their farms are part of that buffer zone, and hence subject to the relevant laws and land use regulations.

Moreover, the GCPDA has prepared a charter for the management of the buffer zone, which was presented at the stakeholder meeting during the mission. However, this charter has not yet been signed by the main stakeholders.

During the mission, it was briefly mentioned that a development project may be planned outside the property, but will not impact the protected views. Hence, it would be imperative that all major projects planned with the boundaries of the property, its buffer zone or larger setting to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre with for technical review, with an impact assessment prepared in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context.

The property's Management Plan recognizes that the city of Ghadamès has tourism potential, and mentions that the old city is visited by tourists of various nationalities, either with the intention of cultural tourism or desert tourism, from which they head to other locations like Ghat and Adree. The annual Ghadamès festival used to be held for three days during the month of October of every year. Although this festival has not taken place since 2011, according to the Management Plan, it is planned for resumption. The Management Plan mentions that focus should be on tourist accommodation and improving tourism infrastructure, and it highlights the role of interpretation and presentation of the property.

With the potential of increased tourism, which would contribute to improved income generation opportunities, it would be pertinent that planning is initiated for sustainable tourism management. Such planning should take into consideration potential gradual increase in tourism, benefitting the local community and providing adequate infrastructure that does not negatively impact the OUV of the property. The visitor centre has been established within four rehabilitated houses, and there are already some visitor routes that have been defined. Further development of a visitor management plan would ensure accessibility for visitors that is compatible with OUV of the property, without posing threats or negative impacts, while providing adequate site interpretation, presentation and the required visitor facilities.

Recommendations

The GCPDA has undertaken a number of actions addressing the future management of the buffer zone, and ensuring that any development would not negatively impact the OUV of the property. In order for these measures to be fully effective, it is recommended that the amended land use regulations integrating the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, together with the proposed charter for the management of the buffer zone be formally adopted

and implemented as soon as possible. This would enable addressing the effective management of the buffer zone and ensuring that any development would not negatively impact the OUV of the property.

In addition, it is recommended that all major projects planned within the boundaries of the property, its buffer zone or wider setting be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for technical review, together with an impact assessment prepared in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context.

Moreover, it is recommended to initiate the preparation of a sustainable tourism management plan that ensures a holistic approach to tourism management at the property, its buffer zone and wider setting. The sustainable tourism plan should take into consideration the social and urban environment of the old town and establish the threshold of what is desirable to achieve. Noting that tourism is essential, however, it would need to avoid any social or cultural impacts, including on the urban environment. Services must be adapted to the needs of visitors, including facilities, informative and interpretive panels, and street furniture, such as barriers or waste receptacles to be installed in appropriate locations. This plan should be prepared through stakeholder participation, particularly with the involvement of the community in defining the services and cultural values, including the OUV, to be promoted.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission concludes that – nine years following its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger and five years since the adoption of the DSOCR and related corrective measures – the property, with its attributes, is well maintained and that authenticity and integrity have been well retained. In recalling text for the application of **criterion (v)** to justify its OUV, which refers to the property's "own unique architecture and traditions" and the dwellings being "outstanding in their design, combining form and function to create comfortable living spaces which allow gender segregation and privacy as well as communication beyond the household, in addition to protection from the desert winds and the thermal fluctuations typical of the desert climate", it is noteworthy that all of these aspects have been well retained in the process of undertaking interventions. In addition, "the balance between the inhabitants and the environment has been fundamental to the development of the city's unique urban character, but is also an important factor in its vulnerability to human and climatic change", as expressed in the OUV, is clearly discernible. Efforts have been made to sustain this balance, mitigate vulnerabilities, and maintain authenticity.

In terms of integrity, through interventions, the "balanced environmental system between the built fabric, water system and palm groves", has been respected, and efforts have been made to conserve "the significant architectural structures and attributes, as well as the original urban layout".

Therefore, through the various interventions, it could still be stated that the Old Town of Ghadamès continues to maintain "a high level of authenticity by not making changes to the design, materials and workmanship of its buildings, and preserving the balanced environmental system". The awareness, local knowledge and engagement of the local community with the authorities, in aspects of the site's management and conservation, contributes to preserving the OUV of the property.

Moreover, it is clear that the property "has maintained its own particular customs and practices", as mentioned in its statement of OUV. The owners of properties and farms continue to live nearby, frequently visiting the site, especially in summer and for special events. The authorities and all concerned stakeholders are fully aware of the OUV as well as the cultural

and social values inherent in the property. The State Party, represented by the GCPDA has been addressing risks and threats in a systematic and competent manner. It has substantially progressed with the execution of corrective measures since their adoption by the Committee at its 44th session in 2021. Hence, the impacts or threats that have been identified at the time of establishing the DSOCR and corrective measures have been addressed, notably in relation to 'damage to the built fabric due to constraints with capital budgets', and, 'damage to the significance setting of the property due to irrigation constraints'.

Moreover, following the minor boundary modification that addressed the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, which are essential for effective protection, it is clear that this delineation has provided an opportunity for a more holistic approach to a sustainable preservation of the old town. The buffer zone, as well as the two protected views from the property and vice versa, provide an additional layer of protection to the inscribed property, particularly in terms of protecting the surrounding cultural landscape in the wider setting. In terms of protection and management requirements, measures to protect and manage the Old Town of Ghadamès have been established and are being implemented.

The issue of ensuring adequate financial resources, as a main factor that has indirectly impacted the property, has been progressively addressed by the State Party, allowing to achieve the DSOCR in terms of acquiring sufficient financial capacity to repair damage due to capital budget reductions; conservation of the degraded built fabric; determining a long term strategy including protection from any repetition of similar threats - with the preparation of a Risk Preparedness Plan and reinforced capacities; establishing a mechanism for water supply to the palm groves; repairing the damage due to electricity shortage crises and due to fires (2014-2018); ensuring continued operation of the irrigation system; and determining a long term strategy to protect, conserve and maintain the irrigation system.

As regards financial resources, and according to the budget tables provided by the GCPDA, the total budgets allocated to the property have increased since 2022, particularly in 2023 and 2024, reaching to levels similar to those before the armed conflict. Hence, the authority has been able to overcome financial constraints, by obtaining various sources of financing, and despite the limited resources, it has completed more numerous projects within the built fabric and the oasis. These have been implemented in good quality, respecting the authenticity and integrity of the site, and supporting the OUV of the property. The site management has a good understanding of the necessary management and conservation processes and challenges, presenting the progress accomplished in achieving the DSOCR. Nevertheless, ensuring structural return of capital budgets in the long-term may still pose challenges.

