

## **47 COM**

WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2 Paris. 27 June 2025

Original: English

# CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Forty-seventh session UNESCO, Paris 6 – 16 July 2025

# Item 7B of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List

## **Summary**

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of Reactive Monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language: <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/47COM/documents">http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/47COM/documents</a>

All previous state of conservation reports will be available through the World Heritage State of conservation Information System at the following Web address: <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc">http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc</a>

<u>Decision required</u>: The World Heritage Committee may wish to adopt the draft Decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

**Note**: For each section, the reports are presented in the English alphabetical order of States Parties.

## **TABLE OF CONTENT**

. STAT	TE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS	4
NATURAL	PROPERTIES	4
ASIA	AND PACIFIC	4
1.	Gondwana Rainforests of Australia (Australia)	4
3.	Greater Blue Mountains Area (Australia)	
8.	Western Tien-Shan (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)	
13.	Sagarmatha National Park (Nepal)	
14.	Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex (Thailand)	14
15.	Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (Thailand)	18
16.	Ha Long Bay - Cat Ba Archipelago (Viet Nam)	18
EURO	DPE AND NORTH AMERICA	19
18.	Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of E (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, F Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Ukraine)	rance, Spain,
19.	Białowieża Forest (Belarus, Poland)	19
20.	Pirin National Park (Bulgaria)	19
21.	Wood Buffalo National Park (Canada)	21
22.	Wadden Sea (Denmark, Germany, Kingdom of the Netherlands)	
24.	Durmitor National Park (Montenegro)	
26.	Lake Baikal (Russian Federation)	
27.	Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve (Russian Federation)	
30.	Western Caucasus (Russian Federation)	
31.	Doñana National Park (Spain)	25
LATIN	NAMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	26
37.	El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)	26
41.	Canaima National Park (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))	29
ARAB	3 STATES	33
53.	Socotra Archipelago (Yemen)	33
IIXED PR	OPERTIES	
EURO	OPE AND NORTH AMERICA	34
54.	Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region (Albania, North Macedonia)	34
55.	Laponian Area (Sweden)	
	N AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	
56.	Ancient Maya City and Protected Tropical Forests of Calakmul, Campeche (Mexico)	
57.	Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru)	
	CA	
60.	Ngorongoro Conservation Area (United Republic of Tanzania)	
	B STATES	
61.	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq)	

CULTURAL	PROPERTIES	42
ASIA A	AND PACIFIC	42
63.	Angkor (Cambodia)	42
64.	Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (China)	45
65.	Historic Centre of Macao (China)	
67.	Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor (China, Kazakhsta Kyrgyzstan)	an,
80.	Town of Luang Prabang (Lao People's Democratic Republic)	53
81.	Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landsca (Lao People's Democratic Republic)	
84.	Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore (Pakistan)	60
85.	Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Philippines)	61
86.	Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty (Republic of Korea)	63
88.	Silk Roads: Zarafshan-Karakum Corridor (Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)	64
90.	Historic Centre of Bukhara (Uzbekistan)	67
91.	Samarkand – Crossroad of Cultures (Uzbekistan)	71
92.	Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Hanoi (Viet Nam)	
EURO	PE AND NORTH AMERICA	
93.	Butrint (Albania)	72
94.	Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania)	
95.	The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Mode Movement (Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Japan, Switzerland)	rn
98.	Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and "Köç Yolu" Transhumance Route (Azerbaija	ın)
99.	Historic centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace (Azerbaijan)	72
101.	Ancient City of Nessebar (Bulgaria)	72
102.	Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia)	72
103.	Venetian Works of Defence between the 16th and 17th Centuries: Stato da Terra – Weste Stato da Mar (Croatia, Italy, Montenegro)	
104.	Historic Centre of Prague (Czechia)	73
105.	Paris, Banks of the Seine (France)	73
109.	Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany)	73
111.	Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and András Avenue (Hungary)	
113.	Venice and its lagoon (Italy)	77
114.	City of Valletta (Malta)	77
115.	Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro)	77
116.	Dutch Water Defence Lines (Kingdom of the Netherlands)	
117.	Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-194 (Poland)	ŀ5)
118.	Centennial Hall in Wrocław (Poland)	81
119.	Tarnowskie Góry Lead-Silver-Zinc Mine and its Underground Water Management Syste (Poland)	
120.	Historic Centre of Guimarães and Couros Zone (Portugal)	
121.	Royal Building of Mafra – Palace, Basilica, Convent, Cerco Garden and Hunting Pa (Tapada) (Portugal)	ırk
122.	Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga (Portugal)	
123.	Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands (Russian Federation)	
124.	Kizhi Pogost (Russian Federation)	

127.	Aphrodisias (Türkiye)	. 87		
128.	Arslantepe Mound (Türkiye)	. 90		
129.	Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape (Türkiye)	. 91		
130.	Göbekli Tepe (Türkiye)			
131.	Historic Areas of Istanbul (Türkiye)	. 95		
133.	Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape (United Kingdom of Great Britain Northern Ireland)			
134.	Derwent Valley Mills (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	105		
135.	Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church (Un Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)			
136.	The English Lake District (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	109		
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN110				
141.	Settlement and Artificial Mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica Parinacota Region (Chile)			
AFRIC	A	114		
151.	Royal Palaces of Abomey (Benin)	114		
152.	Koutammakou, the Land of the Batammariba (Benin, Togo)	118		
154.	Lower Valley of the Omo (Ethiopia)			
157.	Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological Site (Kenya)	125		
161.	Memorial sites of the Genocide: Nyamata, Murambi, Gisozi and Bisesero (Rwanda)	127		
162.	Island of Saint-Louis (Senegal)	130		
163.	Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa (South Africa)	134		
ARAB	STATES	138		
167.	Memphis and its Necropolis – the Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur (Egypt)	138		
168	Saint Catherine Area (Egypt)	141		
170.	Baptism Site "Bethany Beyond the Jordan" (Al-Maghtas) (Jordan)	144		
171.	Petra (Jordan)	144		
172.	Um er-Rasas (Kastrom Mefa'a) (Jordan)	148		
174.	Baalbek (Lebanon)	151		
175.	Byblos (Lebanon)	154		
176.	Tyre (Lebanon)	157		
177.	Medina of Essaouira (formerly Mogador) (Morocco)	161		
182.	Kairouan (Tunisia)	163		

#### I. STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORTS

## **NATURAL PROPERTIES**

#### **ASIA AND PACIFIC**

## 1. Gondwana Rainforests of Australia (Australia)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1986

Criteria (viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/368/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/368/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

N/A

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground transport infrastructure (proposed cableway) (issue resolved)
- Unprecedented fires that affected more than half of the property

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/368/

## Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/368/documents/">http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/368/documents/</a>, which reports the following:

- The conservation of the property continues to be a strong collaborative effort by the Australian, New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland state governments and is supported by communities including First Nations peoples, volunteers and researchers;
- Bushfire recovery actions to address the 2019-20 bushfires that impacted approximately 196,000 hectares (53%) of the property continue to be implemented. The lessons learnt are being used to inform bushfire preparedness and adaptive management as part of long-term recovery efforts, including implementing prescribed burning, feral animal and weed management, fire response planning, monitoring programmes and improved access and installation of water infrastructure. No severe bushfires have occurred in the property since;
- Several recovery actions for threatened species outlined in the 2022 State Party report are beginning to deliver positive outcomes. Threatened species frameworks are implemented at the federal (Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032) and state ('NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Threatened Species Framework' and 'Queensland Threatened Species Program') government levels;

- Research on the impacts of Myrtle rust (Austropuccinia psidii) fungus on the property remains underway, including a national government funded project, as well as ongoing monitoring and management activities;
- The State Party recognises the impacts of climate change have significantly worsened the frequency and intensity of bushfires and is accelerating investment in emission reduction and climate adaptation, including projects for the property such as the development of a climate change adaptation plan;
- The recommendations of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements continue to be implemented (2023 interim report notes 15 completed and the remaining 65 in good progress), as are the recommendations of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry;
- The State Party continues to support capacity building and knowledge sharing in emergency management and climate change action through various initiatives, including the Climate Action for World Heritage through Capacity Building (CAT) project;
- No proposal has been submitted to the government regarding the granting of a "water mining license" to extract water from the vicinity of Springbrook National Park under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Noting community concerns regarding water extraction, research remains underway. The State Party will advise the World Heritage Centre if a proposed action proceeds and is determined to require assessment for potential significant impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The continued collaboration between the federal and state governments and various other stakeholders including First Nations peoples for the conservation and management of the property, is noted with appreciation.

Recalling that the 2019-20 bushfires impacted approximately half of the property, including part of the ancient rainforest communities that are not adapted to regular fires, the implementation of ongoing management actions is welcomed. Noting that the ecological impacts from these fires varied across the property and that understanding their extent, as well as realising full recovery prospects, will take many years, it is positive that no further severe bushfires have occurred in the property since, and that recovery efforts are being continued, including through adaptive management, as well as renewed prevention, preparedness and resilience building for future natural disasters.

Following the immediate response measures reported in 2021 and 2023 (Decisions **44 COM 7B.89** and **45 COM 7B.79**), it is positive that management is now shifting from immediate to longer-term recovery, and that lessons identified from the 2019-20 bushfires are informing future bushfire preparedness, including the preparation of individual bushfire response plans for the national parks that constitute the component parts of the property; addressing issues of feral animal and weed management; extensive post-fire assessments on the condition of the ecosystems and priority species (including NSW and Queensland government support for further research on the OUV of the property), which provide baseline data to inform monitoring and management practices; as well as improved infrastructure to aid fire management.

It is welcomed that several of the threatened species recovery actions outlined in the 2022 State Party report are reported to be beginning to deliver positive outcomes, and threatened species frameworks are implemented at the federal and state government levels. It is noted that research on the impacts of Myrtle rust (*Austropuccinia psidii*) fungus on the property, as well as related monitoring and management activities, remain underway, and it is recommended that the State Party continue to monitor and address its impact on the OUV of the property.

Noting that the impacts of climate change have significantly worsened the frequency and intensity of bushfires, it is welcomed that the State Party is accelerating the implementation of various climate change policies, adaptation plans, programmes and strategies, as well as adaptation projects implemented within the property. The reported knowledge sharing of best practices and continued capacity building support in emergency management and climate action, including through the CAT project, are also noted with appreciation and further encouraged. It is also recommended that the remaining recommendations of the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements* and the NSW Bushfire Inquiry continue being fully implemented.

It is noted that no proposal has been submitted to the government regarding the granting of a license to extract water from the vicinity of Springbrook National Park, and that the State Party will advise the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines should the project proceed and require further assessment. Should such activity be considered in future, its potential impacts on the OUV of the property should be appropriately assessed.

In light of the continuing progress to address the bushfire impacts on the property, it is recommended that the State Party continue the various monitoring, assessment, recovery and longer-term management measures, to ensure the ongoing recovery of the property from the fires, and inform future bushfire preparedness and increase resilience to climate change, and to provide an update on progress of this recovery in 2027.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.1**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 45 COM 7B.79, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Appreciates</u> the continued collaboration between the Australian, New South Wales (NSW) and Queensland governments and various other stakeholders, including First Nations peoples for the conservation and management of the property;
- 4. Welcomes the ongoing implementation of long-term recovery measures to address the ecological impacts of the 2019-2020 bushfires, which affected approximately 53% of the property, on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including adaptive management, renewed prevention preparedness and resilience building for future natural disasters, as well as the prioritisation of threatened species recovery and the report of positive improvements for some threatened species, and the prioritisation of climate action, and requests the State Party to continue the effective implementation of these measures to ensure continued recovery of the property;
- 5. <u>Noting</u> that the recovery of the property from the impacts of the bushfires will take many years, <u>also requests</u> the State Party to provide an update on progress achieved regarding:
  - a) The ongoing monitoring and assessment of ecological impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires, including the impacts of Myrtle rust (Austropuccinia psidii), on the OUV of the property, and the implementation of long-term recovery measures,
  - b) Implementation of the remaining recommendations of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and NSW Bushfire Inquiry, as well as climate change adaptation plans for the property;
- 6. <u>Also appreciates</u> the State Party's continued sharing of best practices and capacity building in emergency management and climate action, including through the Climate Action for World Heritage through Capacity Building project, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to continue supporting other States Parties to the Convention in this regard;
- 7. <u>Takes note</u> that there is currently no proposal for the granting of a license to extract water from the vicinity of Springbrook National Park and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of any projects that may impact the OUV of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

8. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above.

## 3. Greater Blue Mountains Area (Australia)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2000

Criteria (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/documents/</a>

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

N/A

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Air transport infrastructure (construction of the Western Sydney Airport)
- Mining
- Water infrastructure (proposed raising of the Warragamba Dam wall)
- · Unprecedented fires that affected large parts of the property

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/</a>

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/documents/</a> and reports the following:

- The conservation of the property continues to be a strong collaborative effort by the Australian and New South Wales (NSW) governments and is supported by communities including First Nations peoples, volunteers and researchers;
- Full recovery from the 2019-2020 bushfires, which impacted approximately 739,906 hectares (71%) of the property, will take many years. Long-term recovery efforts including adaptive management, renewed prevention, preparedness and resilience building for future natural disasters, are continuing. No severe bushfires have occurred in the property since;
- The impact of climate change on the frequency and intensity of bushfires is recognised and the State Party has committed to national and international climate action;
- Protected area management is shifting from immediate to longer-term recovery. Lessons learnt inform bushfire preparedness and ongoing management, i.e., identifying habitats for intensive protection, prescribed burns, pest management, monitoring programmes, and fire response planning. Assessment of post-fire ecosystems and monitoring recovery continue:
- Threatened species recovery is a key priority at national and state level. The property is a priority under the national Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032 and activities are being implemented. Post-fire monitoring revealed positive outcomes for several species;

- All recommendations of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements
  directed to the Australian Government were implemented in 2023. Progress remains underway
  to implement the remaining 65 recommendations, as well as the NSW Bushfire Inquiry
  recommendations. Flooding response and recovery include on-ground remediation and funding
  to implement the Independent Flood Inquiry recommendations;
- There are no further plans to raise the Warragamba Dam wall. A range of activities are planned within the existing dam footprint to allow environmental flows. The State Party will advise the World Heritage Centre if further assessment is required;
- Internal guidelines have been developed to assess proposed mining developments in the area around the property for potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), providing for greater rigour and consistency, in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- The update of the *Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Strategic Plan* will consider all potential threats to the property including activities outside its boundaries, such as mining;
- The Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport is planned to commence operation in late 2026. The 2024 IUCN review of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the preliminary flight paths is being taken into consideration. The final EIS will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre.

On 25 October 2023, the State Party transmitted an invitation to comment on the draft EIS for the proposed preliminary flight paths of the Western Sydney Airport. On 26 March 2024, IUCN comments were transmitted to the State Party.

On 29 February 2024, the State Party transmitted a letter to the World Heritage Centre confirming that the proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall was withdrawn. On 2 May 2024, the State Party transmitted a notification report for the period from 1 December 2023 to 29 February 2024, confirming withdrawals of the Warragamba Dam Raising Project and a proposal to construct tunnels near the property.

On 12 May 2025, the World Heritage Centre transmitted to the State Party third party concerns regarding a wind farm project in the vicinity of the property. No response has been received at the time of preparation of this report.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The continued collaboration between the federal and state governments and various other stakeholders including First Nations peoples for the conservation and management of the property, is noted with appreciation.

Acknowledging that the full recovery of the property from the 2019-2020 bushfires, which impacted 71% of the area of the property, will take many years, it is positive that no further severe bushfires have occurred in the property since, and that management is now shifting from the more immediate response measures reported in the last 2022 State Party report to long-term recovery efforts, including measures such as adaptive management, renewed prevention preparedness and resilience building for future natural disasters.

It is also positive that ecological monitoring of threatened species is showing positive improvements for some species of flora and fauna impacted by the fires, and that threatened species recovery remains a key priority for national and state level planning and investment, with the property identified as a priority area.

Noting that recovery will take many years, it is recommended that the State Party continue implementing these measures to ensure continued recovery of the property and its OUV, as well as climate action measures. Similarly, it is recommended that the remaining recommendations of the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements*, NSW Bushfire Inquiry and Independent Flood Inquiry continue being fully implemented.

Recalling the concerns previously raised by the Committee, the continued confirmation that there are no further plans to raise the Warragamba Dam wall is positive. It is noted with appreciation that the proposed activities planned within the existing dam footprint to allow environmental flows will be appropriately assessed, and that the State Party intends to keep the World Heritage Centre informed should any such activities have the potential to impact the OUV.

The strategic approach pursued by the State Party to address potential cumulative impacts from development activities on the OUV of the property is welcomed, including the development of internal guidelines to assess potential impacts of proposed mining developments around the property in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, as well as confirmation that the update of the *Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Strategic Plan* will consider all potential threats to the property including activities outside its boundaries. The State Party is requested to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of any significant developments that may impact the OUV of the property in the future, including those related to mining and renewable energy, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

It is noted that IUCN's recommendations regarding the draft EIS for the preliminary flight paths of the Western Sydney Airport are being taken into consideration in the finalisation of the EIS, recalling the specific recommendation to focus on cumulative or additional impacts of noise pollution in relation to air traffic over the property. It is recommended that the State Party ensure that the flight path design is finalised in a way that avoids negative impacts on the OUV of the property during operation.

#### **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.3**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **44 COM 7B.180** and **45 COM 7B.80** adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions, respectively,
- 3. <u>Appreciates</u> the continued collaboration between the Australian and New South Wales (NSW) governments and various other stakeholders, including First Nations peoples for the conservation and management of the property;
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the ongoing implementation of long-term recovery measures to address the ecological impacts of the 2019-2020 bushfires, which affected 71% of the property, on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including adaptive management, renewed prevention preparedness and resilience building for future natural disasters, as well as the prioritisation of threatened species recovery and the report of positive improvements for some threatened species, as well as prioritisation of climate action, and requests the State Party to continue the effective implementation of these measures to ensure continued recovery of the property:
- 5. <u>Noting</u> that the recovery of the property from the impacts of the bushfires will take many years, <u>also requests</u> the State Party to provide an update on progress achieved regarding:
  - a) the ongoing monitoring and assessment of ecological impacts of the 2019-2020 bushfires and the implementation of various long-term recovery measures,
  - b) implementation of the remaining recommendations of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements, NSW Bushfire Inquiry and Independent Flood Inquiry;
- 6. <u>Also appreciates</u> the continued confirmation that there are no further plans to raise the Warragamba Dam wall, and confirmation that the various activities planned within the existing dam footprint to allow environmental flows will be adequately assessed, and that the State Party will inform the World Heritage Centre of any potential impacts on the OUV of the property;
- 7. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> that the completed assessment of potential cumulative mining impacts on the property informed the development of internal guidelines to assess

proposed mining developments around the property for potential impacts on the OUV in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;

- 8. <u>Also welcomes</u> the confirmation that the update of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Strategic Plan will consider all potential threats to the property including activities outside its boundaries, including mining activities;
- 9. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of any significant developments that may impact the OUV of the property in the future, including those related to mining and renewable energy, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 10. Requests furthermore the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts of any activities related to the Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport, including the finalisation of the flight path design, on the OUV of the property are fully assessed in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context and that any negative impacts are avoided;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above.
- 8. Western Tien-Shan (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 13. Sagarmatha National Park (Nepal)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (vii)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/120/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 7 (from 1980-1999) Total amount approved: USD 232,097

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/120/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

June 1985: UNESCO mission; December 2002: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; July 2005: Fact-finding mission; May 2016: IUCN Advisory mission

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Air pollution (issue resolved)
- Illegal activities (Poaching)

- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation (Rapid increase and commercialization of mountaineering tourism, including resort and trail development);
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure (noise pollution and visual impacts from helicopter use)
- Livestock farming / grazing of domesticated animals (issue resolved)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (Unclear legal basis for establishment and operation of Kongde View Resort, including access trails)
- Mining (issue resolved)
- Other climate change impacts
- Quarrying (issue resolved)
- Solid waste (Inadequate solid and liquid waste management)
- Forestry / wood production (Firewood collection)
- Others: Human-wildlife conflict; Subsistence wild plant collection

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/120/

#### Current conservation issues

On 3 December 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/120/documents/, which reports the following:

- The revision of the 2016-2020 Management Plan (MP) for the property is being finalized, including planned field study and stakeholder consultations. The revised MP includes a separate chapter to address tourism related issues and threats:
- Tourism management measures remain ongoing, including regulating visitor infrastructure, a
  visitor tracking system (VTS), helicopters for rescue and emergency works and regular
  consultations with security agencies and the Civil Aviation Authority to manage flights, as well as
  waste management in collaboration with the Sagarmatha Pollution Control Committee (SPCC)
  and local communities (14,000 kg of waste collected in 2023 from the Khumbu/Everest region);
- Illegal activities continue to be monitored through joint patrolling of park authorities and Nepali Army. Regular patrolling and monitoring of the Kongde View Resort continue to control any adverse environmental impact. The revised MP will include a chapter on the mitigation plan;
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the optical fibre project was revised based on IUCN's comments provided in November 2019, and approved in January 2022;
- Sagarmatha National Park (SNP) has clearly defined zonation, consisting of the National Park area (1,148 km²) and a buffer zone (275 km²) as included in the MP. The park authority has undertaken several meetings with the local government and communities regarding the formalization of the nationally designated buffer zone as a buffer zone of the property;
- Firewood collection remains banned within the property, supported by law enforcement. The
  revised MP will include interventions to reduce firewood collection and promote alternative
  energy;
- Patrolling and surveillance activities to control poaching are continued;
- Strategies to address climate change are being developed, and various related monitoring and awareness raising activities have been implemented;
- Overall, three micro and one large hydropower project are proposed in Chaurikharka and Lukla
  within the nationally designated buffer zone (in the vicinity of the property). Two of the micro
  projects are in the feasibility stage, and an Environmental Study for the third Ama Dablam project
  (located within the property) was submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by IUCN
  via letters exchanged in 2023 and 2024. For the large project, the EIA was approved and includes
  measures to mitigate negative impact on the property which are being monitored by the park
  authority.

On 13 November 2023, the World Heritage Centre transmitted to the State Party the IUCN review of a draft EIA for the Ama Dablam hydropower project submitted on 16 July 2023, in which IUCN requested further clarification on the Ama Dablam project as well as a larger (30MW) hydropower project in the Chaurikharka and Lukla areas. The State Party submitted a response on 24 December 2023. The World Heritage Centre transmitted the IUCN review of the additional clarification on 1 March 2024,

recommending that the State Party 1) ensures mitigation measures to minimize visual impact on the landscape, and 2) avoids negative impacts of changes to the river flow in the implementation of the project, while further clarification was requested on the larger hydropower project. In the same letter, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party to verify third-party information concerning the amendment of wildlife legislation which allows hydropower and tourism resorts in national parks.

On 11 April 2025, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party to verify third-party information regarding unrestricted helicopter operations within the property. No response has been received to the two letters dated March 2024 and April 2025 at the time of preparation of this report.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Recalling that the revision of the 2016-2020 MP was already underway at the time of the last State Party report in 2022, it is regrettable that this process has not yet been completed, and that there has therefore been no current MP in place to guide conservation and management of the property since. Noting that the State Party confirms the MP is now in finalization, and has reiterated that the revised MP will include chapters on tourism, mitigation plan for the Kongde View Resort and interventions to reduce firewood collection and promote alternative energy, it is recommended the State Party finalize the MP as soon as possible, ensuring that the aforementioned issues are adequately addressed, for submission to the World Heritage Centre.

It is noted that various tourism management measures such as visitor regulation and waste collection continue to be implemented, and that tourism will be included in the revised MP. However, recalling the previously raised concerns over growing tourism pressure, and highlighting the importance of a strategic approach to tourism management, it is regrettable that no update was provided regarding the development of the planned Tourism Management Plan nor the requested visitor carrying capacity study. It remains important that the carrying capacity of the property is appropriately assessed, especially during the peak season, to inform the Tourism Management Plan, which should in turn be aligned with the revised MP for the property for a coordinated overall management approach.

It is acknowledged that helicopters are important for rescue and emergency works and that flights are managed with the aviation authority. However, the third-party report of unrestricted helicopter operations is concerning, recalling that the 2016 IUCN Advisory mission raised a concern over poorly controlled helicopter use. It would therefore be important that the State Party provide a response on this matter, including further details of monitoring and regulation of tourism related helicopter traffic as previously requested (Decisions 44 COM 7B.96 and 45 COM 7B.87). It is positive that monitoring and enforcement measures regarding the Kongde View Resort are continuing and will be reflected in the revised MP.

It is noted that the EIA for the optical fibre project was revised based on IUCN recommendations prior to approval, and that separate sources report the subsequent positive provision of internet connectivity to remote communities.

The State Party's continued consultation with local government and communities in view of formalizing the nationally designated buffer zone as a buffer zone of the property is appreciated. It is again encouraged that an online meeting be organized between the State Party, the management authority, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to provide further guidance, including in relation to addressing the zonation scheme.

Ongoing actions to address issues including firewood collection, alternative energy use, and poaching are noted with appreciation and should be continued.

The State Party's continued commitment to monitor and raise awareness of climate change impacts on the local community and biodiversity is appreciated. Recalling a glacial lake outburst flood which affected a village within the property in August 2024, the importance of developing a climate adaptation strategy and its alignment with the revised MP should be reiterated.

It is noted that the EIA for the Ama Dablam hydropower project was approved following the IUCN review of March 2024, and that mitigation measures are reported to be in place. Should the two other microhydropower projects be considered beyond the feasibility stage, it is important to ensure that their potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property are adequately assessed in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse. It is highly regrettable that the EIA for the reportedly 'large' hydropower project in Chaurikharka and Lukla, within the nationally designated buffer zone (i.e., in the vicinity of the property), has been approved without further details having been provided as requested in the March 2024 letter, and by the World Heritage Committee (Decision **45 COM 7B.87**)

which also requested the project be halted until clarity is provided on whether the potential impact on the OUV has been determined and submitted for review. It is recommended that the Committee urge again the State Party to halt this project until information on the assessment of potential impact on the OUV has been provided for review by IUCN, and to provide further information, including the current status, on the project. In this regard, it is important that the State Party also provide a response regarding the third-party information that a regulation amending existing wildlife legislation was passed in 2024, which reportedly allows the construction of hydropower and tourism resorts in national parks, including any implications for the OUV of the property.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.13

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **44 COM 7B.96** and **45 COM 7B.87**, adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Takes note</u> that the revision of the 2016-2020 Management Plan for the property is being finalised, however <u>regrets</u> that this process has not yet been completed and <u>requests</u> the State Party to finalize, as soon as possible, the revised Management Plan, including chapters on tourism, mitigation plan for the Kongde View Resort and interventions to reduce firewood collection and promote alternative energy, for submission to the World Heritage Centre;
- 4. <u>Also recalling</u> concerns regarding increasing numbers of visitors to the property, <u>takes</u> <u>note</u> that measures such as visitor regulation and waste management continue to be implemented; and <u>reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to support a strategic sustainable tourism management approach by:
  - a) Providing an update of the planned development of a Tourism Management Plan,
  - b) Undertaking a visitor carrying capacity study to establish an appropriate carrying capacity for the property, especially during the peak season, and use the findings to inform the Tourism Management Plan,
  - c) Ensuring that the Tourism Management Plan aligns with the revised Management Plan for the property;
- 5. <u>Acknowledges</u> that helicopters are important for rescue and emergency works in the property, however <u>notes with concern</u> that the World Heritage Centre has received third-party information regarding unrestricted helicopter operations, and <u>also reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to provide information on monitoring and regulation of tourism-related helicopter traffic within the property and the nationally designated buffer zones of the National Park;
- 6. <u>Takes note</u> that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the optical fibre project was revised based on the IUCN recommendations prior to its approval in 2023 and subsequent implementation;
- 7. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the State Party's continued consultation with local government and communities in view of formalizing the nationally designated buffer zone as a buffer zone of the property, and <u>reiterates its encouragement</u> to organize an online meeting between the State Party, the management authority, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to provide further guidance;

- 8. <u>Also notes with appreciation</u> ongoing efforts by the park authority to address firewood collection and poaching, including patrolling and surveillance activities in cooperation with relevant agencies and local stakeholders, <u>also requests</u> the State Party to continue such measures;
- 9. <u>Welcomes</u> the State Party's continued commitment to monitor and raise awareness of climate change impacts on the local community and biodiversity, <u>further recalling</u> a glacial lake outburst flood which affected a village within the property in August 2024, <u>further reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to develop a climate adaptation strategy, and integrate this into the revised Management Plan;
- 10. <u>Also takes note</u> that the EIA for the Ama Dablam micro-hydropower project was approved following the IUCN review of March 2024 and that mitigation measures are reported to be in place, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts of any other planned hydropower projects are assessed in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse:
- 11. Also regrets that the EIA for the reportedly large hydropower project proposed in Chaurikharka and Lukla, within the nationally designated buffer zone in the vicinity of the property, has been approved without details having been provided as requested, urges again the State Party to halt the aforementioned project until the requested information has been provided, and to provide further information on the project including the assessment of potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) as well as the current status of the project, as soon as possible, and no later than 1 December 2025, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN:
- 12. Requests furthermore the State Party to provide a response regarding the reported amendment of wildlife legislation in 2024 which allows the construction of hydropower and tourism resorts in national parks, including any potential implications for the OUV of the property, in response to the World Heritage Centre's letter dated March 2024;
- 13. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

#### 14. Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex (Thailand)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2005

Criteria (x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/590/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/590/documents/</a>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/590/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

February-March 2012: Joint UNESCO/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2014: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2016: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Illegal activities (Poaching and illegal logging)
- Ground transport infrastructure (Road expansion, in particular regarding Highways 304 and 348)
- Land conversion (Encroachment)
- Management systems/management plan
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Water infrastructure (Dams)
- Livestock farming/grazing of domesticated animals (Cattle grazing) (issue resolved)
- Other threats: Forest fragmentation (connectivity and the need for ecological corridors)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/590/

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/590/documents/ and reports the following:

- Information exchanges and efforts to address illegal wildlife trade, including illegal logging and trade of Siamese Rosewood, continues under established cooperation mechanisms with Cambodia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region, including through the ASEAN Working Group on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement;
- Regarding illegal logging of Siamese Rosewood in the property, between 2014 and 2024 the number of cases and the volume of confiscated timber decreased by approximately 94% and 98%, respectively. Action to protect Siamese Rosewood has been included in the five-year Action Plan (2023-2027) of the Department of National Parks (DNP), which aligns with other national plans and policies;
- Annual budgets for 2023 and 2024 for the protection of Siamese Rosewood have returned to normal levels after the significant drop in 2022 due to COVID-19 funding pressures. In addition, since 2022 new budget has been allocated for activities to manage and protect the property and several capacity building activities were held with the support of NGOs focused on monitoring and reporting, crime scene investigation, intelligence gathering, basic patrol functions and law enforcement operations;
- A proposal to redefine the boundary of the Thap Lan National Park (TLNP) component part is under consideration in accordance with the Cabinet resolution dated March 2023, which would reduce the existing area of the national park to allow for residential and agricultural use, and potentially add new forested areas, with consideration of establishing a buffer zone. Public consultations are underway regarding these proposed changes. The State Party will inform the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Decision 45 COM 7B.19 if it plans to undertake any actions that may affect the boundaries of TLNP;
- Several pieces of subordinate legislation pertaining to the 2019 National Park Act and Wild Animal
  Conservation and Protection Act (former 'Wildlife Protection and Reservation Act') are under
  development, with input from public consultations. Impacts on communities and conservation of
  protected areas will be monitored once the legislation comes into effect;
- All potential dam construction projects within or adjacent to the property remain suspended until
  the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the property is completed and reviewed by
  IUCN. Progress continues towards the development of the SEA with support of the Netherlands
  Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) and a budget has been allocated for 20252026;
- A study is underway regarding the expansion of Highway 348 that passes through the Ta Phraya National Park and Dong Yai Wildlife Sanctuary component parts of the property into a four-lane

highway. Upon the study's completion and subsequent consultations with relevant government agencies, the State Party will communicate the results to the World Heritage Centre;

• A 2nd Thailand Tiger Action Plan for 2022-2034 has been developed after completion of the 1st Action Plan and includes specific actions to support the tiger population in the property (currently 19 individuals).

On 4 April 2024, the World Heritage Centre transmitted to the State Party third-party concerns regarding a reported potential change to the boundaries of TLNP, as well as forest fires reportedly affecting this component part. The response provided by the State Party on 10 June 2024 is reflected in the corresponding paragraph above on the TLNP boundaries. The location of the forest fire in question was confirmed as falling outside of the TLNP.

Following the State Party's request for technical support on the development of the SEA for the property, in 2024, the NCEA provided independent coaching to the State Party in the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between UNESCO, IUCN and NCEA. In a letter to the World Heritage Centre dated 13 January 2025, the State Party reported progress on the development of the SEA, and provided a copy of the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) and a timeline for the SEA's development over 2025-2026.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party's continued commitment at the national, transnational and regional levels to combat illegal wildlife trade and logging is noted with appreciation and should continue. It is encouraging that funding to address illegal logging of Siamese Rosewood has recovered after the drop in 2022 with additional funding being allocated for the management of the property, and that the DNP's five-year Action Plan includes actions to protect Siamese Rosewood. The significant decline in cases and volume of confiscated Siamese Rosewood in the property over the last 10 years is positive, however, current levels of illegal logging reported in 2024 are the highest since 2018, signalling that attention is still needed to prevent a resurgence. Given the many conservation and management challenges facing the property, the State Party should be requested to guarantee adequate and stable funding in the immediate and long term.

The previously reported procedures for a potential reduction in the boundaries of TLNP is still being actively considered and public consultations on the proposed measures are now taking place. It must be stressed that the possible addition of new adjacent forested areas is not an adequate replacement for any areas to be excluded from the current national park, which contain and convey specific values and attributes supporting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property as evaluated at the time of inscription. It should be recalled once again that the requirement to have a sufficient level of legal protection is a critical pillar of the OUV, and undertaking a boundary revision at the domestic level prior to developing and submitting a Significant Boundary Modification to the World Heritage Centre and its subsequent approval by the World Heritage Committee, may lead to the property being faced with major threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics, in line with Paragraph 180(b) of the Operational Guidelines. It should also be noted that any creation of buffer zones should also be approved by the World Heritage Committee in accordance with Paragraph 107 of the Operational Guidelines.

Noting that input from public consultations was considered in the development of subordinate legislation to support implementation of the 2019 National Park Act and Wild Animal Conservation and Protection Act, and that the State Party has committed to monitoring impacts of the new legislation on communities and protected areas, it can be considered that future reporting on this issue is not required.

The independent coaching provided by NCEA on the SEA is appreciated, and the State Party should advance the development of the SEA for the property according to the proposed timeline and project guidelines. The suspension of all proposed dam projects within and adjacent to the property until the SEA has been completed and reviewed by IUCN is appreciated. It is important to recall again the position of the Committee that dams with large reservoirs inside property boundaries are not compatible with World Heritage status and should not be permitted.

Despite previous requests by the Committee and commitment by the State Party to consider alternatives to the expansion of Highway 348 within the property, a detailed study on the expansion as originally proposed is now being carried out with a design plan expected by November 2025. Expansion of existing road infrastructure within a property would require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that considers possible impacts to the OUV of the property. The State Party should, therefore, be urged to undertake an EIA, in line with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage* 

*Context*, prior to making any decision that would be difficult to reverse and submit the EIA to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN.

The information provided on the implementation of the 1st Thailand Tiger Action Plan (2010-2022), which showed positive results for population recovery in the country, is noted with appreciation. The State Party should be encouraged to continue these efforts through the 2nd Action Plan (2022-2034), particularly as they relate to Thailand's three World Heritage properties inscribed under natural criteria, and keep the World Heritage Committee informed of any future concerns related to tiger conservation, given the endangered status of this species that is recognized as part of the OUV of all three properties.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.14**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **41 COM 7B.32**, **44 COM 7B.97** and **45 COM 7B.19** adopted at its 41st (Krakow, 2017), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Notes</u> the actions undertaken by the State Party to continue cooperation and knowledge exchange at the national, transnational (with the State Party of Cambodia) and regional level (under the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and CITES frameworks) to combat illegal trade in flora and fauna, including of Siamese Rosewood, and encourages its continued efforts in this regard;
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the reported decline in illegal logging of Siamese Rosewood between 2014 and 2024 by 94% in identified cases and 98% in the confiscated volume of timber, which is a testament to the dedicated management efforts to addressing this persistent threat to the property, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to continue providing adequate and stable resources for the property as a whole, including for the protection of Siamese Rosewood in line with the five-year Action Plan (2023-2027), to ensure that a resurgence in these incidents does not occur;
- 5. Reiterates its concern regarding ongoing considerations for the potential reduction in size of the Thap Lan National Park (TLNP) component part of the property, and recalls that undertaking a boundary revision at the domestic level with the potential to have a significant impact on the extent of the property or affect its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) prior to developing and submitting a Significant Boundary Modification to the World Heritage Centre, in line with the Operational Guidelines, and its subsequent approval by the World Heritage Committee, may lead to the property being faced with major threats which could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics, in accordance with Paragraph 180(b) of the Operational Guidelines, and that any creation of buffer zones should also be approved by the World Heritage Committee in accordance with Paragraph 107 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 6. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the efforts underway to develop a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the property, involving independent SEA coaching provided by the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA), and <u>also requests</u> the State Party to proceed with the SEA according to the proposed timeline and project guidelines;
- 7. <u>Also notes</u> the State Party's assurance that the construction of all dams proposed within and adjacent to the property remains suspended pending the completion of the SEA and its review by IUCN, and <u>recalls again</u> its previously stated position that dams with large

reservoirs within property boundaries are not compatible with World Heritage status and should be permanently cancelled, in line with Decision **40 COM 7**;

- 8. Notes with concern that a detailed study on the expansion of Highway 348, which crosses the Ta Phraya National Park and Dong Yai Wildlife Sanctuary component parts of the property, is being carried out with the intent to propose a design plan by November 2025, despite the request in Decision 41 COM 7B.32 and commitment by the State Party to consider alternatives to the proposed expansion to avoid potential negative impacts on the OUV of the property, and therefore urges the State Party to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context prior to making any decision that would be difficult to reverse, and submit the EIA to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
- 9. Also notes with appreciation updated information on the increase in the tiger population in the country and implementation of the 1st Thailand Tiger Action Plan (2010-2022), and also encourages the State Party to continue its efforts through implementation of the 2nd Action Plan (2022-2034), particularly with regards to the three natural World Heritage properties in Thailand, given the endangered status of this species that is recognized as part of the OUV of all three properties;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

## 15. Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (Thailand)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

16. Ha Long Bay - Cat Ba Archipelago (Viet Nam)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

#### **EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA**

18. Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, France, Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

#### 19. Białowieża Forest (Belarus, Poland)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 20. Pirin National Park (Bulgaria)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1983

Criteria (vii)(viii)(ix)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/225/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2004-2004) Total amount approved: USD 15,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/225/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 24,915 of financial support from the Participation Programme of UNESCO for development of a strategy for sustainable tourism (2010)

## Previous monitoring missions

2002, 2004, 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; 2018: IUCN Advisory mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Commercial development (developments in the Bansko ski zone)
- Impact of tourism / visitor / recreation
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Management systems/ management plan (lack of effective management mechanisms)
- Management and institutional factors (boundary issues)
- Illegal activities (illegal logging)

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/225/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/225/</a>

#### Current conservation issues

On 27 November 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/225/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/225/documents/</a>, providing the following information:

- The new draft Management Plan (MP) for Pirin National Park is currently under development. The Ministry of Environment and Water (MOEW) has instructed the Pirin National Park Directorate (PNPD) to revise the draft MP, incorporating updated data and recommendations from the 2018 IUCN Advisory mission. A public hearing and consultation with stakeholders will take place during the drafting process to ensure compliance with relevant legislation. The revised draft is expected to be submitted for review by MOEW in early 2025;
- The updated MP is anticipated to differ significantly from the 2015 draft in terms of zoning and protective regimes, aligning with conservation objectives and decisions of the World Heritage Committee. The State Party proposes to share with the World Heritage Centre only the part of the draft MP relating to defining the zoning, regimes and norms, given the substantial size of the overall document:
- Between 2022 and 2024, no significant projects nor investment proposals affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property were approved. During this period, approved and/or implemented proposals within the property and its buffer zone included erosion control, grazing, forest maintenance, water supply projects, and renovation of a tourist shelter;
- All approved investment proposals were evaluated in accordance with Bulgarian legislation, aligned with European Union environmental standards, ensuring no adverse impacts on species, habitats, or the property's OUV;
- The existing 2004 MP, which remains valid until the new plan is finalised, aims to preserve the property's OUV and integrity while integrating a strategic, long-term approach. Spatial planning for the property, buffer zones, and wider areas includes environmental impact assessments, ensuring alignment with conservation goals. Municipal development plans must comply with the zoning and regimes set out in the MP.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is noted that a new draft MP for the property was expected to be produced in early 2025. However, recalling the Committee's longstanding requests for the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to inform the MP, it is regrettable that no progress has been reported in this regard. Since 2013, the Committee has consistently urged the expeditious development of an SEA to guide strategic planning, including the assessment of tourism infrastructure and logging activities (Decisions 37 COM 7B.17, 38 COM 7B.73, 40 COM 7B.93, 42 COM 7B.72, 44 COM 7B.101, 45 COM 7B.91). The Committee is therefore advised to strongly urge the State Party to prioritise the completion of the SEA, ensuring it includes a specific assessment of the proposed management objectives and zoning. This is essential to ensure that the MP adequately considers and reflects the OUV of the property and addresses potential impacts arising from development in areas located within the buffer zone. This process may be aided by the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context.

It is noted that until the updated MP is adopted, the provisions of the current MP remain in effect. However, given that this dates back to 2004 and considering the Committee's previous requests to incorporate the recommendations from the 2018 IUCN Advisory mission, the timely update of the MP is imperative. This update should follow the completion of the SEA and incorporate measures to address key threats, including grazing, forest and water resource management, as well as tourism, particularly tourism-related infrastructure development. In this regard, it is reassuring that the State Party reports that public hearings and stakeholder consultations will be integrated into the updating process, ensuring compliance with Bulgarian environmental legislation and public participation principles. This process should explicitly guarantee full and effective engagement of all relevant stakeholders and rightsholders, including non-governmental organisations. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit the updated MP to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN, prior to its final adoption.

While it is noted that development projects and investment proposals continue to be processed and approved under applicable environmental legislation, it remains unclear how potential impacts on the property's OUV are assessed, particularly in the absence of an SEA to inform decision-making and to assess cumulative impacts of multiple projects at a landscape/regional scale. Consequently, alongside the completion of the SEA, it is important that any new projects, which may negatively impact the OUV of the property, be reported to the World Heritage Centre, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and that the potential impacts of these projects are thoroughly assessed following the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.20**

The World Heritage Committee,

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision **45 COM 7B.91**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. Regrets that no information has been provided regarding the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requested by the Committee since 2013, and strongly urges again the State Party to prioritise and expedite the development of the SEA to inform the new draft Management Plan, including a specific assessment of the proposed management objectives and zoning, to ensure that it adequately considers and reflects the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including potential impacts of development in areas within the buffer zone, and in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 4. Reiterates again its request to the State Party to develop the new draft Management Plan through public consultation with relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, to comprehensively address the threats identified by the 2018 IUCN Advisory mission, to specify how the management priorities will help maintain the OUV of the property, including the protection of its integrity, and to submit the draft Management Plan in its entirety to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN, prior to its adoption;
- 5. Also reiterates again its request to the State Party to ensure that, in accordance with the Operational Guidelines, any new project within the property, its buffer zone, or wider setting, which may have an impact on the OUV of the property, is reported to the World Heritage Centre before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, and that its potential impact is assessed in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 6. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.

#### 21. Wood Buffalo National Park (Canada)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

22. Wadden Sea (Denmark, Germany, Kingdom of the Netherlands)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 24. Durmitor National Park (Montenegro)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 26. Lake Baikal (Russian Federation)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 27. Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve (Russian Federation)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2004

Criteria (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/documents/</a>

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/assistance/

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

August 2017: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Oil and gas (geophysical prospecting in the marine area surrounding the property)
- Marine transport infrastructure (planned construction of a naval base within the property)
- Increased human presence
- Solid waste
- Lack of Management Plan (issue resolved)

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/</a>

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1023/documents/</a> and reporting the following:

- In 2022, work was carried out to assess accumulated environmental damage from past activities.
   Clean-up efforts continue, focusing on the removal of scrap metal and waste from former economic sites, with over 3,000 tonnes removed since 2015;
- Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and photo recorders are now being used to monitor wildlife, including polar bears, musk oxen, and reindeer. Long-term monitoring of species and microclimates is ongoing, but expansion of these efforts and full implementation of the environmental monitoring program for the property is constrained by significant financial, human and technical resource limitations:

- Ongoing monitoring of climate change impacts on the island's ecosystems focuses on microclimatic conditions and indicator species. The creation of a comprehensive database to track these changes is underway, but requires additional expertise and resources to strengthen the monitoring process;
- Six non-permanent tourist accommodation facilities powered by renewable energy exist on the
  property. No new accommodation facilities are planned. In 2023, 66 people visited the property
  for educational tourism. In 2024, two visits by cruise ships and one visit by helicopter were
  planned. The limited number of visitors does not warrant an Environmental Impact Assessment
  (EIA) at this stage;
- Seismic exploration continues in the offshore waters of the East Siberian and Chukchi seas, which does not affect the property. There is no current or planned oil production in the areas adjacent to the property, which would require an EIA and a State Environmental Expert Review;
- Military operations ensure full compliance with environmental regulations by all personnel, and no new infrastructure is planned;
- The State Party is not working to amend legislation that would allow infrastructure development, hunting, extraction and the transport of groundwater, or alteration of the hydrological regime in the property;
- The 2020-2024 Management Plan for the property (annexed to the report) is being updated for 2025-2030, for approval in February 2025.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The submission of the Management Plan, along with the information that a 2025-2030 Plan is close to approval are noted with appreciation, as is the information that no legislative amendments are currently envisaged that would weaken the legal protection of the property. The State Party should be encouraged to ensure that the updated 2025-2030 Management Plan for the property addresses the recommendations of the 2017 Reactive Monitoring mission and the concerns expressed by the Committee in its previous decisions, particularly with regard to cleaning up pollution, establishing sustainable tourism and addressing the impact of climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

The assessment of the impact of plastic pollution and accumulated environmental damage on the OUV of the property, in particular through the establishment of model areas, is welcomed. Efforts to remove waste are noted. However, it is important to note that the removal of 25,000 tonnes of scrap metal and 100,000 metal drums was previously planned for completion by 2023, a target that has not been met. It is therefore recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to expedite the removal of all waste, and the clean-up of associated contaminants, and urge the submission of a detailed timeline for this process.