Noting that there has not been direct threat of the conflict, which appears to be no longer present for the property, indirect threats and their related impacts have been systematically addressed. Annex 5 provides an update and assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of corrective measures based on the information provided by the GCPDA and site visits.

Based on the above, the mission considers that the corrective measures to achieve the DSOCR have been substantially accomplished, and therefore concludes that the Desired State of conservation for removal from the List in Danger (DSOCR) has been achieved. This conclusion is reinforced by the strong commitment that has been demonstrated by all stakeholders to protect and conserve the OUV of the property, with the close participation of the local community. It is an exceptional site, where residents live in close symbiosis with the old town. It is not only a place where heritage is exhibited and endured, but also a social, urban, and architectural space that continues to be used, where diverse cultural values associated with the property and its OUV, have all been contributing to maintaining authenticity, guaranteeing a certain longevity. Also, there is demonstrated local capacity to respond to emerging needs, while the Management and Risk Preparedness Plans have been

prepared, and land use regulations have been amended taking into consideration the amended boundaries of the property and its buffer zone.

Notwithstanding, it would be crucial that ensuring adequate resources should remain a priority for maintaining the ongoing momentum in carrying out maintenance, conservation and adequate management of the property. Further commitments to budgetary allocations are required to allow for comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation projects, within a long-term view.

Additional recommendations have been provided in this report and compiled below.

Response to the Mission Terms of Reference

The mission has addressed the items outlined in its Terms of Reference, as follows:

- **Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property, having particular regard to identified attributes of the property which support OUV, with particular regard to the restoration activities undertaken to the built fabric, and the oasis**

The mission had an overview of the state of conservation of the property. The attributes of the property, which support its OUV, including its built fabric and oasis appear to be well maintained with no evident threats. Various maintenance, conservation and restoration activities have been implemented, whether on the built heritage, public areas, the 'Ain al-Faras basin and irrigation system, and green areas. Interventions have particularly addressed damage and risks to the built heritage and the oasis that had been impacted by heavy rainfall and fire.

The GCPDA has been able to overcome challenges linked to capital budgets, by obtaining various other sources of financing to allow for continued maintenance works at the property, completing numerous projects, generally of very good quality, respecting the authenticity and integrity of the site.

- **Progress in the implementation of corrective measures aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR)**

During the meeting with the stakeholders, the GCPDA presented the DSOCR framework and progress in the implementation of corrective measures. The mission visited parts the property and through the site visit and discussions, to a certain degree, it could confirm the status of progress achieved.

For executing the various corrective measures, the GCPDA has acquired sufficient financial resources to repair damage, undertake conservation measures, determine a long-term strategy for protection and addressing risks, reinforce capacities, and ensure operation of the irrigation system. Since 2022, financial resources have increased, particularly in 2023 and 2024, reaching to levels similar to those before the armed conflict. Nevertheless, ensuring a structural return of budgets in the long-term should remain a priority to overcome potential challenges of insufficient budgets.

- **Challenges faced in the implementation of corrective measures, if any**

The main challenge has been in relation to acquiring capital budgets to undertake conservation projects. To a certain degree, the GCPDA has managed to overcome this

challenge, by obtaining various other sources of financing to allow for continued maintenance works.

- **Any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property**

The mission was informed of a possible project in the setting of the property, which would not impact the protected views. Nevertheless, it would be imperative that all major projects planned within the boundaries of the property, its buffer zone or larger setting to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre with for technical review, with an impact assessment prepared in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context.

Recommendations

The mission recommends the following:

Recommendation 1 (financial resources): Ensure adequate budgetary allocations that are sufficient for maintaining the OUV of the property, with further financial commitments that would allow for comprehensive conservation and rehabilitation projects, beyond regular maintenance and emergency interventions. The perennity of a well-established management plan is associated with available resources for implementation. Ensuring the return of the capital budget structure to levels equivalent to those in place before the armed conflict, would help in undertaking comprehensive rehabilitation projects.

It is also recommended for the State Party to continue with the ongoing efforts in seeking international support and increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support.

Recommendation 2 (maintenance, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation): Compile a conservation guidance manual for the property that provides an illustrated description of the complete processes for maintenance, conservation, restoration, and rehabilitation, from digging trenches for foundations, to stone sourcing, building foundations, moulding mud brick and building earthen walls, forming architectural details and decorative motifs for the upper parts of walls, construction of ceilings, floor slabs and terraces, interior plasterwork and decorative motifs, exterior plasterwork, alley paving/coatings, carpentry, joinery and metalwork. This would ensure that the repair of the damages to the fabric will follow previously approved and tested methods and techniques, and will guarantee the preservation of the integrity of the property.

At the same time, this manual could include guidance on integrating modern adaptations in historical buildings, such as the installation of electrical networks, switches and sockets, according to best practices and professional standards. Rehabilitation projects, especially those built with earthen material, pose challenges in combining traditional materials and construction methods with integrated modern infrastructure networks. The construction of the infrastructure networks, in particular the electrical supply, could be improved, complying to professional best practices.

In addition, it would be important to establish and include the required safety measures to be adhered to for personnel and work sites during the execution of interventions, particularly when working in a dusty environment or on scaffoldings.

Recommendation 3 (monitoring): Continue monitoring of the property to identify and mitigate potential risks, in addition to pursuing maintenance activities, in line with the Management and Risk Preparedness Plans. It is essential to complete the rehabilitation of all needed water reservoirs, as part of preparedness in case of fires. In this regard, it is recommended to

establish a protocol for site maintenance with a list of regular tasks to be undertaken through routine inspection visits, addressing the potential impact of environmental factors, specific weather conditions and natural disasters.

Recommendation 4 (implementation of the Management Plan): Establish an action plan to accompany the Management Plan, compiling all of the Management Plan's actions and proposed projects. The action plan would indicate whether individual actions and projects should be implemented in the short, medium or long term, with a classification according to their urgency, and specifying any availability of resources for implementation. This would support resourcing efforts and contribute to monitoring implementation.

Recommendation 5 (irrigation of the oasis): In recognizing the vital role of local natural resources for maintaining the property and its OUV, continue the commendable efforts in maintaining these resources and reviving the oasis, in collaboration with the civil society and farm owners, including through the continued maintenance of the irrigation system and repair of the remaining channels. This would contribute to the sustained long-term irrigation of the oasis and hence to maintain the integrity of the property that is essential to its OUV.