The improvements in monitoring programmes, including the use of UAVs and photo recorders to enhance wildlife monitoring, and the need to create a comprehensive database to track climate change effects on the OUV, are noted. In line with the IUCN Wilderness Protected Areas Management Guidelines, it is recommended that the use of UAVs be critically reviewed to ensure that this new practice does not cause any disturbance to wildlife. The State Party should be encouraged to maintain monitoring, in particular for species that represent attributes of the property's OUV. However, it is of concern that monitoring efforts are constrained by limited financial, human and technical resources, and the State Party should take steps to address these capacity gaps.

The State Party provides an update on visitation to the property, which remains low, and states that a visitor capacity study or an EIA are not required. It should be clarified that the Committee's request is for a more comprehensive carrying capacity study, in line with the recommendations of the 2017 mission, to define a critical upper limit for human impact, including not only tourists, but also military personnel and associated staff, reserve staff, researchers and weather station staff. Given the broader scope of the study, which extends beyond tourism, the State Party should be urged again to undertake it and to ensure that relevant findings of the study are integrated into the updated management plan.

It is noted that an EIA would be required prior to the approval of oil extraction in the offshore waters of the East Siberian and Chukchi seas adjacent to the property. The State Party should be requested to notify the World Heritage Centre if the current seismic survey adjacent to the property were to progress to a proposal for exploitation, as the EIA will need to include a detailed assessment of the potential impacts on the property's OUV. The State Party should also be requested to submit preliminary documentation for consideration by the World Heritage Committee before work on the EIA commences, such as a scoping report.

Despite repeated requests from the Committee since 2018, it is regrettable that detailed information on the impact of military facilities on the property's OUV has not yet been provided. The Committee should recall that the 2017 mission concluded that inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger may be warranted if it cannot be proven that the military presence within the property does not constitute an ascertained danger to its OUV. This could be reviewed through a possible follow-up Reactive Monitoring mission in the future, as requested by the Committee in 2019, to assess the implementation of the 2017 mission's recommendations.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.27**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **43 COM 7B.17** and **45 COM 7B.25**, adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the progress made in updating the Management Plan for the property, including measures to address pollution, sustainable tourism management and climate change adaptation, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to submit the 2025-2030 Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre;
- 4. <u>Notes</u> the efforts to assess the impact of plastic pollution and accumulated environmental damage on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, but <u>reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to expedite the removal of all garbage and clean-up of associated contaminants, to submit a timetabled plan for its completion and to report on progress:
- 5. <u>Also reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to undertake a carrying capacity study and <u>recalls</u> that the scope of this carrying capacity study is to assess the various increasing pressures on the property's fragile arctic ecosystem from human activities, including climate change, in order to inform spatial zoning and overall human presence;
- 6. <u>Notes</u> that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be required prior to the approval of oil extraction in the offshore waters in the vicinity of the property where seismic testing is underway, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to notify the World Heritage Centre should it proceed further, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and to submit an EIA scoping report for consideration by the Committee before proceeding with the full EIA;
- 7. <u>Notes with concern</u> that limited human, financial and expert capacity constrains environmental monitoring efforts, as reported by the State Party, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to address these capacity gaps through all available means;
- 8. <u>Recalls again</u> the conclusion of the 2017 Reactive Monitoring mission, of which the Committee has already taken note, that the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger could be justified if it is not proven that the military presence within the boundaries of the property does not constitute an ascertained danger to its OUV;
- 9. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.

## 30. Western Caucasus (Russian Federation)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 31. Doñana National Park (Spain)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

#### **LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN**

## 37. El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2013

Criteria (vii)(viii)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

N/A

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation (tourism activities, off-road vehicles as well as potential problems derived from tourism-related water consumption)
- Invasive/alien terrestrial species
- Ground transport infrastructure (proposed roads)
- Necessity to save the Sonoran Pronghorn from possible extinction
- Environmental concerns in security efforts (border wall) along the international border

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/

## Conservation issues presented to the World Heritage Committee in 2024

On 3 February 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/documents/</a> and provides the following information:

- Collaboration between the States Parties of Mexico and the United States of America (USA) for the management, protection and conservation of species has been decreasing, however some actions are been implemented for species of binational importance which are identified as potentially affected by the construction of the border wall;
- The Binational Group for the Recovery of the Sonoran Pronghorn held three meetings in 2024, with various agencies from Mexico and the USA, discussing ongoing projects and research of pronghorn population;
- A University of Arizona-led research in collaboration with the University of Sonora is being undertaken to understand the effects of the border wall on mammal populations within the property using camera traps. Species such as the Sonoran pronghorn and bighorn sheep, whose movements have been interrupted, will be monitored. The results will inform mitigation recommendations to reduce the effects of the border wall on wildlife and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. A final report is expected in 2027;
- Research and monitoring were also carried out on bighorn sheep, bats, birds, herpetofauna, and
  aquatic species such as the Sonoyta pupfish. Monthly monitoring of the pupfish was conducted
  at Quitobaquito, the Sonoyta River, and Charco La Palma, including water quality sampling and
  photographic records. Translocation of bighorn sheep into the property is also proposed under

the 'Program for the Conservation, Repopulation and Sustainable Use of Bighorn Sheep in the state of Sonora':

- A new Voluntary Conservation Area was designated in the Ejido El Bajío, located in the buffer zone of the property. The conservation objectives include habitat restoration, soil recovery, and fire prevention;
- The Puerto Peñasco Photovoltaic Plant started preparation and construction activities in 2023. The site preparation and construction of the transmission line are completed and partial operation has begun. Part of the transmission line is located in the buffer zone and within the (crosses 7.75 km through the property). The environmental impact resolution for the transmission project includes mitigation, conservation and monitoring conditions, including the monitoring of the Sonoran Pronghorn and improving the water supply. A collaboration agreement was signed between the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) and the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE) to implement environmental supervision measures. This included training of local monitors, supervision visits, and monitoring of species along the transmission corridor:
- The Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission requested by the Committee has not yet taken place due to political and administrative transition.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Positive efforts for the conservation of the property is noted including species monitoring, habitat restoration, and the designation of a new Voluntary Conservation Area within the property's buffer zone. The binational collaboration during 2024 is also appreciated and remains key to ensuring the continued implementation of the Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Plan. The impacts of the border wall on species movement and viability remains a critical concern and therefore the mammal population study report expected in 2027 to inform mitigation measures is eagerly awaited. Whilst noting these activities, the State Party should be reminded again to submit an urgent action plan, as requested by the Committee, to restore ecological connectivity.

The reported decline in transboundary cooperation between Mexico and the USA is particularly worrying given the binational nature of key conservation challenges. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate the importance of continued collaboration to safeguard the OUV of the property, in line with Article 6.3 of the Convention.

It is further noted that the report does not clarify how the various ongoing environmental monitoring efforts are informing land-use or infrastructure planning. It is recommended that the State Party strengthen mechanisms to integrate monitoring data into management strategies, spatial planning, and policy responses. This would improve adaptive decision-making and ensure that monitoring results translate into effective conservation outcomes.

The construction of the Puerto Peñasco Photovoltaic Plant and the associated transmission corridor, which crosses 7.75 km of the property, continues to raise concern. Although mitigation and monitoring measures were outlined in the environmental impact resolution, the State Party has not submitted the findings and therefore it is not possible to determine whether these measures are adequate for the protection of the OUV of the property. The lack of cumulative assessment of impacts is also a significant gap that limits the capacity to evaluate infrastructure-related fragmentation and its potential effects on the property's OUV.

The continued delay in scheduling the joint Reactive Monitoring mission remains a significant gap. Without a comprehensive on-site assessment, it is not possible to evaluate the full extent of the threats or the adequacy of current mitigation measures. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party, in close cooperation with the State Party of the USA, to prioritize the organization of this mission. As previously noted, the mission should assess the impact of the border wall on the OUV, the measures taken to ensure ecological connectivity with adjacent dispersal areas, and other potential threats, recalling the Committee's position that if connectivity is not restored, the property may meet the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines.

## Draft decision: 47 COM 7B.37

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **44 COM 7B.114, 45 COM 7B.2** and **46 COM 7B.55**, adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions, respectively,
- 3. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the continued efforts by the State Party of Mexico in the conservation and monitoring of the property, including the implementation of species recovery programmes and the establishment of a new Voluntary Conservation Area and reiterates its request to the States Parties of Mexico and the United States of America (USA) to expedite the implementation of the Recovery Plan and measures to avoid further depletion of scarce water resources;
- 4. Reiterates again its concern about the impacts on the property of the border wall constructed in the USA, which extends along the entire boundary between the property and adjoining areas of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and most of the Cabeza Prieto National Wildlife Refuge, with the exception of two mountainous areas;
- 5. Reiterates again its view that the physical presence of the wall has clear negative impacts on the integrity of the property and wider ecological connectivity thereby blocking the movement of critical wildlife populations, such as the Sonoran Pronghorn, which constitute important attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- 6. <u>Welcomes</u> the border wall mammal monitoring research study underway within the property, undertaken by the University of Arizona in collaboration with the University of Sonora, in order to inform mitigation recommendation and <u>requests</u> that the report findings are submitted to the World Heritage Centre once available and to ensure they guide targeted mitigation and connectivity restoration efforts;
- 7. <u>Notes with concern</u> that no information has been provided regarding the urgent Action Plan to restore ecological connectivity, as requested in Decision **46 COM 7B.55**, and reiterates its requests to the State Party of the USA, in accordance with Article 6.3 of the Convention, to develop, resource and implement this urgent Action Plan in cooperation with the State Party of Mexico, and to submit it to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible and no later than **1 February 2026**;
- 8. <u>Also reiterates</u> that if ecological connectivity is not restored to safeguard the viability of key wildlife populations, the property may meet the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines:
- 9. <u>Also reiterates its request</u> to the State Party of Mexico to ensure that the mitigation measures and operational conditions for the Puerto Peñasco photovoltaic project are consistent with the management of the property and to closely monitor potential impacts and take an adaptive approach to ensure that any negative impacts on the OUV of the property are avoided and that the conservation of the important biodiversity in the wider landscape, which supports the OUV, is ensured;
- 10. <u>Encourages</u> the States Parties of Mexico and the USA to strengthen their collaboration in addressing shared conservation challenges, in line with Article 6.3 of the Convention, to ensure the long-term conservation of the property's OUV;

- 11. <u>Notes moreover</u> that the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property has been postponed again, and <u>further reiterates its request</u> to the State Party of Mexico, in coordination with the State Party of the USA, to re-schedule this mission as a matter of urgency to assess the impact of the border wall on the OUV of the property and the measures taken to guarantee ecological connectivity of the property with the adjacent wildlife dispersal areas, alongside other factors potentially affecting the OUV;
- 12. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and on the implementation of the above, for examination by the Committee at its 48th session, considering that the urgent conservation needs of this property require a broad mobilization to preserve its OUV, including the possible inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

## 41. Canaima National Park (Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1994

Criteria (vii)(viii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1999-2007) Total amount approved: USD 43,777

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## <u>Previous monitoring missions</u> 1998: UNESCO / IUCN mission

- Project to erect a series of power transmission lines
- Conflicts between the Pemons communities and the National Guard
- · Need to finalize the boundaries of the area

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Legal and illegal mining
- Forest fires

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/

#### Current conservation issues

On 15 December 2024 , the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/documents/</a> and provides the following information:

• The State Party reaffirms the content of its 2021 report, emphasizing that the Orinoco Mining Arc National Strategic Development Zone is a regulatory instrument intended to promote and formalize mining activities, and reiterates its commitment to the constitutional requirement that potentially harmful activities undergo impact assessments. The boundaries of the property do not overlap with those of the Mining Arc, situated approximately 5 km from the northwestern and 1 km from the northeastern boundaries, which is considered to be a sufficient buffer to protect the

property from mining impacts. 99.97% of the property shows no mining activities with potential environmental impacts;

- A total of 11,596 ha of deforestation (over the last 24 years) and 81,221 ha of forest degradation (over 20 years) are recorded within the property. Between 2010 and 2023, forest fires affected 21% of the property (652,892 ha). "Loss of forest ecosystems" is mainly attributed to forest fires (50.4%), small-scale agriculture (44.4%) and other uses (5.2%);
- The Reactive Monitoring mission could be considered once suitable conditions are met, and the areas to be visited will be communicated accordingly, taking into account security and sovereignty considerations. The mission would not assess activities located outside the property;
- Active and inactive illegal mining camps were detected within the property and dismantled;
- Presence of park rangers has been reinforced in the main tourist locations. Ranger training was provided to respond to the increased visitor numbers (over 20,000 in 2023);
- 45 ha of reforestation activities were carried out in areas affected by forest fires;
- A proposal to modify boundaries is being evaluated and submitted for approval by the different technical and political bodies;
- Other activities are also reported including: establishment of a cooperation agreement between Instituto Nacional de Parques (INPARQUES) and two Indigenous Communities for the conservation; sustainable use and ecotourism management in the property; environmental educational programs for the conservation of the park; continued surveillance patrols; tackling 43 forest fires in the reporting period; and conducting seven environmental sanitation campaigns.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Positive activities are noted, including the establishment of a new ranger station, establishing a cooperation agreement, education programs, and continued patrols.

The State Party reaffirms that the Orinoco Mining Arc does not overlap with the property. However, the Committee has raised concerns over these existing and planned mining operations that are in proximity to the property (between 1 and 5 km from the boundaries), and as such the reported formalization of these activities remain a serious concern. Although the State Party highlights legal safeguards requiring Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property should specifically be considered in the impact assessments, in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context. In the absence of this information, it is not possible for the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to determine that the current distance from the Mining Arc constitutes sufficient buffer to safeguard the property. The territorial analysis and details on the status of mining concessions requested by the Committee remain pending.

While the State Party asserts that 99.97% of the property shows no mining activity with potential environmental impacts and reports the dismantling of some illegal camps and increased ranger presence, it is concerning that such activities persist and that, in the absence of the Reactive Monitoring mission which remains postponed since 2022, the extent to which illegal mining persists and its effects on the OUV remain unclear.

Forest loss within the property is concerning, reportedly caused by small-scale agriculture and recurring fires, which pose a large management challenge. With climate change making the property more vulnerable to fires, the State Party should be urged to implement effective prevention and management strategies.

Concerning the increasing visitor numbers, the State Party should ensure there is a clear management strategy that considers the direct and indirect impacts. Considering the nature of the property and its ecological uniqueness, it could be vulnerable to factors such as invasive species and therefore the State Party should be requested to report on its actions to prevent, detect and respond to such a threat.

It is regrettable that the Reactive Monitoring mission initially planned for 2022 was postponed and that no renewed invitation has been received. The State Party should be urged to invite the mission to assess the degree to which the OUV is affected by illegal mining, through field visits and engagement with INPARQUES, relevant authorities, Indigenous peoples, local communities, and the scientific community. It should also review nearby legal mining activities in the Orinoco Mining Arc, which may impact the conservation of the property, and advise on integrating OUV considerations into national mining regulations.

As no proposal for boundary clarification has been submitted, the State Party should again be requested to do so in accordance with paragraphs 163–165 of the Operational Guidelines.

Gaps in the response to Committee Decisions do not make it possible to assess their effects on the property. Continued absence of adequate information and delay in inviting the Reactive Monitoring mission, could place the property at greater risk of further deterioration and face potential and/or ascertained danger, in line with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.41

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2.
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **44 COM 7B.199** and **45 COM 7B.71**, adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Appreciates</u> the efforts made by the State Party to strengthen the presence of park rangers, including the establishment of a new ranger station, as well as continued surveillance patrols, education programs and establishing a cooperation agreement between Instituto Nacional de Pragues (INPARQUES) and two Indigenous communities;
- 4. <u>Notes with concern</u> the continued forest degradation and deforestation occurring within the property, and recurring fires continuing to impact the ecological integrity of the property, and <u>urge</u> the State Party to adopt and implement an integrated and effective fire prevention and management strategy, as well as to address the underlying drivers of forest loss, particularly small-scale agriculture and recurring droughts;
- 5. Notes again with concern that it remains unclear whether the planned and existing mining operations within the Orinoco Mining Arc National Strategic Development Zone (ZDENAMO) rights areas close to the property have been subject to impact assessments which fully assess the potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and requests again the State Party to submit the territorial analysis and status of mining projects in this area to the World Heritage Centre, and to ensure that all proposed mining projects which could potentially impact on the OUV of the property are assessed in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, prior to taking any decision that would be difficult to reverse;
- 6. While welcoming the information that most of the property remains intact, <u>also notes with concern</u> the confirmation by the State Party of the occurrence of some illegal mining activities within the property, <u>also reiterates its request</u> the State Party to provide further information ahead of the requested Reactive Monitoring mission on the current extent and status of any illegal mining activities in the property to the World Heritage Centre, and <u>also urges</u> the State Party to take immediate and effective action to halt such activities and rehabilitate affected areas;
- 7. Once again regrets that the State Party did not issue a new invitation for the Reactive Monitoring mission after its postponement, and reiterates its request to the State Party to invite without further delay a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to:
  - a) Assess, including through on-the-ground visits where feasible, the degree to which the property's OUV, including its integrity, might have been affected by illegal mining activities.

- b) Review the planned and ongoing legal mining activities in the parts of ZDENAMO located in the vicinity of the northern border of the property and assess whether they might result in any potential negative impacts on the OUV of the property and provide advice to the State Party in ensuring that assessment of possible impacts on the OUV of the property is integrated into existing national regulations for mining;
- 8. <u>Noting</u> the reported increase in visitor numbers to the property, <u>requests</u> the State Party to ensure the implementation of a tourism management strategy that considers the protection of the OUV of the property, and to also report on its actions to prevent, detect and respond to invasive species that may be spread by increasing tourism;
- 9. <u>Considers</u> that the property is facing multiple threats from cumulative impacts of mining, land use change and fire, and that therefore timely response is required by the State Party to effectively respond to these to not place the property at greater risk of ascertained and/or potential danger in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;
- Also reiterates its request to the State Party to submit an official proposal for clarification of the boundaries of the property within the framework of the Retrospective Inventory, according to paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines concerning Minor Boundary Modifications;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, 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 48th session.

## **ARAB STATES**

## 53. Socotra Archipelago (Yemen)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## **MIXED PROPERTIES**

## **EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA**

54. Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region (Albania, North Macedonia)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

55. Laponian Area (Sweden)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

#### **LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN**

# 56. Ancient Maya City and Protected Tropical Forests of Calakmul, Campeche (Mexico)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 57. Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1983

Criteria (i)(iii)(vii)(ix)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/274/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 11 (from 1986-2001) Total amount approved: USD 166,625

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/274/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 15,000 Extra-Budgetary Spanish FIT support for the participatory workshop requested by the World Heritage Committee (Decision **30 COM 7B.35**)

#### Previous monitoring missions

1989, 1990, 1991, 2003 and 2005: technical missions; October 1997: IUCN/ICOMOS joint technical mission; October 1999: World Heritage Centre, IUCN/ICOMOS joint technical mission; June 2002 and April 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; January 2009: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/ICOMOS Reinforced Monitoring mission; February 2010: World Heritage Centre technical emergency mission; May 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Advisory mission; January 2016: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission; February 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/ management plan (Delays in reviewing the Master Plan and developing detailed yearly operational plans, and inadequate budgetary support for effective implementation; No evaluation of transport options, related geological studies, or the impact of bus traffic on increasing the risk of landslides; Lack of effective management of the property; Lack of risk management plans related to natural disasters)
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation (Uncontrolled visitor access to the western part of the Sanctuary)
- Flooding
- Inadequate governance system including lack of adequate coordination of activities between different institutions and stakeholders involved in the management of the property (issue resolved)
- Lack of impact studies related to the carrying capacity of the Citadel and Inca Trail (issue resolved)
- Delays in the development and implementation of a Public Use Plan (issue resolved)

- Delays in implementing urban planning and control measures for Machu Picchu Village, the main point of entry to the property, which has impacted on the visual values of the property (issue resolved)
- Increase in incidences of site invasion, looting and illegal changes of land use at the property

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/274/

### Current conservation issues

On 14 December 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, reporting as follows, and an executive summary of which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/274/documents/:

- The final version of the 2025-2029 Master Plan is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2025, for approval by the relevant authorities. The Public Use Plan will be part of the Master Plan;
- The updated version of the Regulations for Sustainable Tourist Visits to the Llaqta of Machu Picchu is now in the final consolidation phase after public consultation, to be approved in the first quarter of 2025;
- The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Chinchero International Airport in Cusco was finalized, identifying 44 impacts and proposing 111 mitigation measures. An Action Plan is currently being developed by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, and will include a formally signed commitment regarding the management and acquisition of the necessary funding;
- The admission limit has increased to 4,500 daily visitors, with up to 5,600 during peak season, as per Ministerial Resolution No. 000528-2023-MC. The State Party cites implementation of visitor flow management strategies, differentiated circuits, restricted access to vulnerable areas, increased surveillance, and monitoring of geodynamic risks to support this increase. However, alternative entry/exit routes have not been implemented;
- To address illegal site invasion incidents, looting, and land-use changes on the property, SERNANP (National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State) and the Machu Picchu District Municipality have established a Technical Committee for Rural Land Use Planning in the Machu Picchu District, and nine strategies were proposed in the draft Master Plan;
- Monitoring and conservation actions are being conducted in relation to natural erosion and geological stability of the Llaqta and its access routes;
- The State Party issued Law No. 31770, which integrates the HIA into the national legal framework and establishes that compensation and mitigation measures shall be fully assumed by the developer. HIA will be only required for large-scale new infrastructure projects that are developed in areas adjacent to or within World Heritage properties.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and IUCN

The State Party has made advances in the planning instruments requested by the Committee through public consultations, notably the updating of the Regulations for Sustainable Tourist Visits to the Llaqta of Machu Picchu, which is in the final phase of approval and which includes descriptions of the circuits, characteristics of visitor entry, provisions for local population access, description of the conditions for guided services and details of prohibited activities. The Master Plan is now expected to be completed in early 2025. The approval of Law No. 31770 represents a positive step toward the implementation of the Convention, as it introduces a legal requirement for the preparation of HIAs for "major projects." However, it is important to recall that, under the Convention and its Operational Guidelines, an impact assessment should be undertaken for any project that may affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of a property, regardless of whether it is classified as "major" or not.

Visitor management measures have evolved since 2015, with current daily admission limits set at 4,500 on regular days and up to 5,600 during peak season, as per Ministerial Resolution. This is more than double the limit that was introduced in 2020 (limiting to 2,244 visitors per day) and therefore exceeds those previously approved by the 2015 carrying capacity study. While the State Party claims to meet the preconditions to increase visitation, including visitor dispersal, infrastructure adjustments, and increased monitoring, the absence of independent technical review raises questions. Some measures, like circuit redesign and restricted access to fragile areas, are underway; others, including alternative entry routes (e.g. Inkaraqay and Eastern Terraces), are still in the research phase. No quantitative or detailed evidence has been provided to confirm full compliance with the study's conditions or proportional increases in staffing and operational capacity. It is also of concern that the increased

admission capacity was initially justified as a temporary measure to support economic recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. No advances have been reported on the development of studies on alternative transportation.