Recommendation 6 (management of the buffer zone): Formal adoption and implementation of the amended land use regulations integrating the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, together with the proposed charter for the management of the buffer zone. This would enable addressing the effective management of the buffer zone and ensuring that any development would not negatively impact the OUV of the property.

Recommendation 7: Submit all major projects planned within the boundaries of the property, its buffer zone or larger setting to the World Heritage Centre for technical review, together with an impact assessment prepared in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context.

Recommendation 8 (tourism development): Initiate the preparation of a sustainable tourism management plan that ensures a holistic approach to tourism management at the property, its buffer zone and wider setting. The sustainable tourism plan should take into consideration the social and urban environment of the old town and establish the threshold of what is desirable to achieve. Noting that tourism is essential, however, it would need to avoid any negative social or cultural impacts, including on the urban environment. Services must be adapted to the needs of visitors, including facilities, informative and interpretive panels, and street furniture, such as barriers or waste receptacles to be installed in appropriate locations. This plan should be prepared through stakeholder participation, particularly with the involvement of the community in defining the services and cultural values, including the OUV, to be promoted.

VI. ANNEXES

- Annex 1: Terms of reference (ToR) of the mission, including the Committee decision requesting the mission to be carried out
- Annex 2: Composition of mission team
- Annex 3: Itinerary and programme of the mission as implemented
- Annex 4: List of people met
- Annex 5: Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and progress achieved in the implementation of corrective measures
- Annex 6: Map showing the boundaries of the property
- Annex 7: List of key documents which have informed the mission
- Annex 8: Organizational structure of the Ghadames City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA)
- Annex 9: Additional photographs

ANNEX 1: Terms of Reference of the Mission (including World Heritage Committee decision requesting the mission to be carried out)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Missions

Archaeological Site of Sabratha

Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna

Old Town of Ghadamès

23-28 February 2025

At its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024), the World Heritage Committee, while recalling the invitation by the State Party for the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions to Archaeological Site of Sabratha, Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna, and Old Town of Ghadamès, encouraged that the missions takes place as soon as conditions permit (Decisions 46 COM 7A.22, 46 COM 7A.21, and 46 COM 7A.23) (Annex I).

As regards the Archaeological Site of Sabratha, the mission will address the following:

1. Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property, having particular regard to identified attributes of the property which support its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).
2. Assessment of implemented actions and projects, as well as review of the identified threats, damage, and proposed interventions, which would contribute to the preparation of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and related corrective measures.
3. Assessment of actions and/or resources required to facilitate the adequate protection, conservation, and management of the site.
4. Progress in the preparation of draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and Minor Boundary Modification proposal.
5. Specific advice regarding the proposed DSOCR and potential corrective measures and timeframe for their implementation.
6. Progress and steps undertaken towards finalizing a comprehensive conservation and management plan for the property.
7. Any other matter that may be relevant.

As regards Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna, the mission will address the following:

1. Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property, having particular regard to identified attributes of the property which support its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), with particular regard to the Hunting Baths.
2. Assessment of implemented actions and projects, as well as review of the identified threats, damage, and proposed interventions, in addition to any new major construction or reconstruction projects, including the new highway project in the vicinity of the property.
3. Assessment of actions and/or resources required to facilitate the adequate protection, conservation, and management of the site.

4. Progress in the development of a conservation strategy for the Hunting Baths, with urgent conservation measures aimed at preserving and protecting the monument.
5. Assessment of the impact of tidal flooding and continuous sea encroachment on the circus area and any proposals with mitigation measures to address the issue.
6. Assessment of the impact of and threat of urban encroachment on the property.
7. Progress in initiating the development of a comprehensive Conservation Action Plan and a Management Plan for the property.
8. Progress in the preparation of a Minor Boundary Modification proposal.
9. Advice on the finalization of the latest draft of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), corrective measures and timeframe for their implementation to achieve the DSO CR.
10. Any other matter that may be relevant.

As regards Old Town of Ghadamès, the mission will address the following:

1. Assessment of the overall state of conservation of the property, having particular regard to identified attributes of the property which support its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), with particular regard to the restoration activities undertaken to the built fabric, and the oasis.
2. Progress in the implementation of corrective measures aimed at achieving the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR).
3. Challenges faced in the implementation of corrective measures, if any.
4. Any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property,
5. Any other matter that may be relevant.

The mission will be carried out by May Shaer, representing the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and Thierry Grandin representing ICOMOS.

The State Party will facilitate the necessary field visits and access to key locations, as well as meetings with stakeholders, including the Department of Antiquities, the Administrative Committee of the Ghadamès City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA), and other authorities and stakeholders involved in the management of the sites.

In order to enable the preparation of the mission, it is necessary that the following items are provided to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS as soon as possible:

1. Background information, documentation, and recent report about the three properties, including high resolutions maps.
2. Information on all measures, undertaken or planned at the two properties.
3. Information on any planned conservation or development projects or other potential interventions at the two properties or buffer zone.
4. A brief outline of the statutory protection available to the properties, and the current management arrangements, including resources and personnel.

Please note that additional information may be requested during or following the mission.

Based on the results of the above-mentioned reviews, assessments and discussions with the State Party representatives, authorities and stakeholders, the mission will prepare a concise report on the findings and recommendations as soon as possible after the completion of the

mission, following the standard format (Annex II), for review by the World Heritage Committee. The recommendations will be provided with the mission report, and not during the course of the mission.