The issues of land invasions and unregulated development remain pressing. The formation of a Technical Committee and the inclusion of relevant strategies in the Master Plan are positive developments. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies welcome these steps, and the State Party should be invited to report any advances to the Committee. Effective implementation will depend on coordination and enforcement.

No progress was reported towards establishing a Machu Picchu-Choquequirao Biosphere Reserve. The State Party should once again be encouraged to develop this proposal. No updates were provided on the status of the Visitor Centre project or the state of collaboration of the entities of the Machu Picchu Management Unit.

The final HIA for the Chinchero International Airport in Cusco considers various impacts and proposes corresponding mitigation measures for the 'Historic Centre of Cusco', the 'Historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu', the 'Andean Road System Qhapaq Ñan, the Sacred Valley of the Incas and the Chinchero Archaeological Park'. The most important impacts are linked to the expected increase in visitor numbers and development pressures. As the HIA identifies potential impacts on multiple World Heritage properties, it is critical that mitigation measures are in place before airport operations commence. The HIA concludes that should these measures not be in place, the affected properties should be considered for the List of World Heritage in Danger. The development of an Action Plan for the implementation of the mitigation measures are appreciated in this regard, and the State Party should be requested to submit it for technical review by the Advisory Bodies once available.

The description of the management system of the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu, included in the Chinchero International Airport HIA, mentions contingent pressures on the management process that lead to decisions, which do not take into account technical studies, and which "generate chaos and put in serious danger the conservation" of the property. The report furthermore refers to decree DS N°043-2022-EF, which determines that, in contrast to past arrangements, none of the funds generated by the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu stay directly at the property. These governance issues could hinder effective implementation of technical recommendations and long-term conservation. The Advisory Bodies underscore the significance of using technical studies as guides in decision making processes and also highlight the importance of sufficiently flexible financial resources for the management and the conservation of the property.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.57

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2.
- Recalling Decisions 37 COM 7B.35, 39 COM 7B.36, 41 COM 7B.36, 43 COM 7B.37, 44 COM 7B.172 and 45 COM 7B.100, adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and its extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the advances in managing and controlling the visitor flow, as well as in the conservation and monitoring measures applied at the Llaqta and at the access routes of Machu Picchu, but <u>expresses its concern</u> that the current daily visitor admission levels exceed those approved under the 2015 carrying capacity study, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre information on further progress of the visitor flow policy, and a technical assessment demonstrating compliance with the conditions to increase visitation, including effective implementation of dispersal strategies, infrastructure adaptation, independent monitoring, and adequate staffing:

- 4. <u>Notes</u> the advances in the process of updating the Master Plan, which will include the Public Use Plan and new Zoning Regulations, and the elaboration and consolidation of the Regulations for Sustainable Tourism Visits to the Llaqta of Machu Picchu and <u>urges</u> the State Party to finalise these processes and to submit the documents to the World Heritage Centre once completed for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies;
- 5. <u>Also welcomes</u> the approval of Law No. 31770, which incorporates into the national legislation the obligation to conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for any major projects within or adjacent to World Heritage properties, and <u>recalls</u> that any project that might affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of a property has to be subject of a proper assessment under the obligations of the Convention and the Operational Guidelines, and in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 6. <u>Further welcomes</u> the finalization of the HIA of the Chinchero International Airport Cusco and the fact that Law No. 31770 also established that compensation and mitigation measures shall be fully assumed by the owner of the investment project, and requests the State Party to finalise the Action Plan detailing the mitigation measures and submit it to the World Heritage Centre as soon as it is available for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies prior to the start of airport operations;
- 7. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure that any major infrastructure transport projects, such as airports, railways, cable cars, tunnels and roads, are rigorously assessed, in line with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, and the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and encourages again the State Party to develop land use plans for the areas surrounding the property prior to the expected increase of tourism pressure caused by the construction of the Chinchero International Airport;
- 8. Regrets that no update was provided on the Visitor Centre and its HIA, and reiterates again its request to finalize the HIA, through a consultative process involving relevant rights holders and stakeholders such as the local communities, and in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 9. <u>Also expresses its concern</u> about reported governance challengeswithin the Machu Picchu Management Unit, and the loss of direct financial retention mechanisms at the site level, <u>further reiterates</u> the importance of ensuring sufficient autonomy and flexible financial resources for the effective management and conservation of the property; and <u>furthermore requests</u> the State Party to submit a report on this to the World Heritage Centre;
- 10. <u>Takes note</u> that the National Service of Natural Areas Protected by the State (SERNANP) and the Machu Picchu District Municipality have established a Technical Committee for Rural Land Use Planning in the Machu Picchu District to address the reported increase in-site invasion incidents, looting, and illegal land-use changes, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to elaborate a report on the decisions made, including information on mitigating actions taken or planned, to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- 11. <u>Notes with regret</u> that no further progress towards a proposal for a Machu Picchu-Choquequirao Biosphere Reserve was reported, and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to continue this process;
- 12. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the

implementa 48th sessio	ation of the	above,	for exa	mination	by the	World	Heritage	Committe	e at its
48th sessio	n.								

# **AFRICA**

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# **ARAB STATES**

61.	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of
	the Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# **CULTURAL PROPERTIES**

## **ASIA AND PACIFIC**

# 63. Angkor (Cambodia)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1992

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1992-2004

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/documents/

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1992 to 1998) Total amount approved: USD 113,595

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/assistance/

### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: Approximately USD 600 million through various international partners (1992-present)

### Previous monitoring missions

September 2005: Technical Advisory Mission concerning the protection of Zones 1 and 2 of Angkor; December 2024: Joint World Heritage Centre/ ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; in addition, the ad hoc experts of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC-Angkor/Sambor Prei Kuk) carry out monitoring of the property and of ongoing projects twice a year, on the occasion of the ICC technical and plenary sessions.

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing (Uncontrolled urban expansion; Lack of clarity regarding property rights, ownership and building codes)
- Management systems/Management plan (Lack of an appropriate management system; Poor law enforcement; Lack of capacity of management agency)
- Illegal activities (illegal occupation of space)

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/</a>

### Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission took place from 8 to 13 December 2024, as requested by the Committee, to assess the state of conservation of the inscribed zones and living conditions of the relocation towns, as well as the overall governance relating to the zoning and relocation programme.

On 27 January 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, in response to the two previous Decisions of the World Heritage Committee. The report is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/documents/</a>.

In response to Decision 45 COM 7B.152, the report provides the following information:

- The operational relationship between the recent Tourism Development Plan (TDP), the 2012 Tourism Management Plan (TMP, which is under revision) and the 2013 Heritage Management Framework (HMF);
- Management of tourism and carrying capacity, as illustrated by the Bayon temple and other sites;

Management of the increasing macaque monkey population and their interaction with visitors.

In response to Decision 46 COM 7B.31, the report provides the following information:

- Recapitulation of the conservation efforts for the property, particularly including development of the land zoning and the situation of legal residents since 1992;
- Analysis of the pressures arising from the proximity of the town of Siem Reap, from tourism and demographic growth on villages and legal residents, amounting to 171,616 individuals as of 2022;
- An outline of the jurisdiction and control mechanism relating to illegal settlements, based on national laws and regulations including the 1994 Zoning and Environmental Management Plan (ZEMP) and specific laws, decrees and sub-laws;
- Assurances regarding the distinction between legal residents and illegal occupants;
- The status of the two relocation towns (Run Ta Ek and Peak Snèng);

On 10 March 2025, the World Heritage Centre received a letter from the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction of Cambodia, informing of the preparation of an "Angkor White Paper", putting forward new guidelines, rule and regulations for land management, housing, construction and livelihood improvement, notably for the inhabitants of the 114 ancient villages within the site. The letter also served as an opportunity to inform UNESCO of the State Party's engagement in a consultative process aimed at improving land management, housing, construction, and livelihoods.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The December 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that the overall state of conservation of the property is satisfactory, despite challenges over the past 30 years arising from the size of the property and the diversity of its component parts (archaeological remains, hydraulic systems, landscapes, cultivated lands, and resident communities).

The mission visited 14 villages within the inscribed zones, assessed their management as appropriate, and concluded that landscaping and reforestation efforts support attributes which convey the property's Outstanding Universal value (OUV). Restoration of the ancient hydraulic system has improved water distribution, community livelihoods, enhanced climate change resilience, and supported disaster prevention.

Following visits to Run Ta Ek and Peak Snèng – the two relocation towns within 25 km of the inscribed zones – and stakeholder interviews, the mission observed that the recent relocation efforts have been conducted in accordance with national laws and policies.

The mission found that re-settlers had received land ownership titles and access to basic infrastructures, and emphasised the importance of regular socio-economic assessments, continued investment in infrastructure and lasting livelihoods for the relocated populations.

In order to achieve the integration of heritage conservation and sustainable development, a greater understanding of socio-economic circumstances is required and should complement the ongoing major efforts in archaeological and landscape conservation and community projects led by the Authority for the Protection of the site and the Development of the Region of Angkor (APSARA) under the guidance of the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Sites of Angkor and Sambor Prei Kuk (ICC-Angkor/Sambor Prei Kuk). APSARA should be encouraged to address all issues related to the legal residents who choose to continue to reside within the property. Zoning regulations should remain, and voluntary relocation incentives should continue to be offered to both illegal occupants and legal residents. Any changes to land occupation within the property should be thoroughly studied in consultation with APSARA, national, provincial stakeholders and the ICC, with Heritage Impact Assessments prepared and submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in conformity with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines. APSARA should remain the management body with full legal and operational authority over the property, and expanded authority and resources to implement the mission recommendations for matters such as land management, community engagement, legal advice, social assistance, and communication. Greater integration of the local populations into sustainable development policies needs to be supported by national-level poverty alleviation efforts in the Siem Reap region.

Clarifications provided by the State Party regarding the relationship between tourism and management documents for the property, and initiatives to manage carrying capacity are welcome, and it is appropriate that the Tourism Development Plan seeks to implement key programmes arising from the

2012 TMP but also addresses how the town of Siem Reap and the property function together as tourism destinations. It would be appropriate for the State Party to submit the proposed update of the TMP to the World Heritage Centre for technical review before it is finalised.

Noting increasing incidents related to activities of macaques, the State Party should be encouraged in its efforts to implement more decisive measures, with support from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, to reduce their population within the property, so as to prevent damage to visitors and archaeological structures, and to protect the macagues themselves from mistreatment.

The State Party's engagement in a consultative process aimed at improving land management, housing, construction, and livelihoods can contribute to supporting an integrated approach to the management of Angkor that acknowledges the significance of community well-being, conservation, and coordination among all relevant bodies, including APSARA and local government entities.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.63

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **45 COM 7B.152** and **46 COM 7B.31**, adopted at its extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Acknowledges</u> the State Party's report on major issues, including recent information on the population relocation programme, framed within the historical context and founded on legally established zoning management scheme for the property,
- 4. <u>Notes</u> the conclusions of the joint World Heritage Centre/ ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission of December 2024, which confirm that the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property is sustained despite multiple pressures, and that it is supported by the technical expertise of the National Authority (APSARA), including the systematic rehabilitation of the previously occupied locations with landscaping that supports the attributes of the property's OUV, on-going efforts in the rehabilitation of the ancient hydraulic systems, and other projects which benefit local communities and contribute to sustainable development:
- 5. <u>Notes</u> the conclusions of the 2024 Reactive monitoring mission regarding the relocation programme from the inscribed areas to new townships, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to implement the mission's recommendations, and in particular to:
  - a) Continue providing incentives to legal residents and illegal occupants to accept voluntary relocation, to improve their living conditions and to help sustain the attributes which support the OUV of the property,
  - b) Continue to adhere strictly to international human rights standards for the relocation process, notably by systematically implementing a well-established procedure, through written, traceable and trackable documentation, while also strengthening formal conflict resolution mechanisms,
  - c) Undertake a socio-economic study of the living populations within the property to inform social policies and promote further research and projects relating to them, to increase the awareness of all stakeholders regarding their well-being and their role in conserving the property and its OUV.
  - d) Enhance the living conditions of people who have been resettled in relocation towns by conducting regular socio-economic assessments to inform policies that optimise job opportunities and capacity development.

- e) Maintain the current zoning and related regulations for the property and consider potential modifications to the land occupation and use within the inscribed zones with caution, in consultation with the APSARA, national and provincial stakeholders, and the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of the Historic Sites of Angkor and Sambor Prei Kuk (ICC-Angkor/Sambor Prei Kuk), and, if changes are proposed, submit the proposal with related Heritage Impact Assessment for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies,
- f) Reinforce proactive measures to prevent new settlements and unlawful transfer of land occupation titles, including through communication to national and local populations,
- g) Continue strengthening APSARA in the areas of land management, community engagement, legal advice, social assistance, conflict mediation and communication, with the provision of consequent financial and human resources, to enhance its mission of World Heritage preservation and foster greater benefit sharing with the communities,
- 6. <u>Welcomes</u> the clarifications provided by the State Party regarding the relationship between tourism and management documents, along with initiatives to manage the property's carrying capacity, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to submit the proposed update of the Tourism Management Plan for the property for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before it is finalised;
- 7. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party's efforts to manage the increasing populations of macaques within the property, to prevent them from damaging archaeological structures and hurting visitors, while continuing to protect them from mistreatment;
- 8. <u>Takes note</u> of the information provided by the State Party concerning the establishment of a consultative process aimed at improving land management, housing, construction, and livelihoods;
- 9. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 64. Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (China)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1994

Criteria (i)(ii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

### Previous monitoring missions

March 2014: Joint World Heritage Center/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2023: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management activities (Project to raise up the Yuzhen Palace at the property) (issue resolved)
- Management systems / Management Plan (Requirement for a living heritage management approach)
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation (Tourism development has begun to reach a critical mass)
- Others (Lack of clarity regarding components and buffer zone of the property)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/

### Current conservation issues

From 13 to 17 December 2023, a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission visited the property at the request of the State Party, the report of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/</a>.

On 30 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed is presented in this report, as follows:

- During the 2023 Advisory mission, in-depth discussions were held on the issues currently facing the property, including the Yuzhen Place uplift project, clarification of boundaries and buffer zone, and tourism carrying capacity. The State Party has now begun implementing the mission recommendations:
- Documentation of the Yuzhen Palace uplift project was carried out before, during and after works.
   The uplift project was implemented in line with the Committee's decisions. Selected visual materials comparing before and after the project were annexed to the report;
- During the Advisory mission, it was clarified that the property is made up of 45 component parts.
  The confusion in the number of component parts was due to translation of the terminology, and
  the State Party confirmed that the property consists of 45 component parts (the list included in
  the report), which include 49 heritage sites and 286 elements;
- Boundary clarification, along with an analysis of the attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, is currently underway following the recommendations of the Advisory mission. Once approval processes are completed, a boundary clarification will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre, followed by a buffer zone modification request and the revision of the Management Plan for the property;
- Visitor control measures continue to be applied, as previously reported, to enforce capacity limits, e.g. manual and drone surveillance, booking and ticketing systems, crowd management and the installation of monitoring sensors. It is confirmed that visitor carrying capacity for the World Heritage property is 25,000 people/day, and 46,500 people/day for the larger Wudang Mountains Scenic Area. In addition, daily visitor capacity of 8,000 people/day and peak visitor capacity of 1,000 people/day apply to the entire Taihe Palace area, and not limited to the Golden Peak area. The Golden Peak Visitor Monitoring Project is currently being designed for launch in 2025, to create a real-time visitor flow monitoring and early warning system for the area to inform visitor control strategies and thereby minimize the impact of visitation on the OUV.

On 8 April 2024, the State Party submitted boundary clarification maps and explanatory material to the World Heritage Centre. However, the World Heritage Centre did not accept the clarification maps, as they depicted individual buffer zones for the component parts. A response explaining the issue and requesting corrected maps was sent to the State Party on 30 April 2024. The State Party has not yet provided the new maps.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The December 2023 Advisory mission provided a valuable and constructive opportunity to provide advice and clarification on various issues, including points raised in previous decisions of the World

Heritage Committee notably on Yuzhen Palace uplift project, boundary and buffer zone clarification, and tourism carrying capacity. The mission concluded that the property appeared to be in a good state of conservation, with the immediate and wider setting well protected. The State Party's efforts to implement the mission recommendations regarding the key issues of concern are noted with appreciation.

With regards to the Yuzhen Palace uplift project, the mission visited the completed project site and observed that the Committee's recommendations, including key mitigation measures, have been well implemented. It was noted that the platform has been shaped more naturally to integrate into the landscape better, as requested by the Committee. The mission concluded that overall, the project has limited impact on the OUV, while the mission identified a need for heritage interpretation at the property to include more on-site explanation of the impacts of the project, and of the archaeological sites in particular.

The State Party's further clarification and confirmation concerning the number of component parts of the property (45 component parts) is appreciated and should be reflected in a correction to the Statement of OUV. However, the Advisory mission indicated some cases where the grouping of closely associated property component parts might be considered, and so it is noted that the current work by the State Party on clarifying the boundaries on the basis of the attributes of OUV may affect the number of component parts that are ultimately identified.

Following the clarification of the boundaries of all component parts of the property, a buffer zone needs to be defined covering the immediate and part of the wider landscape setting of the property. The Advisory mission recommended further work on the clear identification of the attributes of OUV, to guide the delineation of a unifying buffer zone that reflects the way the ensemble of buildings was created overtime to become a single complex, linked by sacred pathways, within a single sacred mountain setting. The State Party will need to submit a Minor Boundary Modification (MBM) request for the buffer zone, in line with the technical requirements outlined in the Advisory mission report.

The State Party has provided explanations regarding their carrying capacity calculations and welcome indications of their plans for reinforcing visitor monitoring. It would be useful to understand better what management responses will be triggered when visitor numbers reach certain thresholds. The Advisory mission suggested a study to be based on visitor monitoring data for a one-year period and this would be helpful in determining carrying capacity based on the specific requirements of individual component parts, rather than based on area alone, as well as ensuring that management responses are effective.

Following the boundary clarification and the approval of a MBM for a buffer zone, as well as the tourist management monitoring and research, the *Plan for Conservation and Management of the Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (2019-2035)* should be updated to support the effective management of the property, for submission to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, and ensure that other relevant legislation, including a subsequent *Master Plan for the Wudang Mountains Scenic Area* should also integrate the updated elements accordingly. The State Party should also be requested to integrate a plan that guides the further opening of the property to visitors in the Management Plan, especially with regard to restoration works, interpretation facilities, new buildings and infrastructure, in line with the requirements outlined in the Operational Guidelines and the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* as recommended by the Advisory mission.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.64**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2.
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.153**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the continued efforts made by the State Party to conserve and protect the property, and strengthen its management, <u>expresses its appreciation</u> to the State Party for having invited a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to the property and encourages the State Party to continue implementing the mission

- recommendations, including those aimed at ensuring compliance of the property with the Operational Guidelines;
- 4. <u>Takes note</u> of the Advisory mission's finding that, overall, the Yuzhen Palace uplift project has limited impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), however, <u>requests</u> that more on-site explanation of the project's impact and additional information on the archaeological sites in particular are included within the heritage interpretation;
- 5. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, following the technical requirements outlined in the 2023 Advisory mission report:
  - a) Detailed boundary clarification maps for each of the 45 component parts of the property by **1 December 2025**,
  - b) A Minor Boundary Modification request, following the prescribed format (Annex 11 of the Operational Guidelines) by **1 February 2027**, for the delineation of a unifying buffer zone which encompasses the immediate and part of the wider landscape setting of the property, guided by further work on the clear identification of the attributes of OUV, in order to reflect the way the ensemble of buildings was created overtime to become a single complex, linked by sacred pathways, within a single sacred mountain setting;
- 6. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> various measures being introduced to enhance visitor control at the property, and <u>further requests</u> more details on how the real-time visitor control system at the monitoring centre is being implemented, how the receptors are installed and how it operates in each component part, with information on the type of response measures to be activated once the threshold of visitor numbers is reached;
- 7. Requests furthermore the State Party to update the management plan for the property including a plan that guides the further opening up of the remaining component parts to visitors, following the boundary clarification and approval of a buffer zone, and to ensure the integration of the updated elements in other relevant legislation including a subsequent Master Plan for the Wudang Mountains Scenic Area, in line with the Advisory mission recommendation:
- 8. Reminds the State Party to inform the World Heritage Centre of any proposed actions, including major restorations, that may negatively impact the property's OUV, before any irreversible decisions are made, and to undertake impact assessments in accordance with Paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines and taking into full account the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 9. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.
- 65. Historic Centre of Macao (China)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 67. Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor (China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2014

Criteria (ii)(iii)(v)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1442/documents/

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1442/assistance/

# UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-In-Trust USD 188,361 (2001-2015): "Preparatory Assistance for the Silk Roads World Heritage nomination in China and Central Asia", "Sustainable Tourism: Silk Road"; "Silk Roads Heritage Corridor in Central Asia and China"; "Enhancing Silk Road Interpretation and Quality Guides Training"; Norway USD 483,414 (2007-2013): "Support the World Heritage serial nominations: Central Asian Petroglyph sites and the Silk Roads"; The Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (BELSPO), 90,000 € (2010-2013): "Silk Roads Cultural Heritage Resource Information System (CHRIS) for Central Asia"; UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust projects: "Support for documentation standards and procedures of the Silk Roads World Heritage Serial and Transnational Nomination in Central Asia" (Phase I, USD 985,073 from 2011 to 2015); "Support for Silk Roads World Heritage Sites in Central Asia" (Phase II, USD 697,796 from 2015 to 2018); UNESCO/Republic of Korea Funds-In-Trust USD 350,000 (2018-2021): "Support for the Serial and Transnational World Heritage Nomination(s) of the Silk Roads in Asia (Phase II)"; European Union 4 million € (2018-2024): "Support to Silk Roads Heritage Corridors in Afghanistan, Central Asia and Iran - International Dimension of the European Year of Cultural Heritage".

### Previous monitoring missions

March 2016: ICOMOS Advisory mission to the Talgar component site in Kazakhstan; November 2016: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to eight component sites of the serial property in Kazakhstan (Talgar, Kayalyk, Karamergen, Aktobe, Kulan, Kostobe, Ornek sites and the Akyrtas archaeological complex).