Previous World Heritage Committee Decision

Decision: **46 COM 7A.23**

Old Town of Ghadamès (Libya) (C 362bis)

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/24/46.COM/7A,
2. Recalling Decision **45 COM 7A.36** adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
3. Commends the important efforts made by the State Party in undertaking activities for the conservation of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), particularly those directed towards the implementation of corrective measures for the achievement of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), as adopted by the Committee, and requests the State Party to continue its efforts in this regard;
4. Notes with appreciation the finalization of a Management Plan for the property, with a Risk Preparedness Plan, taking into consideration the recommendations of ICOMOS' technical review, as well as incorporating action for the sustainability of green areas within the property and its buffer zone, and also requests the State Party to provide more information about the implementation of these projects in terms of available resources, timeframe and progress achieved;
5. Also notes with appreciation the amendment of land use regulations within the boundaries of the Old Town of Ghadamès, to integrate the modified boundaries of the property and its buffer zone;
6. Welcomes the completion of the fully rehabilitated Visitor Centre and capacity-building activities and further requests the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed about the progress in this regard;
7. Further notes with appreciation the investigations undertaken by the State Party in response to the infestation by green scale insects in the palm groves, and requests furthermore the State Party to implement and monitor the proposed remedial actions and to provide further information about their efficacy;
8. Acknowledges the request by the State Party to extend the timeframe for the implementation of corrective measures and adopts a revised timeframe with a two-year extension;
9. Requests moreover that the invited joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission be carried out as soon as conditions permit in order to assess the overall state of conservation of the property and progress made in implementing corrective measures;
10. Requests the State Party to regularly inform the Committee on the evolution of the situation at the property, the implementation of corrective measures, and any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
11. Continues to call for an increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through the

UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund, to implement the corrective measures that have been identified;

12. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2025**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session;
13. **Decides to retain Old Town of Ghadamès (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

ANNEX 2: Composition of Mission Team

The mission team was composed of the following members:

- May Shaer, Head of Arab States Unit, UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- Thierry Grandin, ICOMOS

The mission was accompanied by Eric Falt, Eric Falt, Director and UNESCO Representative to Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania and Tunisia, and Mr. Ming Kuok Lim, Advisor for Communication and Information, UNESCO Office for the Maghreb.

ANNEX 3: Programme and Itinerary of the Mission

Archaeological Site of Sabratha
Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna
Old Town of Ghadamès

Date		Agenda	Location
Sunday 23 February 2025		Arrival in Tripoli	
Monday, 24 February 2025	8:00 09:00 – 13:00 13:30 16:30 – 18:45 19:00 – 20:00	Departure to Sabratha Site visit and onsite meeting/discussion with the site management Return to Tripoli (DOA premises/Saraya) Meeting with the Chairman of the Department of Antiquities Return	Archaeological Site of Sabratha District of Zawia DOA (Saraya)
Tuesday, 25 February 2025	07:30 10:00 – 14:00 14:00 – 18:30	Departure to Leptis Magna Site visit and onsite meeting/discussion with the site management Return to Tripoli	Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna District of Khoms
Wednesday, 26 February 2025	07:50 16:40 18:30 – 21:00	Departure to Ghadames Site visit of Old Town of Ghadamès Meeting with Mayor, Chairman of the Administrative Committee of the Ghadames City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA), DOA representative and all other stakeholders	Old Town of Ghadamès Municipality Building in Ghadames
Thursday, 27 February 2025	8:30 – 12:00 12:00 – 20:30	Site visit of Old Town of Ghadamès Return to Tripoli	Old Town of Ghadamès
Friday, 28 February 2025		Departure from Tripoli	

ANNEX 4: List of People Met

Old Town of Ghadamès

- Yakoub Ibrahim Dawi, Mayor of Ghadamès and Chief of the City Council,
- Abdel Salam al-Mahdi Hiba, Chairman of the Ghadamès City Development Agency (GCPDA),
- Abdel Qader Mohammed Omar, Head of the Committee to Remove Ghadamès from the list in Danger,
- Mansour Abdel Salam Mansour, Ghadamès Antiquities Supervisor, and several members of the local community.

Meeting at the Ghadamès Municipal Council with the relevant authorities and stakeholders

1. Yakoub Ibrahim Dawi	Mayor of Ghadamès – Chief of the City Council
2. Abdel Salam al-Mahdi Hiba	Chairman of the GCPDA
3. Bashir Abdullah Hiba	Member of the City Council
4. Muhammed Qasem Hammoud	Member of the City Council
5. Abdel Rahim al-Bukhari Sano	Member of the City Council
6. Abdel Sattar Bashir Hiba	Member of the City Council
7. Abdel Salam al-Bukhari al-Thani	Deputy Mayor
8. Thuraya Mustafa Wow	Member of the City Council
9. Salah al-Masalati	Representative of the Libyan NATCOM
10. Adnan al-Zarrouk	Representative of the Libyan NATCOM
11. Hisham Daoub	Director of Ghadamès Security Directorate
12. Mohammed al-Madani Abdel Hafiz	Director of the Civil Defense Branch
13. Mohanned Abdel Salam Shamila	Director of the Tourist Police Branch
14. Abdel Qader Bashir Qaqah	Director of the Municipal Guard Branch
15. Abdel Qader Mohammed Omar	Head of the Committee to Remove Ghadamès from the List in Danger
16. Umm al-Khair Mustafa Hiba	Director of the Woman Training Center
17. Kawthar Idris Yibi	Member of the Local Youth Council
18. Mohammed Abdullah Yader	Council of Elders and Notables
19. Mohammed Abdel Salam al-Aswad	Council of Elders and Notables
20. Mohammed Abdel Hafiz Hamoud	Council of Elders and Notables
21. Abdel Moneim Ahmed al-Aswad	Head of the Local Youth Council
22. Mansour Abdel Salam Mansour	Ghadamès Antiquities Supervisor
23. Khaled Abdel Hamid Younis	Ghadamès Education Supervisor
24. Hamoud Bashir Hamoud	Dean of the College of Literature and Sciences
25. Qasim Bashir Yusha	Head of Ghadamès Manuscripts Association
26. Abdel Jabbar Abdel Qader Mahalhal	Researcher in history and manuscripts
27. Nour al-Din Mustafa al-Thani	Researcher in history and manuscripts
28. Khaled Hammadi Mansour	Director of the Urban Planning Office
29. Ahmed Bashir Malek	Director of the Cultural Center
30. Abdullah Mohammed Bahmi	Director of the Administrative and Financial Affairs Department at GCPDA
31. Al-Shadli Mustafa al-Hajji	Director of the Old City Administration at GCPDA
32. Abdel Sattar Bashir al-Bakai	Head of the Activities Department at GCPDA and member of the Committee to Remove Ghadamès from the List in Danger
33. Abdel Moneim Ibrahim Mohammed	Head of the Maintenance Section at GCPDA
34. Ahmed al-Tahami al-Arabi	Director of Planning and Projects at GCPDA
35. Hussein Mohammed Abou al-Qasim	Head of the Office of the Chairman of GCPDA
36. Ahmed Mohammed al-Hashanshi	Head of the GCPDA Documentation Section