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/management plan (Need to implement the timetables for developing detailed management plans; Need for strategies for conservation of component sites; Need for visitor management strategies, including interpretation)
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation
- Urban development (Comparative fragility of many sites)
- Ground transport infrastructure (Proposals for a major road and bridge directly across the Talgar component site in Kazakhstan)
- Housing (Residential development in the buffer zone, near the Talgar Citadel in Kazakhstan)

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1442/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1442/</a>

## Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2024, the States Parties of China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan submitted a joint state of conservation report, available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1442/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1442/documents/</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

• The ICOMOS International Conservation Centre-Xi'an (IICC-X) continues to provide the Secretariat for this three State Party-transnational property, and a working group convened in Xi'an coordinated the joint state of conservation report;

- A special exhibition "Departing from Chang'an: A Thematic Exhibition Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Silk Roads Inscription" was hosted by IICC-X in Xi'an, jointly supported by the three States Parties;
- The 33 component parts of the property receive the highest level of protection available through the heritage legislation in each State Party: the State Party of China continuously updates laws and regulations; the State Party of Kazakhstan has strengthened laws and adjusted administrative divisions of some component parts; the State Party of Kyrgyzstan applies existing laws;
- In relation to management plans for the Chinese component parts, the revision of those in Shaanxi Province and the Site of Yumen Pass are complete, and the Maijishan Cave-Temple Complex is in progress. In Kazakhstan, management plans for all eight component parts are complete and under implementation. Kyrgyzstan provided an outline 'Action plan to ensure the preservation and improvement of protection of the archaeological sites of Krasnaya Rechka, Ak-Beshim and Burana in the Chui region for 2022-2027';
- Visitation numbers through and since the COVID-19 pandemic are provided by the States Parties
  of China and Kazakhstan. The visitor numbers in the Chinese component parts remain below
  each visitor capacity limit;
- The State Party of China has strengthened monitoring, protection, presentation, utilization, promotion, and research, and has actively promoted cultural exchanges and cooperation;
- The State Party of Kazakhstan has improved management, undertaken staff training, and extended public outreach and education, including through social media;
- The State Party of Kyrgyzstan has actively investigated other potential Silk Roads heritage sites, delineated protection zones, and continues to engage local communities;
- Heritage presentation and interpretation, and stakeholder participation have been improved by all three States Parties;
- The Birlik-Akbulak highway and bridge were constructed to the north of the buffer zone of the Talgar settlement in 2020-2021, with the old bridge closed in 2016 and additional information provided;
- All three States Parties continue to improve heritage monitoring systems. The State Party of China
  has established a combined mechanism of routine and special monitoring, and has cooperated
  with the International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage (HIST).
  The establishment of early warning system is also underway. The State Party of Kazakhstan has
  a multi-level monitoring system and site-specific emergency plans. The State Party of Kyrgyzstan
  has a three-tier monitoring system (local, national and international) to strengthen heritage
  protection and management;
- The State Party of China has conducted Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for the proposed rural sewage treatment project and special education school within the buffer zone of Weiyang Palace in Chang'an City of the Western Han Dynasty, which conclude that neither project will adversely affect the fabric, setting nor the surrounding environment of this component part of the property. The respective HIAs are annexed to the report;
- The State Party of China re-submitted cadastral maps showing clear boundaries and buffer zones for each component part of the Chinese section of the property (annexed to the report);
- The State Party of Kyrgyzstan notes that the intrusive infrastructure, previously reported in the buffer zones of the Ak-Beshim settlement and Krasnaya Rechka settlement, remain.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The three States Parties involved in the protection and management of this complex transnational serial property continue to make progress with monitoring, presentation, training, and stakeholder outreach. The continued secretarial support provided by the IICC-X is welcome, as is the special exhibition that was proposed.

Despite the extensive report submitted by the three States Parties, some matters previously raised by the Committee have not yet been fully addressed. Updates provided on management plans for the component parts of the property indicate progress, but the full set of management plans should be

finalized as a matter of priority, taking into consideration the outcomes of the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission, and all should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. The Committee has previously requested review of carrying capacity for each of the component parts, in light of the implications of the pandemic and the outcome of these reassessments should also be submitted to the World Heritage Centre. The Committee has previously requested that the State Party of Kazakhstan establish a World Heritage Steering Committee and to continue co-ordinated management of the property in co-operation with the States Parties of China and Kyrgyzstan. The Committee has also previously requested that the State Party of Kazakhstan to provide information concerning roads management, notably for the component parts of Akyrtas, Kostobe, and for the adjusted route of the A3 Ust-Kamenogorsk-Almaty road that avoids the buffer zone of the Kayalyk component part (Decisions 42 COM 7B.5 and 44 COM 7B.22), but the works were completed prior to the previously-requested submission of detailed information.

Additional information provided on the Birlik-Akbulak highway and bridge is noted, but the works were completed prior to the previously-requested submission of detailed plans in one of the working languages of the Convention. The documentation provided suggests that the new road aligns with the northern edge of the buffer zone, rather than being outside, and the Committee may wish to request clarification. The State Party of China has provided HIAs for the proposed rural sewage treatment project and school within the buffer zone of Weiyang Palace in Chang'an City of the Western Han Dynasty, which will be subject to technical review by ICOMOS. Concerns remain about inappropriate development within the buffer zones of the Ak-Beshim and Krasnaya Rechka settlements, and the State Party of Kyrgyzstan should be encouraged to continue efforts to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property is not impacted by inappropriate development.

Cadastral maps have been submitted by the State Party of China and it would be appropriate to reiterate the previous request to the States Parties of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to ensure that the boundaries and buffer zones of all inscribed component parts of the property are documented on cadastral maps (Decision 44 COM 7B.22), which should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre. Moreover, all three States Parties should be asked to ensure that the component parts of the property are appropriately identified in local regulatory documents and that, as also previously requested, the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape is implemented as a tool for integrating heritage protection with development plans and processes. The Committee has previously welcomed collaboration with HIST, and it would be appropriate to reiterate the previous request that all three States Parties work closely to use space technology applications to monitor the state of conservation of the entirety of the property.

Despite the extensive submitted documentation, the report by the three States Parties has not responded directly to all previous requests by the Committee and future reports should respond specifically to each Committee decision.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.67

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **42 COM 7B.5**, **44 COM 7B.22** and **45 COM 7B.156** adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the ongoing secretarial support provided by the ICOMOS International Conservation Centre-Xi'an (IICC-X), the special exhibition "Departing from Chang'an: A Thematic Exhibition Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Silk Roads Inscription", the advice of the States Parties regarding the statutory protection afforded to the component parts of the property, and the progress reported with monitoring, presentation, training, and stakeholder outreach directed at protecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property:

- 4. <u>Noting</u> the updates provided on the preparation of management plans for the component parts of the property provided by the States Parties of China and Kazakhstan, <u>reiterates its previous requests</u> that outstanding management plans be finalized as a matter of priority, taking into consideration the outcomes of the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission, and be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 5. <u>Also noting</u> the information provided by the States Parties regarding visitation during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, <u>again encourages</u> the States Parties to review and re-assess the carrying capacities at all component parts in light of the post-pandemic health and safety regulations, and to submit the results of this reassessment to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 6. <u>Further noting</u> the information provided by the State Party of Kazakhstan regarding the revised route of the Birlik-Akbulak highway and bridge, and that the works were completed prior to submission of more detailed plans, <u>requests</u> the State Party of Kazakhstan to provide clarification regarding the location of the new bridge and road in relation to the northern edge of the buffer zone of this component part of the property;
- 7. Also reiterates its previous requests to the State Party of Kazakhstan to establish a World Heritage Steering Committee for its component parts, to provide information concerning roads management for the component parts of Akyrtas, Kostobe, and for the adjusted route of the A3 Ust-Kamenogorsk-Almaty road, and to continue developing effective coordination with the States Parties of China and Kyrgyzstan for the management of the property through the existing agreements and management mechanisms;
- 8. <u>Takes note</u> of the Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) submitted by the State Party of China for the integrated rural sewage treatment project and special education school proposed within the buffer zone of the Weiyang Palace in Chang'an City of the Western Han Dynasty, which will be subject to technical review by ICOMOS;
- 9. <u>Takes note with concern</u> that development issues in the buffer zones of the Ak-Beshim and Krasnaya Rechka settlements remain unresolved and <u>further reiterates its previous request</u> to the State Party of Kyrgyzstan to continue efforts to ensure that attributes which support the OUV of the property are not impacted by development;
- 10. <u>Noting</u> receipt of cadastral maps for the Chinese component parts of the property, reiterates furthermore its previous request to the States Parties of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to ensure that:
  - a) The boundaries and buffer zones of all inscribed component parts are duly documented in cadastral maps and that these maps are submitted to the World Heritage Centre,
  - b) All three States Parties ensure that the component parts of the property are appropriately identified in local regulatory documents and that the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape is implemented as a tool for integrating heritage protection with development plans and processes for the cities and settlements in the property;
- 11. <u>Also welcomes</u> the collaboration with the International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage (HIST) by the State Party of China, and <u>reiterates moreover its previous request</u> that all concerned partners work closely with the HIST and the International Institute for Central Asian Studies to use space technology applications to monitor the state of conservation of the entirety of the property;

12. <u>Finally requests</u> the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

# 80. Town of Luang Prabang (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1995

Criteria (ii)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479/documents/

# International Assistance

Requests approved: 8 (from 1994-2024) Total amount approved: USD 229,062

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 200,000 (France / UNESCO Cooperation Agreement)

### Previous monitoring missions

September–October 2007: UNESCO/Region Centre/Ville de Chinon international co-operation project mission; November 2007: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2009: UNESCO/Ville de Chinon/ADUC cooperation program mission; April 2022: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, March 2025: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of enforcement of the Luang Prabang Conservation Plan (PSMV), illegal constructions and long-term conservation and management of wooden structures
- Public works (proposed new town, airport extension, pedestrian bridge, Nam Khan riverbank protection project and Nam Khan bridge replacement)
- Luang Prabang Hydropower Project (LPHPP) which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)
- · Condition of historic buildings requiring physical conservation works
- · Need for urban design guidelines
- Discontinuation of the Heritage Fund and resulting absence of a sustainable financial mechanism for the preservation of traditional architecture
- · Potential impact on OUV of significant tourism and infrastructure projects
- Status and resourcing of the World Heritage Management Division

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479/

### Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2025, the State Party provided a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479/documents">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479/documents</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

The State Party remains committed to implementing the Luang Prabang Conservation Plan ("Plan
de sauvegarde et mise en valeur" - PSMV) and supporting social and economic wellbeing of local
communities:

- The status of the World Heritage Management Division and possible re-establishment as a unified technical entity is under consideration;
- GIS monitoring is occurring with a dedicated GIS team being proposed;
- Funding has been secured for risk and disaster management with the appointment of a specialist;
- Phase 1 of the Mekong and Nam Khan River Disaster Risk Management Project is under construction and additional information has been submitted. Phases 2 and 3 remain at the feasibility stage and subject to Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- Monitoring of the environmental setting of the property is progressing, including analysis of the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers study;
- Engagement is continuing with traditional building owners, and five buildings were restored and a further five are in progress;
- Discussions continue about re-establishing a Heritage Fund;
- World Bank funding of USD 2 million will support further wetlands restoration;
- Information on intangible heritage will be made more widely available;
- There is no separate Infrastructure Development Plan document for the property;
- The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is funding a project, the Sustainable Urban and Transport Management in Luang Prabang, which will improve overall infrastructure including traffic and parking, bicycle lanes, walking paths, and public transport;
- An Interim Urban Transport Master Plan will be finalised once pilot projects are complete. Larger project initiatives will include HIAs and referral to the World Heritage Centre;
- The Nam Khan River Bridge project remains at concept stage;
- The Luang Prabang Tourism Management Plan has been prepared, following the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Guidelines and ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism, and informed by the Integrated Tourism and Heritage Destination pillar of the Luang Prabang Smart and Integrated Urban Strategy, and has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- The January 2024 HIA for the Luang Prabang Hydro-Electric Power Project was revised in response to the recommendations of the ICOMOS Technical Review and of the World Heritage Centre. The updated version of the HIA has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- The Asian Development Bank-funded Urban Environment Improvement Investment Project has not progressed, but the HIA conducted at the feasibility stage (available online) did not identify significant negative impacts;
- The Mekong Bridge project remains at feasibility stage;
- A feasibility study for the Riverside Tourism Development project is complete, but designs are not yet approved and an HIA will be prepared;
- The Hillside Tourism Accommodation project remains at concept stage;
- The Mekong Footpath project is pending approval;
- The Airport Upgrade project has not progressed;
- The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission requested by Decision 46 COM 7B.34 occurred from 16 to 22 March 2025.

### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's ongoing efforts to safeguard the OUV of the property, while supporting local communities and integrating the principles of the World Heritage Convention within the broader context of territorial and development planning, and progress with environmental monitoring and reporting

should be acknowledged. It is welcome that consideration will be given to the possible re-establishment of the World Heritage Management Division as a unified technical entity, in accordance with previous Committee requests, and that the re-establishment of the Heritage Fund remains under consideration, as such a fund would significantly contribute towards the conservation and restoration of dilapidated timber buildings, thereby supporting preservation of the traditional architecture of the property. The State Party enjoys considerable support from the international community and the funding which has been secured for risk and disaster management and further restoration of wetlands is also welcome. As foreshadowed, the State Party has prepared a Tourism Management Plan, which will be subject to Technical Review. The previously reviewed HIA for the Luang Prabang Hydro-Electric Power Project has been revised in response to the 2024 ICOMOS Technical Review. The updated version of the HIA has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and shared with the Advisory Bodies.

Recognising that there are many issues, programmes and individual projects to be managed, it would be timely and appropriate to remind the State Party of the previous requests of the Committee to provide updated elements of the PSMV, address the outcomes from the Technical Reviews of the Riverbank Protection and Park project, consider alternative approaches to the proposed replacement of the Nam Khan River Bridge, share monitoring data from river studies, and establish an urban design document, in accordance with the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL). The State Party report is accompanied by voluminous documentation providing updates on significant tourism and infrastructure projects and programmes including the Mekong and Nam Khan River Disaster Risk Management Project, Urban Environment Improvement Investment Project, Interim Urban Transport Master Plan, Sustainable Urban and Transport Management in Luang Prabang, new Mekong Bridge, Riverside Tourism Development, Hillside Tourism Accommodation Project, Mekong Footpath Project and Airport Upgrade. The Committee may wish to acknowledge the State Party's commitment to ensuring that documentation will be provided for these projects (and, where relevant, in accordance with the methodology of the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context), and to remind the State Party of the projects for which additional documentation should be submitted before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse. With Decision 46 COM 7B.34 the Committee has already requested that the 2025 Reactive Monitoring mission consider the potential impact of the above-mentioned projects and programmes on attributes that support the OUV of the property. The mission report is being finalised at the time of writing.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.80**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 46 COM 7B.34, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
- 3. <u>Acknowledges</u> the State Party's ongoing efforts to safeguard the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, through implementation of the Luang Prabang Conservation Plan ("Plan de sauvegarde et mise en valeur" PSMV), support for the social and economic wellbeing of local communities, commitment to integrate the World Heritage Convention's principles within the broader context of territorial and developmental planning, environmental monitoring and reporting, including the use of GIS and the proposed establishment of a dedicated GIS team, engagement with the owners of traditional buildings and progress with restoration and promulgation of information on intangible heritage;
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the State Party's advice that the status of the World Heritage Management Division remains under consideration, including its possible re-establishment as a unified technical entity, and that discussions continue about re-establishing a Heritage Fund, to support the preservation of traditional architecture, as well as the new funding secured for risk and disaster management and to support further wetlands restoration;
- 5. Reiterates its previous requests to the State Party to:

- a) Submit updated elements of the PSMV to the World Heritage Centre for Technical Review by the Advisory Bodies,
- b) Take into full consideration the points raised in ICOMOS Technical Reviews as the Riverbank Protection and Park projects are implemented,
- c) Consider alternative approaches to the proposed replacement of the Nam Khan River Bridge in light of the ICOMOS Technical Review, and the option proposed by the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission of a like-for-like replacement, and to submit the selected design to the World Heritage Centre prior to implementation,
- d) Share monitoring data collected for the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers with the World Heritage Centre,
- e) Establish an urban design guidelines document, in line with the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) to contribute to the preservation of streetscapes, and inform the appropriate built form, materials and colours to be used in future development projects within the property and its buffer zone:
- 6. <u>Notes</u> that the Luang Prabang Tourism Management Plan will be subject to Technical Review by ICOMOS and <u>requests</u> that it not be finalised until this review is complete and any resulting adjustments have been made;
- 7. <u>Also notes</u> that the January 2024 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Luang Prabang Hydro-Electric Power Project has been revised in response to the recommendations of the 2024 ICOMOS Technical Review and the updated version has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre for further review;
- 8. <u>Further notes</u> the updates provided for significant tourism and infrastructure projects and programmes, including the Mekong and Nam Khan River Disaster Risk Management Project, Urban Environment Improvement Investment Project, Interim Urban Transport Master Plan, Sustainable Urban and Transport Management in Luang Prabang, new Mekong Bridge, Riverside Tourism Development, Hillside Tourism Accommodation Project, Mekong Footpath Project and Airport Upgrade, and <u>also welcomes</u> the commitment of the State Party to ensure that, in conformity with previous Committee requests and the Operational Guidelines, documentation for the above-mentioned projects, including HIAs prepared in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context, will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse;
- 9. <u>Notes furthermore</u> that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission requested by Decision **46 COM 7B.34** took place in March 2025;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, a concise progress report on the state of conservation of the property and on the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session.

# 81. Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landscape (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2001

Criteria (iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/documents/</a>

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1999) Total amount approved: USD 13,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/assistance/

# UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: UNESCO/Japanese Funds-in-Trust project: USD 379,040 (1996-1997); Projects funded by Italy through the Lerici Foundation: USD 482,194 (1996-2004, 3 project phases): Phase I (1996-1997), USD 161,124; Phase II (1998-1999), USD 164,000; Phase III (2003-2005), USD 157,070; UNESCO/France Cooperation Agreement: 20,000 EUR (2020-2021) jointly for Vat Phou and the Plain of Jars

### Previous monitoring missions

January/February 2011: UNESCO Mission; November 2011: France-UNESCO Convention Programme mission; February 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2013: France-UNESCO Convention Programme mission; March 2014: France-UNESCO Convention Programme mission; February 2015: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2023: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground transport infrastructure (New infrastructure construction, including new proposed roads)
- Housing (New constructions contributing to the haphazard densification of the main monumental complex)
- Management systems/Management Plan (Lack of a coordinated management mechanism)
- Impacts of tourism/visitors/recreation
- Interpretative and Visitation facilities (Parking lot and visitor centre)
- Human resources (Lack of sufficient professional staff)
- Water infrastructure related to water supply
- Water infrastructure: hydropower Dam construction

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/</a>

### Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/documents">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/481/documents</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by previous Committee sessions is presented in this report:

- Revised nomenclature used for areas of the property, avoiding use of the term 'core area' inside the property boundaries;
- The requested roadworks for Roads 14A and 14B are now included in the Provincial Facilities Development Plan, with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) approached to fund a Management Plan that will ensure that the road construction does not harm the cultural landscape and archaeological attributes;
- The implementation of the recommendations of the 2023 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission include:

- Ongoing restoration of the east- and propping of the west pediment of the southern palace,
- Relocation of non-archaeological structures inside the main temple complex to reduce visual impact,
- Plans for major sites inside the property to be developed for conservation purposes, specifically for interpretation and visitor presentation,
- Updating of the Management Plan and revision of the Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV), which will assist in the enhancement of preservation measures for landscape setting;
- Regarding the Phou Ngoy Dam Hydroelectric Power project, and hydro-electrical projects in general:
  - The 2021 amendment to the Law on National Heritage mandates impact assessments for all development projects or socio-economic activities that may directly or indirectly impact heritage,
  - Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) are now integrated into Feasibility Study processes,
  - The Lao National Mekong Committee Secretariat has reconfirmed that there are currently no ongoing procedure regarding the Dam,
  - The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, with the Champasak provincial authorities will encourage the central government to undertake a HIA for the Phou Ngoy project and other projects in its region.

The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for the Phou Ngoy Dam, the draft RSOUV and the requested updated topographic map based on LiDAR scanning are appended to the State Party's report.

The World Heritage Centre was informed that Prior Consultation procedure of the Mekong River Commission has been initiated for Phou Ngoy Dam project and sent a letter to the State Party on 6 December 2024 requesting further consideration of Paragraph 118 bis of the Operational Guidelines, in line with past Committee decisions emphasising the need for comprehensive assessments, notably a HIA.

### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre. ICOMOS and ICCROM

The revised draft RSOUV reflects some recommendations of the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission, notably the explicit inclusion of Tomo Temple and other elements as attributes. Yet, the State Party may be invited to further review the text in light of the mission's suggestions (p.36) concerning the contribution of the landscape to the OUV. The revision of the Management Plan is based on this revised RSOUV, but the Committee may wish to remind the State Party that the RSOUV must be adopted by the Committee before it can be formally applied in management processes. A revised RSOUV should be submitted by 1 February of the year preceding its prior adoption by the Committee, as per Annex 10 of the Operational Guidelines. The Committee may also wish to request the State Party to submit the draft Management Plan to the Advisory Bodies for review prior to its adoption and implementation.

The boundaries of the property indicated on the submitted map align with those inscribed. The Committee may wish to encourage again the State Party to submit a Minor Boundary Modification request for the creation of a buffer zone, as requested in Decision **46 COM 7B.35**.

The State Party further integrated the Reactive Monitoring mission's recommendation by confirming the property's delineation, with Zone U (villages), Zone N (natural or agricultural area), Zone S (area of the sacred mountain), Perimeter A (archeological research easement) and Perimeter B (river banks), to be consistent with the urban regulation under application by Land Use Plan and not using the denomination such as 'core area' and 'buffer zones' to avoid confusion.

While recognising the State Party's progress in implementing the mission's recommendations, interventions on vulnerable archaeological structures, notably the central axis of the main temple complex, requires additional funding and technical support from partners. The Committee may wish to express satisfaction with the integration key elements of the Ancient City, notably Tomo Temple, into the conservation, research and valorisation programme. As further progress needs to be reported at its next session, the Committee may wish to request the State Party to strengthen its efforts to maintain the state of conservation of the property's archaeological attributes.

It is welcome that the completion of the interrupted work for Roads 14A and 14B budget is now integrated into the Provincial Facilities Development Plan. Its implementation should be expedited, coupled with the proposed Management Plan for road utilisation.