- | | |
|--|--|
| 37. Abdel Salam al-Bukhari alHashanshi | Head of the GCPDA Media Unit |
| 38. Ahmed al-Araj al-Tayeb | GCPDA Documentation Section |
| 39. Miqdad Ahmed Malek | GCPDA Documentation Section and
member of the Committee to Remove
Ghadamès from the List in Danger |
| 40. Abdel Mawla Ahmed al-Arousi | GCPDA Media Unit |
| 41. Ali Mohammed Ghanjir | Sound system technician for the meeting hall |
| 42. Abdel Fattah Qasim Hamoud | GCPDA Services Section |
| 43. Abou Baker al-Tayeb al-Muwaffaq | GCPDA Transportation Section |
| 44. Sadia Mohammed Hassan Younis | Tamanahat Heritage Association |

ANNEX 5: Desired state of conservation for removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and progress achieved in the implementation of corrective measures

DSCOR Adopted Framework by Decision 44 COM 7A.14 (2021)

Impacts or threats (direct / indirect damages)	Relationship to the OUV	Corrective measures*	Expected outcomes [DSOCR]	Verification of indicators (by WHC)	Current status	Time frame
A. Damage to the built fabric of the property due to constraints with the capital budgets.	Negative effects on the management, integrity and authenticity of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.	1. Ensure long-term structural return of budgets to levels equal to those before the armed conflict for (a) emergency maintenance and (b) capital projects.	1. Long-term fully-resourced conservation and management system.	1. Commitment by the State Party to restore capital budgets to their equivalent level before the budget reductions.	1. a) Emergency maintenance work started in 2017 and is still ongoing regularly. b) This year the capital budget is delayed but approval is expected in July 2021.	1. Work will continue (a, b) as capital budget returns to pre-existing levels by December 2023 latest.
		2. Provide additional interim budgets to repair the damage due to the budget constraints between 2014–2018.	2. Sufficient financial capacity to repair damage due to capital budget reductions.	2. Availability and use of additional capital budgets to complete restoration activities due to previous capital reduction (see also 3).	2. First set of additional funds were made available in December 2020 so the work is now ongoing.	2. Additional funds are expected yearly with work completed by end of March 2022.
		3. Resume preservation, restoration and maintenance activities to recover	3. Complete the conservation of degraded built fabric to the level before beginning of the armed conflict.	3. Guidelines, budgets, and implementation and work plan.	3. The works started in January 2020 (80% estimated complete).	3. Completion date in July 2022.

Impacts or threats (direct / indirect damages)	Relationship to the OUV	Corrective measures*	Expected outcomes [DSOCR]	Verification of indicators (by WHC)	Current status	Time frame
		the attributes of the property OUV.	Including: a. Maintenance of 80% of the roofs and upper corridors of the old town houses b. Rebuilding / Renovation some of the houses in danger of collapse, c. Maintenance of the squares and main streets of the old town, d. Repair of the 21 houses damaged by heavy rains.			
		4.. Determine a long-term strategy including protection from any repetition of similar threats to the property's attributes.	4. Permanent risk preparedness and reinforced capacities.	4. Specific inclusion in Guidelines, Work Plan, Management Plan, supported by training and coordinated with fire department and civil security.	4. This was started in May 2020, and is in an ongoing process of review.	4. Expected completion in June 2023.
B. Damage to the significance setting of	Negative effects on the setting of the Outstanding	1. Establish a stable mechanism to ensure continued water	1. Long-term fully financially resourced conservation and management system.	1. Commitment by the State Party to provide sufficient capital budgets to fully maintain the oasis.	1. Budgetary commitments expected in July 2021.	1. Expected resourcing completed by December 2022.

Impacts or threats (direct / indirect damages)	Relationship to the OUV	Corrective measures*	Expected outcomes [DSOCR]	Verification of indicators (by WHC)	Current status	Time frame
the property due to irrigation constraints.	Universal Value of the property.	supply to the palm groves of the oasis,				
		2. Repair the damage due to the electricity shortage crisis and due to fires, 2014–2018.	2. Provide additional interim budgets to repair provoked damages.	2. Availability of additional capital budgets to complete rehabilitation .	2. Additional budget received in July 2020 with work ongoing (30% completed).	2. Work completed in March 2023.
		3. Ensure continued operation of irrigation system in the future.	3. Confirmation that planned activities support the contribution of the setting to the authenticity and the attributes of the property OUV including: a. Continued maintenance of Ain Al-Faras Basin, b. Continued operation of the 5 productive agricultural wells, c. Continued maintenance of 18 km of traditional irrigation channels, d. Continued maintenance of 36	3. Approved specific work plan, guidelines and practical evidence. Implementation of the work plan. Restoration and maintenance of the built fabric of the property.	3. Current phase of work started in 2018 and is currently ongoing (based on previous annual work).	3. Phase completed in December 2022 (annual continuity and regular review).

Impacts or threats (direct / indirect damages)	Relationship to the OUV	Corrective measures*	Expected outcomes [DSOCR]	Verification of indicators (by WHC)	Current status	Time frame
			linear km of fences for the main farm lanes, e. Replanting of lost palm trees and repair of other important features.			
		4. Determine a long-term strategy to protect, conserve and maintain the irrigation system along with an emergency back-up plan.	4. Permanent risk preparedness and reinforced capacities in relation to the irrigation and its importance for the property's setting.	4. Inclusion of risk preparedness in the Property Management Plan with provision of back-up mechanisms and successful and regular testing exercises.	4. Work started in May 2020 and currently ongoing.	4. Expected completion date in June 2023.

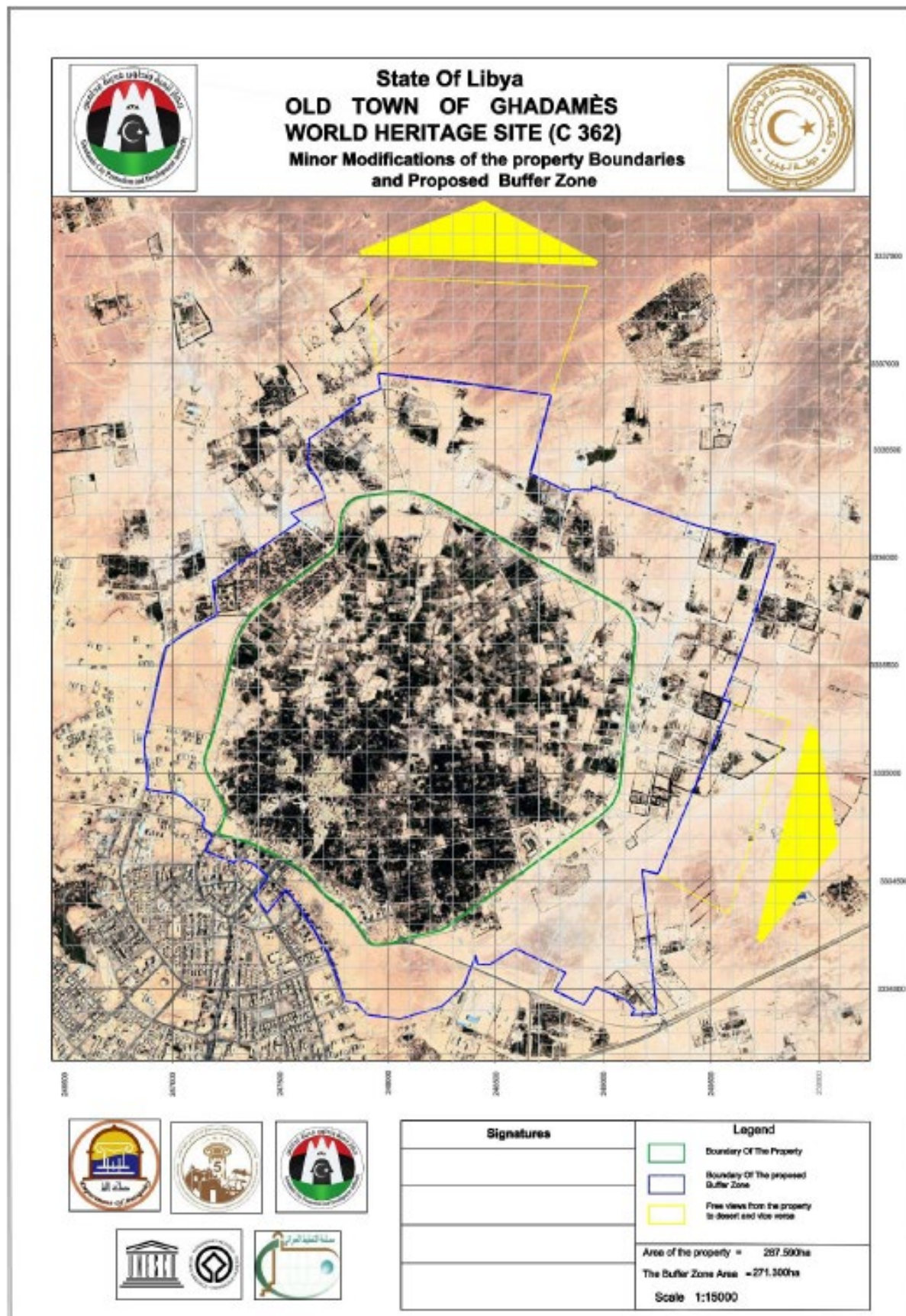
DSOCR Framework and Progress Achieved in the Implementation of Corrective Measures

Corrective measures*	Expected outcomes [DSOCR]	Verification of indicators (by WHC)	Status at the time of DSCOR finalization (2021)	Current Status (2024/2025)
Impacts or threats (direct/indirect damages):				
A. Damage to the built fabric of the property due to constraints with the capital budgets				
1. Ensure long-term structural return of budgets to levels equal to those before the armed conflict for (a) emergency maintenance and (b) capital projects.	1. Long-term fully-resourced conservation and management system.	1. Commitment by the State Party to restore capital budgets to their equivalent level before the budget reductions.	1. a. Emergency maintenance work started in 2017 and is still ongoing regularly b. This year the capital budget is delayed but approval is expected in July 2021	1. Total budgets have increased between 2021 and 2024 (though no 'capital budgets' allocated). This allowed for continued maintenance works. In addition, international partnerships formed to support specific projects.
2. Provide additional interim budgets to repair the damage due to the budget constraints between 2014–2018.	2. Sufficient financial capacity to repair damage due to capital budget reductions.	2. Availability and use of additional capital budgets to complete restoration activities due to previous capital reduction (see also 3)	2. First set of additional funds were made available in December 2020 so the work is now ongoing	2. Additional interim budgets provided addressing damage due to constraints in 2014-2018.
3. Resume preservation, restoration and maintenance activities to recover the attributes of the property OUV	3. Complete the conservation of degraded built fabric to the level before beginning of the armed conflict. Including: a. Maintenance of 80% of the roofs and upper corridors of the old town houses	3. Guidelines, budgets, and implementation and work plan	3. The works started in January 2020 (80% estimated complete)	3. Preservation, restoration and maintenance activities have continued to recover attributes of the property OUV. Including: a. 80% of roof terraces and pathways. b. Rebuilding/renovation of dilapidated houses in danger of collapse.

4. Determine a long-term strategy including protection from any repetition of similar threats to the property's attributes	<p>b. Rebuilding / Renovation some of the houses in danger of collapse</p> <p>c. Maintenance of the squares and main streets of the old town</p> <p>d. Repair of the 21 houses damaged by heavy rains</p> <p>4. Permanent risk preparedness and reinforced capacities</p>	4. Specific inclusion in Guidelines, Work Plan, Management Plan, supported by training and coordinated with fire department and civil security.	4. This was started in May 2020, and is in an ongoing process of review	<p>c. Maintenance of public squares and main streets of the old town.</p> <p>d. Conservation of houses damaged by rain in 2017, and stabilization repair of houses damaged by the 2019 rainfall.</p> <p>4. Risk Preparedness Plan and Management Plan prepared, and capacities reinforced through training workshops.</p> <p>Water reservoirs have been rehabilitated, in addition to repair of the power supply, and provision of movable pump if needed.</p> <p>In addition, land use regulations have been prepared and a charter for the management of the buffer zone has been drafted.</p>
Impacts or threats (direct/indirect damages): B. Damage to the significance setting of the property due to irrigation				
1. Establish a stable mechanism to ensure continued water supply to the palm groves of the oasis,	1. Long-term fully financially resourced conservation and management system.	1. Commitment by the State Party to provide sufficient capital budgets to fully maintain the oasis.	1. Budgetary commitments expected in July 2021	<p>1. 'Ain Al-Faras water basin rehabilitated; five water reservoirs rehabilitated and operational.</p> <p>Power supply has been restored.</p>