The progress of the Phou Ngoy Dam project at the current projected location remains a serious concern for the preservation of the property's OUV and its potential impacts on the ecological values. While an ESIA was submitted, the Committee may again request the central government to carry out a proper HIA to assess the adequacy of the project's location and identify other necessary measures to avoid irreversible impacts on the OUV, in conformity with the 2021 amended Law on the National Heritage of Lao, and Paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The same HIA requirement applies to any alternative project location within the buffer zone or the wider setting of the property. The Committee may wish to request that no irreversible decisions be taken, ensuring all mitigation options, including relocation, remain open for assessment in the requested HIA.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.81**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decisions 40 COM 7, 43 COM 7B.68, 44 COM 7B.146, 45 COM 7B.168 and 46 COM 7B.35, adopted at its 40th (Istanbul, 2016), 43rd (Baku, 2019) extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023), 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the State Party's efforts in implementing the previous Committee's decisions and recommendations of the 2023 joint World Heritage Centre/ICCROM/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, notably the process of revising the Management Plan with an updated draft Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV), and requests the State Party to:
  - a) Further refine the RSOUV in line with the analysis and suggestions of the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission, particularly in relation to the wider cultural landscape and Champasak town and that such consideration should involve meaningful consultation with the local community, and in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and submit the draft updated RSOUV by 1 February 2026 for examination by the Committee at its 48th session,
  - b) Submit the draft Management Plan, which should be based on the approved RSOUV, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, before adopting it for implementation;
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the submission of a topographic map presenting the boundaries of the property and <u>encourages again</u> the State Party to investigate for the purposes of effective protection of the property, a buffer zone delineation, considering the recommendations of the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission, and to submit a Minor Boundary Modification request in accordance with Paragraphs 163 and 164 of the Operational Guidelines, to the World Heritage Centre by **1 February 2027**, for examination by the Committee at its 49th session, if the technical requirements are met;
- 5. Also requests the State Party to continue:
  - a) Pursuing resource mobilisation efforts to complete the roadworks on Roads 14A and 14B.
  - b) Pursuing its efforts in addressing the technical recommendations of the 2023 Reactive Monitoring mission,

- c) The conservation, research and valorisation of the main temple complex, Ancient City and Tomo Temple;
- 6. <u>Also encourages</u> the State Party to reinforce its efforts to improve the maintenance of the physical state of conservation of the archaeological attributes of the property;
- 7. <u>Express its concern</u> on the reported pursuit of the projected site for the Phou Ngoy Dam in proximity to archaeological sites of the property and its possible impacts on the attributes that support its OUV, while <u>also noting</u> the stated recommendation of the site management and provincial authorities to the central government to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and that the Project Development Agreement for this project was renewed in February 2023, <u>reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to:
  - a) Consider an alternative location for this hydropower project,
  - b) Not undertake any further project or process approvals or start any further on-site operations that would limit the mitigation options available after the HIA has been completed,
  - c) Urgently submit any other details available on the project and the possibly forthcoming HIA to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, in compliance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines,
  - d) Ensure full agreement on the impacts and mitigation thereof of the project with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before taking any further decisions on its implementation;
- 8. Reminds the State Party to inform the World Heritage Centre in due course about any major development project that may negatively impact the OUV of the property, before any irreversible decisions are made, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 9. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.
- 84. Fort and Shalamar Gardens in Lahore (Pakistan)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 85. Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Philippines)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1993

Criteria (ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/677/documents/

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1997 to 1998) Total amount approved: USD 27,000

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/677/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/677/assistance/</a>

### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

July 1998: ICOMOS expert mission; July 2000: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Ground Transport Infrastructure (Proposed project to build the Binondo-Intramuros Bridge)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/677/

### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report along with attachments, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/677/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/677/documents/</a> and provides the following information:

- Several mitigation measures have been or will be implemented in response to the recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Binondo-Intramuros Bridge (BIB):
  - A Traffic Impact Assessment will be conducted to understand and manage the long-term effects of increased vehicular activity around the property, and to identify and propose traffic mitigation measures that benefit both stakeholders and bridge users,
  - Parking has been discontinued in front of the San Agustin Church, thereby improving its visual setting,
  - Pedestrianisation and urban design improvements are ongoing in Intramuros, including the removal of parking spaces within the World Heritage property, the creation of al fresco dining zones, the pedestrianisation of General Luna Street, discontinuation of coach parking and traffic control within the buffer zone;
- The BIB was constructed at the northern boundary of the buffer zone of San Agustin Church in 2022 without the required prior notification to the World Heritage Committee before the start of construction in 2018, but mitigation studies such as an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) and a HIA were conducted retroactively, and a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) has been developed for Intramuros;
- Since the completion of the BIB, visitation to the historic district of Binondo, including the San Augustin Church, has been increasing, and visitor awareness of cultural heritage has increased, there is stronger pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, and heavy trucks are no longer permitted to enter Intramuros:
- Structural assessments of San Agustin Church were undertaken in 2022 and again in November 2024, and there are future plans for seismic retrofitting;

- Challenges remain, including a lack of clear coordination and defined responsibilities, especially
  with regard to the management of the buffer zone, delayed legal reforms, ongoing development
  of regulations, and reactive rather than proactive heritage assessments;
- The management of the buffer zone will be strengthened through the development of the Implementing Rules and Regulations for Republic Act No.11961 (2023);
- Reconstruction of the Baluarte de Santo Domingo will not proceed, and interpretive methods such
  as virtual reconstructions and historical displays will be pursued. Plaza Mexico is currently
  undergoing rehabilitation.

On 13 November 2023, following receipt of third-party information, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party to request information concerning a large-scale construction project for a highway called "Pasig River Express Way", reportedly to come into the vicinity of the property. At the time of preparing this report, no response has been received from the State Party.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party is taking actions to mitigate concerns raised in the HIA for the BIB project submitted as an annex to the State Party's 2023 state of conservation report, including the long-term effects of changes in traffic volume, including pollution and vibrations. The implemented mitigation measures include introduction of pedestrianisation in Intramuros City and removal of parking in front of the San Augustin Church. The removal of these parking areas has contributed to improvement in the setting for this component of the property and better visitor amenity. A Traffic Impact Assessment will be conducted to guide traffic management approaches that respect and reflect the area's historical and cultural importance. The findings and recommendations of this assessment should be incorporated into a Traffic Management Plan once the assessment has been completed.

Another consequence of the BIB is increased visitation to the historic district. Therefore, the State Party should develop and implement a Tourism Management Plan to address increased visitor numbers resulting from the BIB. This need is also highlighted in the Intramuros CMP 2019, submitted as an annex to the State Party's 2023 report. As changes have occurred and some assessment results are now available, it would be appropriate to revise the CMP as a foundational framework for ensuring the long-term conservation of Intramuros, including buffer zone management.

The decision not to proceed with the reconstruction of the Baluarte de Santo Domingo is noted, and it is encouraging that the Intramuros Administration has required an HIA for Plaza Mexico, which will be subject to ongoing rehabilitation efforts.

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), intended to operationalise the legal provisions of Republic Act No. 11961 and ensure the integration of HIA into planning processes, remain pending, highlighting that institutional mechanisms necessary to safeguard the OUV and ensure coordinated inter-agency oversight remain under development. Therefore, while the State Party's initiative to create a legal mechanism for protecting the buffer zone is to be welcomed, its completion is urgent, given the pressures currently faced by the property.

The reported new "Pasig River Express Way" project has potential to affect the OUV of the property and, recalling that the BIB was completed prior to submission of relevant documents for review, the Committee should request the State Party to confirm the current status of the project, provide comprehensive details and conduct an HIA before any irreversible decision is made, in line with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

### Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.87

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.171**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).

- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the measures taken to mitigate the long-term impact of the Binondo-Intramuros Bridge (BIB), and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to continue its efforts, including conducting a Traffic Impact Assessment, and incorporating its findings and recommendations into a Traffic Management Plan covering at least the component part "Church of the Immaculate Conception of San Agustin (Manila)" and its buffer zone;
- 4. <u>Notes</u> that the number of visitors to the historic district of Binondo, including the San Augustin Church, has been increasing since the completion of the BIB, and therefore, requests the State Party to develop a Tourism Management Plan to address increased visitation and to submit the draft of this Plan for review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- 5. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to revise the Conservation Management Plan for Intramuros to address recent changes, including the buffer zone management, and the findings of the BIB Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- 6. <u>Welcomes</u> the proposed development of a legal framework to better protect the property's buffer zones, but <u>further requests</u> the State Party to complete the process to finalise the Implementing Rules and Regulations intended to operationalise these legal provisions of the 2023 Republic Act No. 11961 as a matter of urgency;
- 7. <u>Notes with satisfaction</u> the State Party's decisions not to proceed with the reconstruction of the Baluarte de Santo Domingo and to require an HIA for projects affecting the Plaza Mexico, and <u>requests furthermore</u> that the HIA be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in line with paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are made;
- 8. <u>Expresses concern</u>, following receipt of third-party information about a new "Pasig River Express Way" project, and <u>requests moreover</u> the State Party to submit comprehensive details about this project, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, as soon as possible, and to complete and also submit an HIA undertaken in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context before any irreversible decisions are made and before any part of the project is implemented, in line with paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines;
- 9. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.
- 86. Royal Tombs of the Joseon Dynasty (Republic of Korea)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 88. Silk Roads: Zarafshan-Karakum Corridor (Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2023

Criteria (ii)(iii)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1675/documents/

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1675/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1675/assistance/</a>

### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

### Previous monitoring missions

N/A

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Factors identified at the time of inscription of the property:

- Management systems / Management Plan (Lack of a management plan; Lack of a visitor management system)
- Water (Rain/Water table; Rising damp coupled with salinity)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1675/

### Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2024, the States Parties submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1675/documents">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1675/documents</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at the time of inscription of the property on the World Heritage List in 2023 is presented in the report as follows:

- Both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have established a new state-level heritage agency with responsibilities exclusively on cultural heritage protection and management. Subsequently, the constitutions of both the Coordinating Committee and the Working Group have been updated in November 2024;
- The Coordinating Committee has put the development of the five-year Management Plan on its agenda, which will include international operational procedures and incorporating the three World Heritage properties (Ancient Merv State Historical and Cultural Park (Turkmenistan, 1999), the Historic Centre of Bukhara (Uzbekistan, 1993), and Samarkand-Crossroad of Cultures (Uzbekistan, 2001)) along this section of the Silk Roads into the management of the current property:
- A joint Management Plan for the component parts in Turkmenistan has been developed;
- The comprehensive geospatial database created by the Central Asian Archaeological Landscapes (CAAL) project (2019-2027) benefits the coordinated monitoring, risk assessment, decision-making, and strategic planning of the property;
- Capacity-building activities have been conducted through international research projects, training workshops, seminars, international symposiums and conferences, and field schools;
- The official website and logotype of the serial property have been developed, and fencing, information boards, and visitation rules and procedures have been introduced, which enhance the coordinated tourism management and interpretation;
- The issue of rising damp and associated salt activities is addressed by a long-term international research project, with the monitoring and conservation methods disseminated to site managers;

- The local communities' involvement has been improved by employing more local residents in site management, monitoring, and archaeological excavations;
- The local residents' income has been increased through initiatives to safeguard intangible heritage, notably by supporting women to produce traditional crafts for the tourism industry;
- Research projects on the ancient artificial irrigation systems associated with the Zarafshan River have been conducted and envisaged to assess the potential future extensions of the property; and investigations of the location and extent of the Toksankoriz Irrigation System will be carried out in the future by the Agency of Historical and Cultural Heritage Protection of Tajikistan, with a view to possibly submitting a Minor Boundary Modification (MBM) request for this component part of the property and the relevant buffer zone to cover the entire historical irrigation system;
- Additional research has been conducted regarding the remains of Sheibanikhan Water Divider Bridges, with a conclusion that the site no longer warrants a future World Heritage extension due to its integrity and authenticity issue;
- The potential MBM request may include the necropolis, the pilgrim route, and the sacred spring around the Mausoleum of Khoja Mukhammad Bashoro;
- Concerning the proposed Kafirkala Archaeological Park project and the Paikend Museumification, the States Parties confirm that Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in 2025, before the projects are implemented.

### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Considerable progress has been made since the property's inscription on the World Heritage List in 2023 in terms of coordination among the States Parties, conservation, management, monitoring, capacity building, interpretation and presentation, tourist management, and community involvement, which is commendable.

The establishment of a State-level heritage agency in both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is a positive endeavour to enhance cultural heritage protection and management in the countries. Furthermore, the International Advisory Committee for World Heritage Properties in Uzbekistan, comprising international experts and representatives from ICOMOS and ICCROM, has been established to advise the Agency for Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan through annual meetings.

It is noted that international and national research projects to assess a potential extension of the property to include the ancient artificial irrigation systems associated with the Zarafshan River in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have been conducted and envisaged. The States Parties should be encouraged to submit to the World Heritage Committee a boundary modification request to include these irrigation systems, based on the outcome of these research projects. The Committee may wish to also note that the investigating on the location and extent of the Toksankoriz Irrigation System will be carried out in the future by the Agency of Historical and Cultural Heritage Protection of Tajikistan, and that a resulting boundary modification request may be submitted for this component part of property and the relevant buffer zone to cover the entire historical irrigation system.

The State Party of Uzbekistan confirms that, based on the research outcomes regarding the remains of the Sheibanikhan Water Divider Bridges, the site no longer warrants a future World Heritage extension due to issues with its integrity and authenticity. The Committee may wish to note this conclusion and nonetheless encourage the State Party to protect the site at the highest possible national level.

The potential MBM is envisaged to include the necropolis, the pilgrim route, and the sacred spring around the Mausoleum of Khoja Mukhammad Bashoro, which is encouraging.

It is welcome that communities have benefited more since the inscription on the World Heritage List, which is encouraging and should be further enhanced.

While a series of five-year site Management Plans for each component part of the property has been envisaged, their development should be conducted as a matter of urgency and put on the agenda of the Coordinating Committee. The joint Management Plan for the component parts in Turkmenistan's territory is a positive step towards this endeavour; nevertheless, a site Management Plan tailored to each component part is imperative to level the conditions and management of individual component parts up to the standards that apply to World Heritage. It is important that the overall five-year Management Plan includes international operational procedures and incorporate the three World Heritage properties (Ancient Merv State Historical and Cultural Park (Turkmenistan, 1999), the Historic Centre of Bukhara

(Uzbekistan, 1993), and Samarkand-Crossroad of Cultures (Uzbekistan, 2001)) along this section of the Silk Roads into the management of this property.

Extensive capacity-building activities have been undertaken, which is encouraging. It should be noted, however, that the focus of capacity building should be placed on improving the skills of the staff who undertake daily management of the sites.

Rising damp coupled with salinity is a common threat to sites in the region, and several academic studies have been undertaken in countries along the Silk Roads. International cooperation is therefore essential to address this issue by leveraging existing knowledge and experience.

Finally, the Committee may wish to thank the States Parties for sharing information about the proposed Kafirkala Archaeological Park and Paikend Museumification projects. It is noted that the HIAs for these projects have not been received, and the Committee may wish to recall the requirements outlined in Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines and urge the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, as early as possible and before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse, the initial designs for the projects along with HIAs, for review by the Advisory Bodies.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.88**

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 45 COM 8B.13, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the States Parties for the progress made with reinforcing coordination among themselves, conservation, management, monitoring, capacity building, interpretation and presentation, tourist management, and community involvement;
- Welcomes the establishment of State-level heritage agencies in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to enhance the protection, conservation and management of cultural heritage;
- 5. <u>Notes with satisfaction</u> the research projects conducted and envisaged by the States Parties to assess the ancient irrigation systems along this section of the Silk Roads, <u>also notes</u> that investigations into the location and extent of the Toksankoriz Irrigation System will be carried out in the future by the Agency of Historical and Cultural Heritage Protection of Tajikistan, and <u>encourages</u> the States Parties, based on the outcomes of these projects, to submit boundary modification requests to include these irrigation facilities in the property, as appropriate:
- 6. <u>Acknowledges</u> the outcomes of the States Parties' research, according to which the remains of the Sheibanikhan Water Divider Bridges no longer warrant consideration as an extension of the property due to issues with integrity and authenticity, and <u>encourages</u> the States Parties to protect the sites at the highest possible national level, in the spirit of the 1972 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage;
- 7. <u>Appreciates</u> the States Parties' commitment to planning a research project aimed at including the necropolis, the pilgrim route, and the sacred spring around the Mausoleum of Khoja Mukhammad Bashoro in the property through a minor boundary modification request;

- 8. <u>Encourages</u> the States Parties to continuously engage the local communities in site management, archaeological excavation, conservation, restoration and tourist services, so that they can benefit from the World Heritage status;
- 9. <u>Appreciates</u> the extensive capacity-building activities already commenced since the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List, and <u>encourages</u> the States Parties to provide dedicated capacity-building opportunities for the staff who are responsible for daily management of the sites:
- 10. <u>Urges</u> the States Parties to develop a five-year Management Plan for each component of the property as a matter of urgency, and <u>also urges</u> the States Parties to ensure that the overall five-year Management Plan includes international operational procedures and incorporate the three World Heritage properties along this section of the Silk Roads, i.e., the Ancient Merv State Historical and Cultural Park (Turkmenistan), the Historic Centre of Bukhara (Uzbekistan) and Samarkand-Crossroad of Cultures (Uzbekistan), into the management of this property;
- 11. <u>Requests</u> the States Parties to address the rising damp and associated salinity issues, in collaboration with countries along the Silk Roads with past knowledge and relevant experience;
- 12. Regrets that the States Parties have not yet submitted Heritage Impact Assessments for the Kafirkala Archaeological Park and Paikend Museumification projects to the World Heritage Centre, and requests the States Parties, as a matter of urgency, to complete the two above-mentioned reports in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context and in line with Paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and to submit them, together with detailed initial project designs, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before making any decision that would be difficult to reverse;
- 13. <u>Finally requests</u> the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

### 90. Historic Centre of Bukhara (Uzbekistan)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1993

Criteria (ii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/documents/</a>

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1995-2021) Total amount approved: USD 130,960

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/assistance/</a>

### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: 2016: USD 30,670 from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust project for the Application of the UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban landscape (HUL, 2011) at the World Heritage properties 'Historic Centre of Bukhara' and 'Samarkand – Crossroads of Cultures';

2019: USD 43,115 UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust project "Building capacity in managing World Heritage properties, interconnection of development and heritage preservation in Uzbekistan and Central Asia"

# Previous monitoring missions

1998: ICOMOS Reactive Assessment mission; October 2010: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2016: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2018: ICOMOS Advisory mission; January 2020: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; November 2024: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission.

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground Transport Infrastructure (Roads)
- High impact research / monitoring activities
- Housing, Development (Use of new building material and methods, inappropriate restoration and reconstruction methods; utilities or service infrastructure)
- Management deficiency (Lack of coordination with regard to the conservation and restoration activities carried out as part of the State Programme; Lack of on-going routine maintenance and varying state of conservation of monuments)
- Managements systems/Management Plan (Lack of a proper conservation and management plan; Lack of guidelines for rehabilitation of housing and lack of integration of Management Plan with City Masterplan and HUL Recommendation)
- · Archaeological excavation and rebuilding on the Shakhristan Market site
- Implications of the Project of Detailed Planning of Historical Centre of Bukhara Development (PDP)
- Others: Degradation of traditional houses

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/

### Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/documents/</a>. Progress with conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- The Management Plan for the property is being revised following Technical Review and an updated Masterplan for the City of Bukhara is under development. The ongoing moratorium on construction of new development will remain until the Management Plan and Masterplan have been reviewed by the Advisory Bodies. The legal framework for proposed developments continues to be updated. The national Agency for Cultural Heritage is advised by the Scientific Expert Council and the International Advisory Committee (IAC) on World Heritage sites in Uzbekistan, which held its Third meeting in November 2024. The Administration for Cultural Heritage of Bukhara Region is advised by a Public Scientific Advisory Council. Management of the property has focused on sustainable practices and support for inter-generational transmission of traditional arts and crafts. Guidelines for conservation requirements, renovation approaches, and new developments have been presented to community representatives and mahalla leaders;
- Progress has been made with implementation of the recommendations of the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission. Attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property were identified at a high level. Conservation works have been undertaken at the Ark Citadel, Kalon Mosque, Abdulazizkhan Madrassah, Rashid Madrassah, Jurabek Caravanserai and Khoja Kalon Hauz. The proposed construction of the new Shakhristan Bazaar is under review, although the south side has been paved to form a new 'Persian Square'. Other interventions to historic structure included restoration of roof structures, repair and replacement of ceiling beams, masonry stabilisation, floor renewal, installation of flashing, doors, and windows and provision of utilities, including the water supply and heating systems. In 2021, a technical study of drainage needs identified the need for 15 vertical wells. Designs have been developed for a proposed 'Eternal Bukhara Ethnographic Park' within the property.

At the invitation of the State Party, a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission took place in November 2024 (the mission report is available at: <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/602/documents/</a>). The State Party subsequently submitted a revised Masterplan for the City of Bukhara and an updated Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Eternal Bukhara Ethnographic Park project.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Ongoing improvements to the legal framework and support provided by the expert advisory committees and the IAC are welcome. Sustainable practices and support for traditional crafts and the promulgation of conservation and development guidelines also contribute to the conservation of the property's OUV.

The November 2024 Advisory mission concluded that the property retains the attributes which support its OUV, but remains impacted by past development initiatives, the poor condition of some monuments, and potentially by new development projects. It also concluded that the Eternal Bukhara project may contribute to the cultural awareness and environmental conditions of the property, but further investigations and refinements are necessary, including preparation of some key studies requested in the 2024 Advisory mission and a detailed HIA. An updated HIA has now been received and will be subject to Technical Review by ICOMOS. The mission also concluded that the draft Masterplan for the City of Bukhara requires further elaboration, including analysis of the property's condition and integration of principles from the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), as previously requested by the Committee, and to address matters outlined in the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission. Both the Masterplan for the City and the Management Plan for the property must be aligned and reflected in urban design and building regulations. The current moratorium on new development should remain until both documents have been finalised, following Technical Reviews which will be undertaken by ICOMOS.

Many significant projects are proceeding within the property, all of which should include HIAs and referral to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines. Works have been undertaken at the Ark Citadel (including reconstruction of the fortifications' northern wall, and projects at Jominy Mosque and the Throne Hall), Kalon Mosque and Minaret, Abdulazizkhan Madrassah, Abdulakhan Madrassah, Rashid Madrassah, Amir Alimkhan Madrassah, Ulughbek Madrassah, and Khoja Kalon Hauz. Works are planned for the Magoki Attari Mosque and Carayanserais complex. Although the State Party report includes some information about these projects, it does not provide the documentation requested by the Committee Decision 45 COM 7B.174. The works to Khoia Kalon Hauz were completed without being re-scoped in response to the ICOMOS Technical Review, and it is unclear whether the works at Abdulazizkhan Madrassah, Abdulakhan Madrassah projects were revised in accordance with Technical Reviews. The State Party should be requested to provide a comprehensive report on all ongoing and proposed conservation works and be reminded of its obligations under paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines. The new Shakhristan Bazaar project is being revised, but on the south side the site has been paved to form a new 'Persian Square' without prior referral to the World Heritage Centre. As previously requested by the Committee, the revised design for Shakhristan Bazaar should address the recommendations of the 2020 and 2024 missions, and 2021 Technical Review, and a detailed documentation package with a new HIA should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. As also previously requested, HIAs should be prepared and detailed project documentation should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for the proposed installation of 15 vertical drainage wells, which are intended to address salinity and groundwater issues.

The State Party's commitment to the implementation of previous Committee decisions and missions' recommendations is welcomed, but the Committee may wish to request a definitive schedule of actions already underway and the strategy for further actions necessary to implement the recommendations of both the 2020 and 2024 missions. The State Party is invited to develop a three-year comprehensive national capacity-building programme, in World Heritage site management, HIA, and technical projects for historic monuments, with the support of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.90

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.174**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).

- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the continuing progress made to support conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property through regulatory change, access to expert advice, capacity building, and guidance documents, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to support and implement the recommendations of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) on World Heritage sites in Uzbekistan, particularly in relation to development and conservation projects within the property and its buffer zone and previous Committee decisions and missions recommendations:
- 4. <u>Noting</u> the conclusions of the 2024 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission, <u>requests</u> the State Party to implement the mission's recommendations and to prepare and submit to the World Heritage Centre a schedule of actions already completed and the proposed strategy and programme for the further actions necessary to implement fully the recommendations of both the 2020 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission and the 2024 Advisory mission;
- 5. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to undertake further investigations and refinements to the Eternal Bukhara project, in accordance with the findings of the 2024 Advisory mission and following the forthcoming review by ICOMOS of the recently-submitted Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), and to submit a revised detailed documentation package to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are made:
- 6. Also notes that the moratorium on development and new work within the property and its buffer zone will remain in place until the integrated Masterplan for the City of Bukhara and the Management Plan for the property have been finalised, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party when updating these two Plans to include the findings of the 2024 Advisory mission, and integrate the principles of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape within the Masterplan;
- 7. Expresses concern that creation of the new 'Persian Square' on the south side of the proposed Shakhristan Bazaar site occurred without notification to the World Heritage Centre, and reiterates its previous request in Decision 45 COM 7B.174 that the revised design for Shakhristan Bazaar should address the recommendations of the 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission, 2021 Technical Review and 2024 Advisory mission, and that a detailed documentation package including a new HIA prepared in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review, in conformity with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, before any irreversible decisions are made;
- 8. Also reiterates its previous requests to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, and in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, revised detailed project documentation for works already undertaken and proposed for: the Ark Citadel, (including reconstruction of the fortifications' northern wall, and projects at Jominy Mosque and the Throne Hall); the Kalon Mosque and Minaret; the Abdulazizkhan Madrassah; the Abdulakhan Madrassah; the Rashid Madrassah; the Amir Alimkhan Madrassah; the Ulughbek Madrassah; the Magoki Attari Mosque; the Caravanserais complex; and for the 15 vertical drainage wells intended to address salinity and groundwater issues;
- 9. Requests furthermore the State Party to continue to prepare HIAs for all major conservation or development projects, and to adopt the methodology of the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and to continue submitting detailed project documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;

- 10. <u>Invites</u> the State Party to develop a three-year comprehensive national capacity-building programme on World Heritage site management, HIA and technical projects for historic monuments, with the support of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.
- 91. Samarkand Crossroad of Cultures (Uzbekistan)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

92. Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Hanoi (Viet Nam)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# **EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA**

93.	Butrint (Albania)
See [	Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3
94.	Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (Albania)
See [	Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3
95.	The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement (Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Japan, Switzerland)
See [	Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3
98.	Cultural Landscape of Khinalig People and "Köç Yolu" Transhumance Route (Azerbaijan)
See [	Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3
99.	Historic centre of Sheki with the Khan's Palace (Azerbaijan)
See [	Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3
101.	Ancient City of Nessebar (Bulgaria)
	, moioni ong on moodonan (Dangama)
See [	Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3
102.	Old City of Dubrovnik (Croatia)
<b></b>	

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 103. Venetian Works of Defence between the 16th and 17th Centuries: Stato da Terra – Western Stato da Mar (Croatia, Italy, Montenegro)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 104. Historic Centre of Prague (Czechia)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 105. Paris, Banks of the Seine (France)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 109. Upper Middle Rhine Valley (Germany)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2002

Criteria (ii)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

# Previous monitoring missions

February 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Advisory mission; December 2012: ICOMOS Advisory mission; May 2022 Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of a Master Plan for the sustainable development of the property (issue resolved)
- Potential impacts of the Rhine crossing project
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure (traffic increase)
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation
- Input of excess energy (noise pollution)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Renewable energy facilities
- Management Systems/Management plan
- Quarrying

#### Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1066/documents/</a>. The report presents progress on a number of conservation issues raised by the Committee at its previous sessions, as follows:

- Progress has been made on the development of the new Management Plan for the property, and
  a draft version has been submitted alongside this report. The development process involved a
  review and refinement of the attributes that convey the property's Outstanding Universal Value
  (OUV). The updated attributes have also been submitted with the report;
- The management system has been strengthened with additional bodies, tools and procedures aimed at the protection and preservation of the property's OUV. The management system is reported to extend to the property's buffer zone and wider setting;
- A spatial planning procedure was conducted for the planned permanent river crossing of the Middle Rhine. In 2023, a regional spatial planning decision approved the option of 'a low-level crossing outside' the town, in the valley north of St. Goar and St. Goarshausen. This decision now forms the basis for the forthcoming planning approval procedure, which will include the details of the structure and be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- The Rhineland-Palatinate and Hesse states continue to apply different legal frameworks for wind energy development. In Rhineland-Palatinate, exclusion zones established through sensitivity mapping have become legally binding at the state level. Hesse only allows the construction of wind turbines in designated priority areas. Both frameworks are reported to ensure the protection and preservation of the property's OUV;
- A specific visual assessment concluded that the proposed installation of the 'crystal rock', which
  is an integral part of the design for the top of the 'Hall of Myths' building at the Loreley Visitor
  Centre, will have no adverse impact on the attributes conveying the OUV and a negligible impact
  on the lines of sight from the opposite side of the Rhine. The State Party therefore plans to
  proceed with construction;
- The plans for a new hotel on the Lorelei Plateau are currently on hold. Should the project be resumed, the State Party has indicated that it will adhere to the procedure outlined by the Committee in its previous decision:
- Proposals for the National Horticulture Show (BUGA) in 2029 are closely monitored and sensitive planning will be sought to ensure their compatibility with World Heritage status;
- The operating licence for the Koblenz's cable car has been extended to 2030. It is now intended
  to be a permanent transport facility rather than a temporary installation. A design competition has
  been held to redesign both of the two stations. Relocation was not reassessed and is not
  considered necessary. Detailed information regarding the competition was provided in the report;
- The existing plans for the Koblenz Brewery have been revised and are reported as not having a
  negative impact on the attributes conveying the OUV of the property. A planning application has
  not yet been submitted;
- The permit for the summer bobsleigh run is still valid, therefore no changes are reported;
- No updates are reported on the Sooneck quartzite open pit mine, except that any new projects will be subject to the procedures and mechanisms of the management system;
- The planned redevelopment of the Löhnberger Mill in Lahnstein will not be pursued, while consultations are underway to modernise or replace the existing moorings in the Rhine.

On 28 February 2025, the State Party submitted additional information to the World Heritage Centre in response to the concerns raised under Paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines regarding a proposed high-performance freight rail corridor through the property and proposed wind turbines in its wider setting. According to the State Party, the rail works are primarily maintenance and upgrading of noise abatement measures. A bypass route, which would divert trains away from the property, is not currently prioritised in the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. The reported wind turbine projects are

still in an early planning stage, and the ongoing processes reportedly take into consideration the tools and measures developed to protect the property's OUV.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's ongoing efforts to advance the development of the Management Plan are welcomed, as is the creation and refinement of tools to support or form part of it. While the initial draft represents a positive step, it now requires further elaboration to incorporate key elements for stakeholders, such as clearly articulated management objectives, actionable implementation programmes, structured decision-making processes for planned changes and developments, as well as monitoring indicators and related information. In line with previous Committee decisions, a sustainable tourism strategy should also be developed and integrated into the Management Plan. The revised set of attributes offers an improved basis for assessing the impact of proposed changes. It is advised that this framework be finalised with detailed explanations and illustrative examples for each identified attribute. Both the draft Management Plan and the revised attributes are currently under review by ICOMOS, which will provide detailed recommendations to guide the State Party in refining and finalising these documents.

The information on the status of the planned bridge over the Rhine is noted, as is the State Party's intention to submit the detailed design plans to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS. These plans should be developed through an iterative impact assessment process to ensure full consideration of the OUV of the property. The reported planning frameworks for wind energy projects in both Rhineland Palatinate and Hesse are also noted. The State Party may be encouraged to adopt a similarly structured and precautionary approach for solar energy projects to ensure their compatibility with the safeguard of the attributes conveying the OUV of the property.

Regarding the Loreley Plateau, it is regrettable that the State Party did not follow the Committee's previous encouragement to complete the Hall of Myths building with a flat skylight and to relocate the planned crystal rock installation inside the building. In the light of existing developments and future plans, the Committee may wish to remind the State Party of its previous request to develop a strategic spatial framework for the future use of the area, which is oriented towards the sustenance of the OUV of the property and supported by a thorough impact assessment.

With regard to the projects in Koblenz, it is noted with concern that the State Party has not followed the recommendation of the 2022 Reactive Monitoring mission to reassess the siting of the cable car's valley station, particularly in light of its intended permanent role as part of the city's transport system, nor to reconsider its possible relocation. A process for the redesign of both the valley and mountain stations has been initiated and the documentation relating to the associated design competition is currently under review by ICOMOS. In addition, the revised plans for the Koblenz Brewery project should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS before irreversible decisions are taken.

The reported status of the Sooneck quartzite open pit mine is noted. The Committee may wish to remind the State Party of its previous request to submit any new proposals for the expansion of the mine, accompanied by an appropriate impact assessment, to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS before any decision is taken. Similarly, regarding the modernisation or replacement of existing moorings along the Rhine, the Committee's previous encouragement could be recalled, inviting the State Party to submit relevant plans and associated impact assessment documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS as soon as they become available.

The careful planning process for the 2029 National Horticulture Show is commendable. The World Heritage Centre should be kept regularly informed, and construction plans should be developed through iterative impact assessment processes.

While the noise mitigation measures for the freight rail corridor could be welcomed, it is regrettable that the bypass route to divert freight trains away from the property is not currently a priority in the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan. The Committee may wish to encourage the State Party to explore alternatives for a long-term solution to this factor affecting the state of conservation of the property.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.109

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,

- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **43 COM 7B.83**, **44 COM 7B.155** and **45 COM 7B.187**, adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Appreciates</u> the State Party's efforts to advance the development of the draft Management Plan and to revise and refine the attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, as well as the creation and refinement of tools linked to or forming part of the Management Plan, and encourages the State Party to
  - a) Await detailed recommendations from the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS in order to expand and finalise the Management Plan,
  - b) Develop a sustainable tourism strategy for the property, as previously requested,
  - c) Ensure that the Management Plan, and the supporting tools developed serve to protect and preserve the OUV of the property and its underlying attributes in all relevant decision-making processes;
- 4. <u>Notes</u> the status of the planned bridge over the Rhine and the State Party's intention to submit the detailed design plans to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to develop the design plans through an iterative impact assessment process in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 5. <u>Also notes</u> the reported planning framework for wind energy projects in both Rhineland Palatinate and Hesse, and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to adopt a similar approach, based on a sensitivity assessment, for solar energy projects to ensure their compatibility with the preservation of the OUV of the property;
- 6. Notes with concern that the completion of the 'Hall of Myths' building has not proceeded with a flat skylight, as previously encouraged, and reminds the State Party of its previous request to develop a strategic spatial framework, supported by a thorough impact assessment, for the future use of the Loreley Plateau, ensuring that it supports the OUV of the property;
- 7. Regrets that the State Party did not fully consider the recommendations of the 2022 Reactive Monitoring mission in relation to the cable car in Koblenz, which is now planned to become a permanent means of public transport for the city, and did not consider and assess alternative routes and locations for the valley station, and takes note of the process initiated to redesign both stations to mitigate their visual impact on the property's values and attributes;
- 8. <u>Further notes</u> the status of projects at varying planning stages and <u>reiterates its previous</u> request to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS:
  - a) The revised plans for the Koblenz Brewery before irreversible decisions are made on any specific project proposal,
  - b) Any new proposals for the expansion of the Sooneck quartzite open-pit mine, together with the relevant impact assessment, before any decisions are taken,
  - c) The plans for the modernisation or replacement of the existing moorings in the Rhine, together with the corresponding impact assessment documentation, as soon as it becomes available:
- 9. <u>Commends</u> the State Party for the careful and considerate approach taken in the planning process for the 2029 National Horticulture Show and <u>further encourages</u> the State Party to:

- a) Develop the specific construction plans through iterative impact assessment processes in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context,
- b) Keep the World Heritage Centre regularly informed of relevant updates;
- 10. <u>Welcomes</u> the efforts of the State Party to implement noise mitigation measures related to the freight rail corridor within the property, but <u>also regrets</u> that the bypass route to divert freight trains away from the property is not currently a priority in the Federal Transport Infrastructure Plan and <u>encourages furthermore</u> the State Party to explore alternatives for a long-term solution of this factor affecting the state of conservation of the property;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above to the World Heritage Centre by **1 December 2026**, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.
- 111. Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrássy Avenue (Hungary)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 113. Venice and its lagoon (Italy)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 114. City of Valletta (Malta)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 115. Natural and Culturo-Historical Region of Kotor (Montenegro)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 116. Dutch Water Defence Lines (Kingdom of the Netherlands)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 117. Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) (Poland)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/documents/</a>

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1998-2000) Total amount approved: USD 30,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/assistance/

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 10,000 from Israel

## Previous monitoring missions

July 2001: joint Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee/World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2006: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS site visit during the management seminar; May 2007: site management meeting; May 2008 and October 2013: Expert Consultation Group Meetings; October 2021: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems / management plan (lack of Management Plan)
- Slow process of consultation with local communities
- Ground transport infrastructure (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/

## Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/documents/</a>. Actions implemented in response to the Committee's decisions are as follows:

- Collaboration among the different stakeholders has continued to ensure that the needs of the World Heritage property and the surrounding towns are adequately met. State budget allocations have supported road, land development and infrastructure improvements;
- Despite the establishment of a national team tasked with overseeing the preparation of Management Plans for World Heritage properties in Poland, this has not resulted in significant progress in the development of the Management Plan for the property. The State Party is considering alternative mechanisms to facilitate the preparation and adoption of the Management Plan in line with the Committee's requests;
- The National Institute of Cultural Heritage updated Part 3 of the Conservation Strategy for the property in 2022, focusing on the historical landscape surrounding the property;
- The longstanding recommendation to establish a formal buffer zone, encompassing both the silence zone and protection zone, remains unresolved. The State Party acknowledges the continued complexity of regulating land use in the area and reiterates its commitment to addressing the issue. In the absence of a formally established buffer zone, local spatial development plans continue to serve as the primary means of protecting the property's surroundings. Each plan is reviewed in consultation with the Malopolska Regional Monuments Inspector, while the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum regularly provides comments on new planning documents concerning areas surrounding the property;
- A wide range of educational and commemorative activities continues to be carried out both within the property and in adjacent areas. These include programmes led by the Auschwitz-Birkenau

State Museum, as well as other institutions operating within a broader landscape aimed at raising awareness of the property's historical significance;

- Concerning infrastructure development, work on the Oświęcim southern ring road previously reviewed during the 2021 World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission – has progressed based on Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) accepted by the expert mission;
- The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum continues its efforts to preserve, secure and enhance accessibility to the property, undertaking a range of conservation activities. The Foundation of Memory Sites Near Auschwitz-Birkenau, with the support of the State Party, has continued research, conservation and protection work on the former SS Kitchen building, and has initiated conservation and repair works on the former cabbage and potato warehouses.

On 11 April 2025, the World Heritage Centre invited the State Party to share project documentation and the associated HIA, once available, for the proposed transformation of two houses located at 88 and 88a Legionów Street in Oświęcim – the former home of Auschwitz Commander Rudolf Höss, immediately adjacent to the boundary of the property, into the Auschwitz Research Center on Hate, Extremism and Radicalization (ARCHER).

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies welcome the continued commitment of the State Party to stakeholder coordination in the protection of the property. The update of Part 3 of the Conservation Strategy, which focuses on the historical landscape surrounding the property, is particularly noteworthy and represents positive progress, as it provides a framework for integrating landscape protection into local spatial planning and constitutes a welcome step towards addressing wider setting-related concerns.

The ongoing efforts by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Foundation of Memory Sites Near Auschwitz-Birkenau, supported by the State Party, to ensure the conservation, protection and presentation of various sites of memory within and adjacent to the property are noted with appreciation. In particular the integration of landscape protection into spatial planning frameworks is a positive development. However, its effective implementation requires appropriate legal and administrative tools.

The continued absence of a finalised Management Plan and the lack of a formal buffer zone remain matters of concern – both have been longstanding requests of the Committee. These are essential tools for sustaining the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the face of potential urban and developmental pressures. The lack of a finalised and adopted Management Plan represents a critical gap in the effective management of the property. It compromises the ability to manage development pressures, ensure coordination among stakeholders, and safeguard the property's OUV. Additionally, the absence of a legally established and protected buffer zone, or an equivalent mechanism, leaves the surrounding landscape vulnerable to potentially incompatible developments.

While the complexity of the situation is acknowledged, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies recommend that the State Party develop a time-bound action plan to address these critical management and protection issues. In addition, the construction of the southern ring road must be closely monitored to ensure that all mitigation measures identified by the 2021 Advisory mission are fully implemented.

In light of the above, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its requests regarding the finalisation of the Management Plan and the establishment of the buffer zone and encourage continued implementation of the 2021 mission recommendations.

The Committee may wish to recall that, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the State Party should inform it, through the World Heritage Centre, of any intention to undertake or authorise major restorations or new constructions within the protected area that may affect the property's OUV. This notification should be provided as early as possible and before any irreversible decisions are made. The Committee may also recall that, under Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, Heritage Impact Assessments must be carried out in advance of any planned development projects or activities within or around a World Heritage property. These assessments should be explicitly focused on the property's OUV and guided by the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context*.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.117

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.193**, adopted at the extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Acknowledges</u> the efforts of the State Party and other stakeholders, in particular the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, to ensure the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including ongoing conservation and protection measures, as well as the implementation of educational and commemorative initiatives within the property and its setting;
- 4. <u>Takes note</u> of the update to Part 3 of the Conservation Strategy focusing on the historical landscape surrounding the property, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to ensure its integration into relevant planning and conservation frameworks;
- 5. <u>Welcomes</u> the continued efforts of the State Party to implement the recommendations of the 2021 Advisory mission;
- 6. <u>Notes with concern</u> that the Management Plan for the property remains undeveloped, despite the establishment of a national coordination team, and <u>strongly urges</u> the State Party to prioritise its completion in close cooperation with the site manager and other stakeholders, and to submit its final draft to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its adoption;
- 7. <u>Reiterates its longstanding recommendation</u> for the establishment of a formal buffer zone for the property, encompassing both the silence zone and the wider protection zone, as originally foreseen at the time of inscription, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to explore all legal and planning mechanisms at its disposal to achieve this;
- 8. Recalls that, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the State Party is required to notify the World Heritage Centre of any major restorations or new constructions within the protected area that may affect the property's OUV as early as possible and prior to any irreversible decisions, and requests that Heritage Impact Assessments, focused on the property's OUV and guided by the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, are conducted in advance of any such development projects within or around the World Heritage property;
- 9. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 118. Centennial Hall in Wrocław (Poland)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2006

Criteria (i)(ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

November 2011 and September 2024: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground transport infrastructure (Great Island Avenue, completed)
- Housing
- Management issues
- Lack of overall development plan for the property and its buffer zone

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/

## Current conservation issues

On 24 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/documents/</a> and providing information on the implementation of Decision 46 COM 7B.12, as follows:

- The planned update to the Management Plan for the property could not be completed by the end of 2024 due to insufficient funds; the necessary financial resources, expected from the state budget, are anticipated in 2025;
- Detailed documentation to assist the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property was submitted on 23 April 2024;
- No conservation issues with the potential to impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property have been identified;
- Polish-language editions of the World Heritage Resource Manuals 'Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context' and 'Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0' will support site managers in their work.

The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property took place from 10 to 12 September 2024. Its purpose was to assess the overall state of conservation of the property, evaluate the impact of completed, ongoing and planned projects on the attributes conveying the property's OUV, and review the management system in place. The mission report is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1165/documents/</a>.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

While it is unfortunate that the State Party's report provides limited information on the state of conservation of the property, the September 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission allowed for an in-situ assessment. The mission was undertaken in response to concerns regarding several projects within the property, its buffer zone, and wider setting, with potential negative impact on its OUV, as well as due to the absence of meaningful dialogue between the State Party and the World Heritage Centre.

The mission concluded that the overall state of conservation of the property can be considered satisfactory. The Centennial Hall remains in fair condition following recent restoration efforts, though its exterior would benefit from the removal of advertisement and signage posters. However, with regard to the attributes conveying the OUV of the property, a significant concern is the addition of a glass roof over the courtyard of the Four Domes Pavilion. This intervention, completed in 2015 without a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and without prior notification to the World Heritage Committee, via the World Heritage Centre, as required by Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, disrupts the original spatial dialogue between the Pavilion and the Centennial Hall and obstructs key sightlines that were integral to the property's original design. Consequently, it negatively impacts on the authenticity of the property. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to develop a plan for the removal of the glass roof over the courtyard of the Four Domes Pavilion at the earliest possible opportunity, thereby restoring this important attribute to its original shape.

The mission provided a number of recommendations to enhance the state of conservation of various buildings within the property, and the State Party should be encouraged to implement them. The mission's findings reaffirm the concerning and persistent trend of new projects being undertaken within the property without HIAs. One such case is the project to replace the decorative and well-preserved garden of perennials, created in the mid-1980s, with a replica of its original layout. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to suspend this project until an HIA is conducted in accordance with the *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* and shared with the World Heritage Centre, thereby allowing for an ICOMOS Technical Review and guidance. The State Party's initiative to translate the Guidance into Polish is a positive development in supporting effective World Heritage management.

Regarding recent developments in the wider setting of the property, particularly the now completed Great Island Avenue Road project, it was carried out without an HIA and raised concerns about its scale and impact. While the mission did not observe any immediate negative impact of the project on the property's OUV, continued vigilance is required to prevent further deterioration of the wider setting from cumulative impacts of future projects. It is recommended that the Committee seek assurances from the State Party that the extension of Great Island Avenue will not continue northwards in a way that could affect the property's buffer zone.

Overall, the most pressing issue affecting the state of conservation of the property is its dysfunctional management system, compounded by the absence of an updated and well-functioning Management Plan. Addressing this should be a priority. In this regard, the announcement that funding for its update will become available in 2025 is a positive development. The State Party should ensure that the revised Management Plan includes a comprehensive Development Plan for the property and its buffer zone, as well as measures to improve the management system and address the underlying causes of its dysfunction. This plan should provide a clear framework for understanding how implemented and planned projects do not negatively impact on and sustain the OUV of the property, as well as assess instances where past interventions have undermined the integrity and authenticity of its attributes. The Committee is advised to request the State Party to submit the final draft of the revised Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS prior to its formal adoption.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.118

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 46 COM 7B.12, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the State Party for translating into Polish the Resource Manuals 'Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context' and 'Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit 2.0';
- 4. Regrets the limited information provided by the State Party in its report on the state of conservation:

- 5. Reiterates its request to the State Party to:
  - a) Strengthen the management system and related mechanisms to ensure the systematic implementation of Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
  - b) Develop mechanisms for integrating Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) into the management system, ensuring that all projects, irrespective of their scale and nature, are assessed in accordance with the methodology outlined in the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, with particular attention to their impact on the attributes that convey the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
  - c) Develop a cumulative HIA for all projects undertaken within the property, its buffer zone, and wider setting since its inscription, providing a basis for assessing potential negative impacts on the attributes conveying the OUV of the property and identifying appropriate mitigation measures to be integrated into the revised Management Plan;
- 6. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to finalise the revision of the Management Plan for the property by the end of 2025, ensuring that it incorporates an overall Development Plan for the property and its buffer zone, as well as measures to address the management system shortcomings, and that it explains how implemented and planned projects support the OUV of the property, and how some implemented projects have undermined the integrity and authenticity of its attributes, and to submit the final draft of the Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS prior to its formal adoption;
- 7. <u>Expresses concern</u> regarding the negative impact of the glass roof constructed over the courtyard of the Four Domes Pavilion in 2015, particularly on the authenticity of the property, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to plan for its removal at the earliest possible opportunity in order to restore this key attribute of the OUV of the property to its original shape;
- 8. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to halt the project replacing the decorative and well-preserved garden of perennials within the property, created in the mid-1980s, with a replica of the original layout, to undertake an HIA of the project in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context and to share it with the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Takes note</u> of the conclusions of the 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, including its assessment of the now-completed Great Island Avenue road project, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to implement the mission's recommendations in order to improve the state of conservation of the property and strengthen its management system:
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.
- 119. Tarnowskie Góry Lead-Silver-Zinc Mine and its Underground Water Management System (Poland)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 120. Historic Centre of Guimarães and Couros Zone (Portugal)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 121. Royal Building of Mafra – Palace, Basilica, Convent, Cerco Garden and Hunting Park (Tapada) (Portugal)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 122. Sanctuary of Bom Jesus do Monte in Braga (Portugal)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 123. Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands (Russian Federation)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 124. Kizhi Pogost (Russian Federation)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1990

Criteria (i)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee <u>Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/544/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/544/documents/</a>

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1992-2001) Total amount approved: USD 38,540

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/544/assistance/

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

1992, 1993, 1994, 2011: ICOMOS missions; 2002: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission and on-site workshop; 2007, 2010 and 2013: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; July 2014, October 2015, March 2018 and March 2024: ICOMOS Advisory missions

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Structural integrity issues at the Church of the Transfiguration (issue resolved)
- Lack of an integrated management plan addressing the overall management of the World Heritage property

- Tourism development pressures including development of infrastructures
- · Interpretative and visitation facilities
- Housing
- Land conversion (issue resolved)
- Management activities
- Management systems/ management plan
- Marine transport infrastructure (issue resolved)

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/544/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/544/</a> and <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4454/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4454/</a>

#### Current conservation issues

An ICOMOS Advisory mission visited the property in March 2024 (mission report available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/544/documents/).