<p>2. Repair the damage due to the electricity shortage crisis and due to fires, 2014–2018.</p> <p>3. Ensure continued operation of irrigation system in the future</p>	<p>2. Provide additional interim budgets to repair provoked damages</p> <p>3. Confirmation that planned activities support the contribution of the setting to the authenticity and the attributes of the property OUV</p> <p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continued maintenance of Ain Al-Faras Basin. b. Continued operation of the 5 productive agricultural wells. c. Continued maintenance of 18 km of traditional irrigation channels d. Continued maintenance of 36 linear km of fences for the main farm lanes. e. Replanting of lost palm trees and repair of other important features 	<p>2. Availability of additional capital budgets to complete rehabilitation</p> <p>3. Approved specific work plan, guidelines and practical evidence. Implementation of the work plan.</p> <p>Restoration and maintenance of the built fabric of the property</p>	<p>2. Additional budget received in July 2020 with work ongoing (30% completed)</p> <p>3. Current phase of work started in 2018 and is currently ongoing (based on previous annual work)</p>	<p>2. Effect of fire removed and palm waste cleaned.</p> <p>3. 18 km of irrigation canals cleaned and rehabilitated (805 of total). Maintenance of water pumps and wells.</p> <p>36 km of fencing around farm lands maintained and green area revived. Replanting and repair carried out, and cultivated area is now 200.27 hectares (80% of property).</p> <p>4. Risk Preparedness Plan prepared referring to traditional knowledge systems and their impacts on mitigating impact of emergencies.</p>
<p>4. Determine a long-term strategy to protect, conserve and maintain the irrigation system along with an emergency back-up plan.</p>	<p>4. Permanent risk preparedness and reinforced capacities in relation to the irrigation and its importance for the property's setting.</p>	<p>4. Inclusion of risk preparedness in the Property Management Plan with provision of back-up mechanisms and successful and regular testing exercises.</p>	<p>4. Work started in May 2020 and currently ongoing</p>	

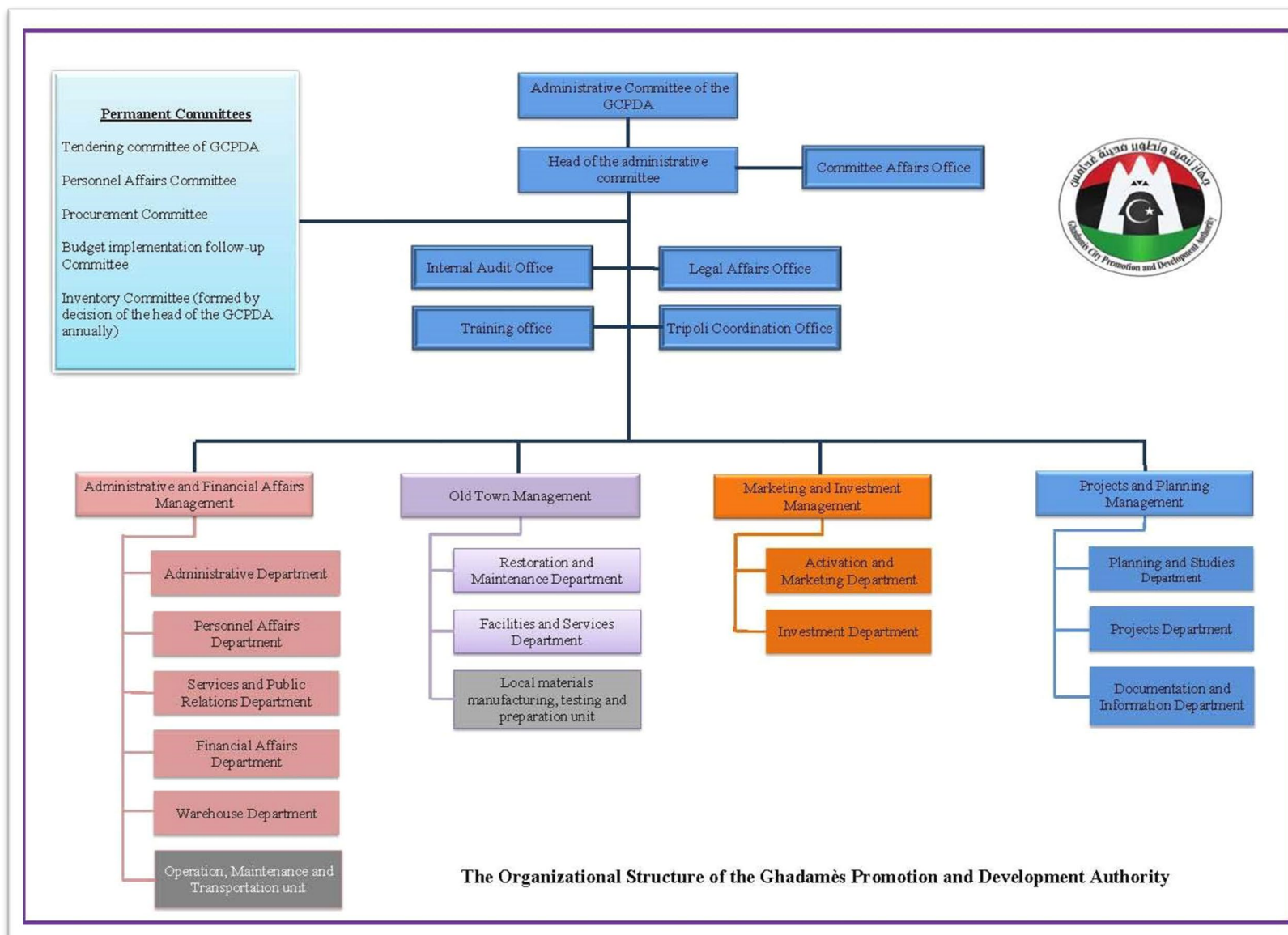
ANNEX 6: Map showing the boundaries of the property



ANNEX 7: List of key documents which have informed the mission

- Management Plan (2024-2030)
- Risk Preparedness Plan
- Amended attachment of the decision of the Secretary of the (GCPDA) No. 62 of 2019
Land use regulations within the boundaries of The Old Town of Ghadames and the buffer zone
- Charter to manage the buffer zone and property boundaries
- Previous state of conservation reports submitted by the State Party with relevant annexes, in addition to presentations provided during the mission.

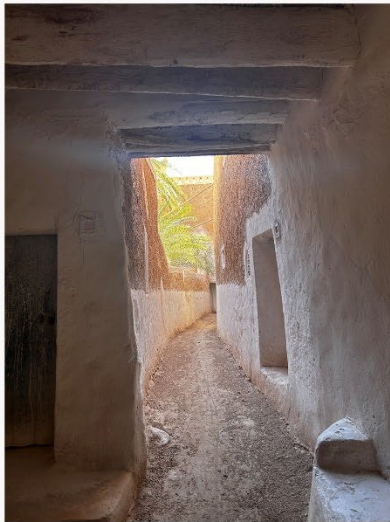
ANNEX 8: Organizational structure of the Ghadames City Promotion and Development Authority (GCPDA)



ANNEX 9: Additional photographs



A maze of cool, covered alleys within the urban area, and the door to the Younis Mosque.



Shaft to permit a natural air convection through the covered alleys, and alleys through the palm groves.



Different views of the public squares, mayadin.

Door of the Mosque al-Atiq, dated from 664, 42 of the Hegira, benches always framed the entrances.

Details of decorated arches.



View of the palm groves.

© ICOMOS / T. Grandin



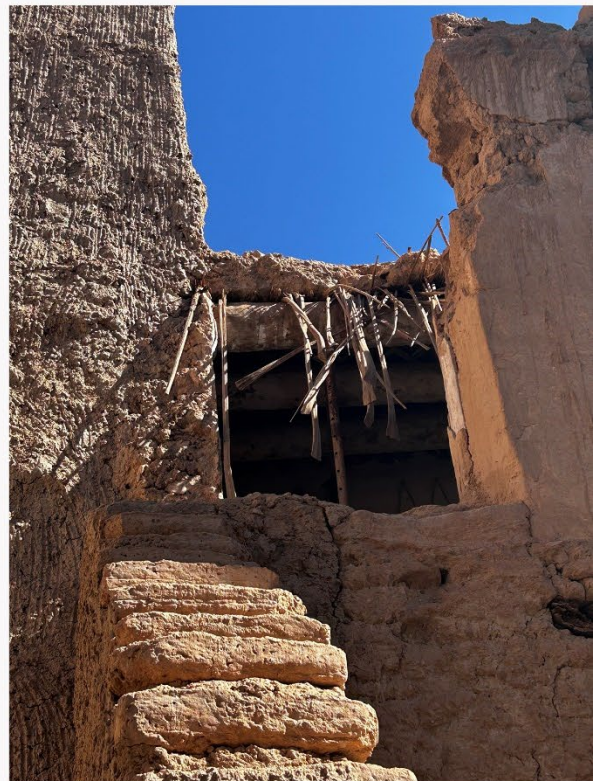
Traditional ceilings, the one at right is recent - Traditional vaults, the one at right is recent.



Traditional gypsum painted and in relief decorative patterns on the walls, zanjafoor, an old craftswomen techniques, applied principally on the central space of the house.



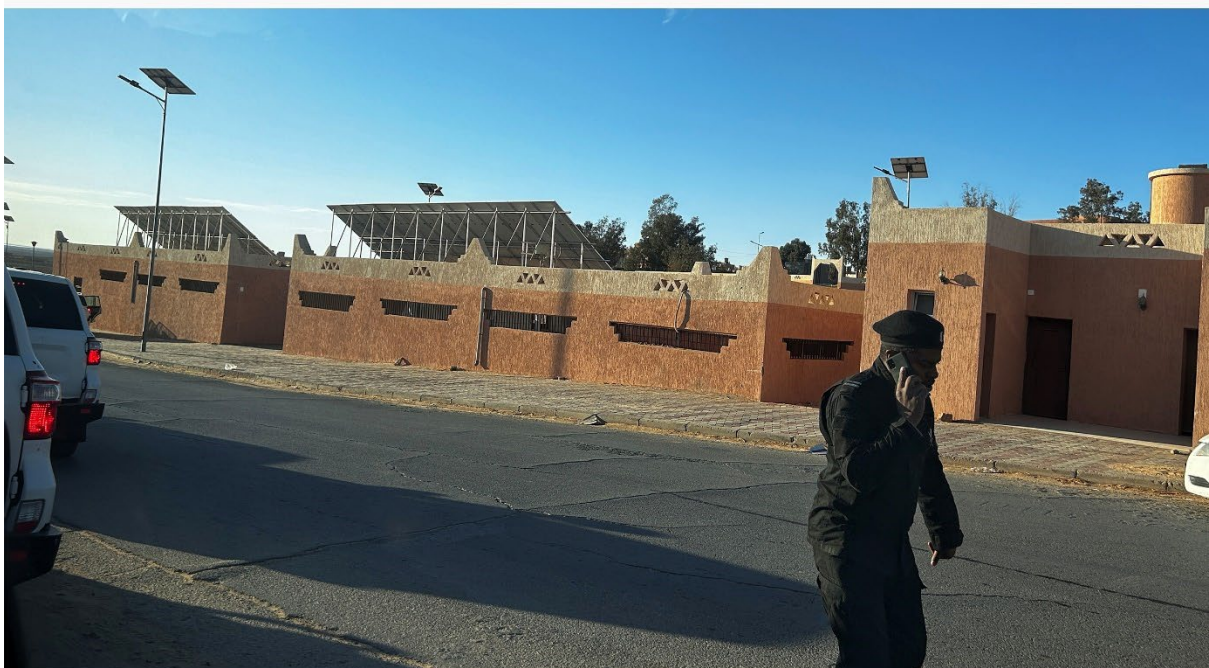
New zanjafoor in the visitors center.



Cracks have been noticed in numerous locations effect of rain, atmospheric conditions, or possible ground subsidence.

Emergency shoring, within partially collapsed houses, have only been carried out in very few cases.

A necessary progress in the quality of the electrical installations is needed.



Up Left: The electrical transformer for the electrical supply of the houses in the Old Town.

Up Right: Wall integrated public lighting.

Below: The solar plant for the public lighting on the Old Town.



Recent WHS panel located at the South-West of the Property. The Boundaries of the Property, and the Related Buffer Zone, as well as the two areas where the view should be free up to 2 km from the Boundary of the Property

Lively public cafes within the settlement providing shadow.





Internal views: Ceilings, vaults and wall decorative patters.

© ICOMOS / T. Grandin



Different views of the public square, the "mayadin" .