Subsequently, on 1 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at the same link. Progress on a number of conservation issues previously raised by the Committee in its Decision **45 COM 7B.198** is presented in this report as follows:

- Regarding the property and its monuments, the State Party reports the following developments:
  - Regular maintenance and monitoring activities continue, addressing biodeterioration, structural stability, and temperature and humidity levels, as well as seasonal deformations in the Church of the Transfiguration,
  - The Wooden Architecture Conservation Centre continues to provide training for specialists,
  - A restoration project for the Church of the Intercession is under development. It includes upgrades to fire detection and response systems; project documentation will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to implementation; measures are currently being undertaken to stabilise the monument's structures in advance of restoration,
  - An application has been submitted to a federal funding programme to support the design and installation of a new external fire extinguishing system, replacing the existing obsolete system;
- With regard to the management of the buffer zone, the State Party reports the following progress:
  - The stormwater sewer network has been upgraded, and the reconstruction of the administrative warehouse completed,
  - A draft design has been developed for the 'Prionezhie Vepsians (three farmsteads)' exhibition sector in the northern part of the island,
  - Ongoing engagement with and support of the local community continues, including awareness-raising, improved transport access, and the provision of electricity while removing intrusive overhead lines. The Kizhi Open Air Museum remains active in job creation for the local population,
  - No further interventions are planned in Zone A in the near future, and spatial limits for new constructions and land use within the buffer zone are regulated,
  - No additional demolitions of dissonant 20th-century structures have taken place, nor are any currently planned; the Master Plan provides for either their removal at the end of their lifecycle or the mitigation of their visual impact.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's report demonstrates continued progress in the preservation of the property and the management of its buffer zone. The ICOMOS Advisory mission of March 2024 focused on two main areas: the restoration and monitoring of the Churches of the Transfiguration and the Intercession, and the management and development of the property and its buffer zone.

The mission concluded that the meticulous restoration of the Church of the Transfiguration, including its Baroque iconostasis, was successfully completed. Among its recommendations, the mission advised that the restoration of the 'heaven' – the decorative scheme – should be completed through virtual rather than physical means and provided guidance on the further development of the general plan for the

sector 'Prionezhie Vepsians' within the buffer zone. The mission also recommended that monitoring of the monuments continue, and that visitor numbers to the Church of the Transfiguration be regulated in order to protect its fragile wooden flooring. It further suggested that a comprehensive interior presentation and liturgical scheme for the Church of the Transfiguration be developed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. With regards to the conservation project of the Church of the Intercession, the mission advised adopting a minimal intervention approach, focused on addressing the building's identified structural and material pathologies.

To ensure long-term availability of timber for regular maintenance and periodic restoration of the wooden monuments, the mission recommended the development and implementation of a Management Plan aimed at securing adequate and appropriate wood supplies. It is also advised that the proposal for a new fire extinguishing system be subject to a Heritage Impact Assessment, which should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The continued development of the buffer zone requires careful and sustained consideration. The Advisory mission recommended that the reconstruction of buildings be avoided and confirmed that the setting of the property faces significant tourism development pressures, arising from new road construction, infrastructure projects, and the high recreational value of the cultural landscape. As such, tourism development needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the setting of the property continues to contribute to its Outstanding Universal Value. In this context, the mission's recommendation that the State Party develop an updated Sustainable Tourism Management Plan for the property is regarded as particularly important. This Plan should incorporate policies on the future development of the settlements within the islands in the property's buffer zone, including a revised zoning proposal with adequate provisions for the protection of the landscape setting. It should also include a comprehensive tourism strategy, measures for risk preparedness, and an archaeological rescue and monitoring strategy. Furthermore, the mission advised that the State Party should develop guidelines for interventions, to establish restoration criteria and address key conservation issues such as the treatment of elements from different historical periods, the handling of witness marks, the use of modern materials, and approaches to structural reinforcement, among others.

In the interest of the sustainable conservation and development of the property, the Committee may wish to request that the State Party continue its efforts to engage with and support the local community, with a view to fostering a resilient and active community within the wider setting of the property.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.124

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.198**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the State Party for its continued and meticulous conservation efforts at the property, including works undertaken in the Church of the Transfiguration and other elements of the property, as well as measures taken to improve the quality of life for residents within the buffer zone through electrification and employment generation initiatives:
- 4. <u>Takes note</u> that the restoration project for the Church of the Intercession, including the upgrading of the fire detection and response system, is currently under development, and that the relevant documentation will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to implementation;
- 5. <u>Welcomes</u> the State Party's initiative to develop an external fire extinguishing system to enhance the protection of the property, and <u>requests</u> that this project be subject to an iterative Heritage Impact Assessment, undertaken in accordance with the Guidance and

Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

- 6. <u>Also takes note</u> of the conclusions and recommendations of the 2024 ICOMOS Advisory mission to the property, including concerns related to tourism development pressures and community engagement, and <u>also requests</u> that the State Party implement the mission's recommendations, notably:
  - a) The development and implementation of a management plan to ensure the sustainable availability of appropriate wood for future conservation and restoration works.
  - b) The development of an updated Sustainable Tourism Management Plan for the property, to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.
  - c) The continuation and strengthening of its community engagement and support measures, with a view to fostering a resilient and active community within the wider setting of the property;
- 7. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

## 127. Aphrodisias (Türkiye)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2017

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/documents/</a>

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/assistance/</a>

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

N/A

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Need to revise the Management Plan (ongoing)
- Lack of legal protection for the entirety of the buffer zone (ongoing)
- Need to integrate the local community into the management system for the property (ongoing)
- Slow implementation of the drainage rehabilitation plan within the walled city
- Lack of a fire response plan (ongoing)
- Need to expand the patrols by the agricultural guards to include the quarry component and the whole of the buffer zone (resolved)

- Need to conduct a full 3D inventory of the quarry faces in order to provide a baseline record of their condition (resolved)
- Need to implement corrective conservation measures within the guarry component

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/

## Current conservation issues

On 2 December 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, an executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1519/documents/</a>. The report includes three annexes: Aphrodisias Site Management Plan 2025-2029, the Fire Action Plan and an Inventory of location and features of the modern structures found near to the Ancient Marble Quarries component. The report provides information on measures implemented by the State Party in response to Decision 45 COM 7B.201, as follows:

- In response to concerns by the Committee regarding activities implemented without notification to the World Heritage Centre, the State Party notes that the property and buffer zone are protected by legal and regulatory frameworks designed to prevent major construction or development projects that could impact OUV;
- Concerning the legal protection of the entire buffer zone, the Aydin Regional Council for Conservation of Cultural Properties was unable to designate the entire buffer zone as a 3rd Degree Archaeological Site because no relevant cultural property was identified in the area surrounding the Ancient Marble Quarries component during on-site inspections. Notwithstanding, the Aydın-Muğla-Denizli Planning Region 1/100,000 Scale Environmental Master Plan indicates that approximately 92% of the buffer zone surrounding the Ancient Marble Quarries is protected by other legal instruments related to forests, agricultural areas, and wetlands; the remaining parts of the buffer zone are designated as residential and rural development areas. A Conservation Development Plan is currently being considered to define conservation and use principles, as well as construction limits, for the part of the buffer zone not protected as an archaeological site;
- Studies for the drainage rehabilitation plan have continued, although no specific details have been provided regarding the rate of progress or the expected date of completion;
- A Fire Prevention Plan and a Management Plan were completed and sent to the World Heritage Centre along with the state of conservation report for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- An inventory of modern buildings within the buffer zone was included in the State Party's report. Since the
  property's inscription in 2017, three new buildings have been constructed, while the remainder pre-date
  2017. Most of these buildings are used as farmhouses or for agricultural storage. According to site visits
  by Karacasu Municipality technical staff, these constructions have no negative impact on the property's
  OUV, as they are not large-scale projects.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies note the progress made by the State Party in addressing the concerns raised by the Committee since the inscription of the property. Regarding the proposed extension of the 3rd Degree Archaeological Zone across the entire buffer zone, it is noted that the absence of archaeological remains precludes the application of this designation. Although a single designation for the whole area would be preferable to facilitate coherent management, other legal instruments are being used to provide protection. However, Map 2, which indicates the land-use zoning around the Ancient Marble Quarries component, shows that current zoning does not appear to align with the boundaries of the property. Furthermore, some areas within the property itself are zoned for development and residential use. Clarity on this matter would be helpful, given that the Ancient Marble Quarries component is described as a 1st Degree Archaeological Site, a status potentially incompatible with such zoning.

It is essential that the Conservation Development Plan, to be developed in accordance with the protocol signed between the Karacasu Municipality and Aydin Metropolitan Municipality, is completed. All landuse plans and regulations should integrate World Heritage considerations to ensure the appropriate use of the property area and to guarantee that the buffer zone provides an added layer of protection.

While work on the implementation of the drainage rehabilitation plan is underway, it is noted that no details have been provided regarding the rate of progress, preliminary study results, or the expected completion rate. The Committee may therefore wish to reiterate its request for an update on this matter.

The provision of information on the modern buildings close to the Ancient Marble Quarries, both before and after inscription, including their locations and characteristics, is welcomed. It is noted that only three new buildings have been constructed since the time of inscription. The State Party reports that these buildings have no negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). However, to prevent cumulative negative impacts on the OUV, planning documents should clearly define appropriate levels of construction in the area, covering aspects such as density, volume, height and other characteristics, so that clear criteria guide the granting of building permissions and potential impacts on the World Heritage property are consistently considered. Even modest projects within or around the World Heritage property could potentially have negative impacts, and it may be beneficial to develop screening criteria to address this.

The Aphrodisias Site Management Plan 2025-2029 represents a significant improvement over the 2014-2018 Plan. It is a well-structured, comprehensive, and responsive document that reflects a critical evaluation of past experiences and a commitment to aligning with international best practices in World Heritage property management. The Plan's focus on the formally adopted Statement of OUV, enhanced stakeholder coordination, detailed risk assessment, and a more pragmatic and accountable Action Plan provides a robust framework for the property's future safeguarding.

However, the ICOMOS Technical Review notes that the success of the Plan hinges on the sustained capacity of all actors to fulfil their management roles and allocate the necessary resources. In particular, long-term resource mobilisation is needed to ensure ongoing maintenance and projects beyond the five-year scope of the Plan. The Committee may therefore request the State Party to ensure that adequate resources are made available for the immediate and continued implementation of the management plan, while also addressing the recommendations set out in the Technical Review to maximise the likelihood of achieving its intended outcomes.

In addition, the Management Plan lacks capacity-building measures for local communities and a strategy for greater involvement of civil society in conservation and management beyond mere consultation. Moreover, the Plan does not clarify how the Conservation Development Plan will be articulated with the Management Plan or other planning tools, particularly regarding buffer zone management and potential future developments subject to Heritage Impact Assessments, such as visitor centres, septic tanks, or landscaping. There are also gaps in monitoring, with indicators needing better alignment with intended outcomes.

The Fire Action Plan represents a positive and comprehensive step towards mitigating fire risks. It sets out clear actions to be taken in the event of a fire, as well as measures to improve response times. Given the vulnerability of the property to such risks, the proposals set out in the plan warrant urgent implementation. The Committee may therefore request the State Party to ensure the full and timely implementation of the Fire Action Plan, securing the necessary long-term financial and human resources to guarantee its sustainability, particularly regarding ongoing vegetation management and the procurement and maintenance of mobile firefighting equipment. However, the Technical Review also identifies areas where the Action Plan could be further strengthened, and the State Party should be advised to address the points raised therein.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.127

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 45 COM 7B.201, adopted at the extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the progress made by the State Party in addressing concerns raised since the inscription of the property:
- 4. <u>Notes</u> that it is not possible to inscribe the entire buffer zone as a 3rd Degree Archaeological Zone due to the absence of archaeological remains in the section surrounding the quarries, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to prepare a Conservation Development Plan and to guarantee that all other land-use plans and regulations fully

- take into account World Heritage requirements to protect the property and to ensure that the buffer zone is used appropriately while providing an additional layer of protection;
- 5. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to continue implementing the drainage rehabilitation plan with appropriate archaeological supervision and to provide an update on progress;
- 6. <u>Acknowledges</u> the submission of information on modern buildings in the vicinity of the Ancient Marble Quarries and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to define appropriate construction parameters, including density, volume, and height, to avoid cumulative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and to inform the World Heritage Centre of any future plans for additional structures, providing updates on progress;
- 7. <u>Commends</u> the State Party for the well-structured and comprehensive Management Plan for 2025-29 and its OUV-centred approach and <u>furthermore requests</u> that the finalisation and formal approval of cooperation protocols with all key responsible institutions be expedited to ensure clarity of roles, responsibilities, and resource commitments, and that the recommendations of the ICOMOS Technical Review be implemented, with the revised Plan submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- 8. <u>Also commends</u> the State Party for the development of the Fire Action Plan and <u>urges</u> its full and timely implementation, securing the necessary long-term financial and human resources to guarantee its sustainability and <u>requests</u> the State Party to strengthen and update the Plan in accordance with the recommendations of the ICOMOS Technical Review and to provide an update on progress;
- 9. Reiterates its call to the State Party that any projects within or around the World Heritage property should be assessed based on their potential impact on the OUV, in conformity with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage context, and that the World Heritage Centre should be informed in due course, before any irreversible decisions are made, in accordance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines:
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 128. Arslantepe Mound (Türkiye)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

# 129. Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape (Türkiye)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2015

Criteria (iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

November-December 2022: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Concern about the situation in Diyarbakır as reported since 40th session (2016) (issue resolved)
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction works and development, urban design and landscape projects
- Ground transport infrastructure
- Water infrastructure
- Impacts of tourism/visitors/recreation
- Management system/Management and Conservation Plan modified
- Land Conversion

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/

## Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report; an executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/documents/</a>. Progress on a number of conservation issues raised by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- Four meetings have been held with relevant local government institutions and NGOs to discuss
  the recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring
  mission and subsequent Committee decisions;
- Those discussions will inform the revision of the Management Plan for the property and help develop a workplan for the completion of the Plan before its submission to the World Heritage Centre for review. A draft workplan for revising of the Management Plan has been provided;
- Restoration work on the city walls, bastions, buttresses and monuments is ongoing, including
  work carried out in response to the 2023 earthquake. Funding for restoration has been provided
  for 33 monuments in private ownership. The preparation of a study for functional re-use of some
  of the walls and bastions, for which restoration work has been completed, was provided;
- In preparation for the restoration of the Church of Saint George and Bastions 75-76, archaeological excavations in the Castle area have been completed and a report has been provided:
- Georadar and Geoelectric Studies conducted on the Amida Mound identified significant archaeological traces up to 4.5m under the surface and a report has been provided;
- The Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change has developed an Urban Design and Landscape Project for the area between the city walls and the road from Dag Kapi-Yenikapi

to Mardin Gate; however, due to the ongoing archaeological discoveries relating to the restoration of the city walls, the project will be revised and a new version submitted to the World Heritage Centre:

- Further studies on the Hevsel Garden and its functions related to agriculture and water management are planned, including a research project to assess biodiversity and ecosystems;
- A study to identify illegal structures/buildings around the Ten-Eyed bridge has been completed, but no legal action has yet been taken for their demolition. The Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change has designated the area including the setting of the Ten-eyed bridge as a 'natural conservation area'. Proposals to reduce the impact of the Tigris Valley Recreation and Afforestation project are being evaluated and will be transmitted to the World Heritage Centre for review;
- The 2020 Conservation Plan for the Suriçi neighbourhood in the buffer zone complies with all national legal requirements, which precludes its update. Recommendations from the November 2024 ICOMOS Technical Review will be considered when future legally required revisions are undertaken;
- In accordance with the Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, the State Party notes that it will submit documentation for consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies for the Anzele Urban Design Project, which is located within the property and reiterates its commitment to continued dialogue and consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies; it will also conduct impact assessments for all newly planned urban, infrastructural and landscaping projects within the property and its buffer zone.

On 17 and 27 June 2024, the State Party submitted (translated) versions of the revised Development Plan, the Diyarbakır Sur District Şemhane, Yeniköy, Yukarıkılıçtaşı, Bağıvar Neigh, Hevsel Gardens Development Plan, along with the 2012, 2016 and 2020 versions of the Suriçi Conservation Plan, as well as additional information on the state of conservation of the property. In December 2024, an ICOMOS Technical Review was transmitted to the State Party.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party's efforts to conduct archaeological investigations in the Castle area and to continue conservation work on the city walls and monuments damaged by the earthquake in 2023 are both appropriate and welcome. However, critical issues concerning the overall management of the property and its setting are not currently receiving attention proportionate to their urgency.

Recent actions and decisions implemented within the property and its buffer zone have eroded its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) since its inscription. This has resulted in a situation where urgent conservation measures are needed to preserve its OUV and may require a broad mobilisation, as highlighted in Decision **45 COM 7B.5**. The Committee welcomed the State Party's commitment to updating the Management Plan (Decision **46 COM 7B.15**). The Committee also requested that the State Party develop an Action Plan outlining the implementation of past Committee decisions as well as the recommendations from the 2022 mission and ICOMOS Technical Reviews as part of the updated Management Plan. In its report, the State Party provides first draft sections of such an Action Plan. However, upon analysis, it appears that the Action Plan does not fully take into account previous decisions and recommendations. Many proposed actions remain open-ended, such as the requested ecological study and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) recommended by the 2022 mission for the Tigris River Rehabilitation Project, which aimed to address the damage caused by the halted project since 2018.

The workplan for delivery of the Management Plan indicates a development process of at least three years. It would be beneficial to the management of the property to request that the State Party develop and submit a comprehensive Action Plan as a stand-alone document as soon as possible for review by the Advisory Bodies. Such an agreed-to Action Plan would provide a clear framework for the management of the property until the new Management Plan is finalised.

The 2022 mission reported that considerable changes to the Ten-Eyed Bridge have virtually destroyed its historic setting, emphasising the urgent need to mitigate these negative impacts. In Decision **46 COM 7B.15**, the Committee requested that the State Party develop an Action Plan, including a timeline of feasible actions, to reverse the negative impacts of developments that have taken place within the setting of the Bridge since inscription and submit this action plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. While the State Party reports that it has completed the identification

of the illegal structures/buildings around the Ten-Eyed Bridge, it only reports that legal action is ongoing but has not yet provided the requested Action Plan.

In Decision **45 COM 7B.57**, the Committee raised concerns about the functioning and morphology of the Hevsel Gardens due to recent changes. The State Party reports that the studies requested by the Committee in Decision **46 COM 7B.15** are planned, but execution is dependent on funding approval. However, the State Party has not provided a timeframe for submitting the further detailed analysis or possible land management strategies for the Hevsel Gardens or presented any information on studies of the historical water mills, as requested.

The State Party's decision to delay the development of the landscaping project intended to reduce the negative impact of the Tourist Ring Road between Mardin and Dag Gates until archaeological studies are completed underscores that this project not only creates a significant physical division between the wall and the urban environment, but also likely disturbs significant archaeological residue during its construction. Continued engagement with, and submission of relevant documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies is required to ensure that the damage is addressed and mitigated to the greatest extent possible.

The contribution of Suriçi to the OUV of the property was highlighted by the Committee at the time of inscription, when it requested that the State Party strengthen the legal protection of the buffer zone to protect the urban fabric, including through reinforcement of the provisions of the Conservation Plan in the Suriçi District (Decision **39 COM 8B.32**). The property should be understood within its urban and landscape settings, as noted in the Statement of OUV, which states that: 'the ability to view the walls within their urban and landscape settings is significant, as are the hydrological and natural resources that support the functional and visual qualities of the property'. The 2022 mission identified the erosion of the OUV of the property due to recent urban restructuring in Suriçi, and the highlighted ongoing threats to the urban fabric of the property resulting from the area's 2012 designation as 'under risk of disasters', and the 2016 expropriation decision (No. 2016/8659), which the mission recommended should be repealed. In Decision **46 COM 7B.15**, the Committee requested that the current development plan (the Conservation Development Implementation Plan) be re-evaluated, and that a draft update be developed through iterative Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs).

The 2024 ICOMOS Technical Review concludes that the 2012 Conservation Development Implementation Plan, along with its 2016 and 2020 updates, has proven inadequate in maintaining the contribution of the Surici district as setting to the OUV of the property. Based on the submitted materials, it concludes that the Surici 2020 Conservation Plan's main aim is to control the facades onto the main streets of Surici, to allocate or define the (new) built form and to identify the location of electricity transformers. It recommends that a moratorium be imposed on any further demolition or new construction in the Surici district until a new Plan is developed, based on an assessment of the current state of the area and aimed at protecting Suriçi's built fabric. It further advises that several studies be undertaken in advance of developing a new Conservation Plan, and that a phased approach be adopted in its revision. Among its recommendations, the Technical Review urges the State Party to conduct research into the historical water system, crops, land use and socio-cultural linkages as a prerequisite for developing an appropriate land management plan or strategy, particularly prior to considering any amalgamations or subdivisions of land within the Hevsel Gardens, that would ensure the protection and maintenance of the OUV of the property. It further notes the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS full availability and readiness to provide further advice, including through a possible joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission or through regular online consultations, to ensure regular dialogue and support the way forward.

The State Party report indicates that, in accordance with Article 4 of its Regulation n.25887 dated 26 July 2005, the Conservation Plan may be renewed when 'new needs and problems are revealed by reports prepared as a result of research based on technical and scientific justifications'. In light of this provision, it would be appropriate to revise the Plan on the basis of the technical and scientific justifications outlined in the Committee's Decision **46 COM 7B.15**, the conclusions of the 2022 mission, and the ICOMOS Technical Reviews.

In view of the Committee's general concern, as expressed in Decision **45 COM 7B.5**, regarding the erosion of the property's OUV, alongside issues related to individual developments within the property and the limited progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2022 mission with regard to critical management issues affecting the property and its setting, it is recommended that the Committee request that the State Party invite a new Reactive Monitoring mission to assess the current state of conservation of the property and inform the Committee's deliberations at the 48th session.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.129**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **39 COM 8B.32**, **45 COM 7B.57** and **46 COM 7B.15** adopted at its 39th session (Bonn, 2015), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the State Party for allocating resources to the continued restoration of the city walls and monuments in both public and private ownership following the earthquake of 2023, as well as for the archaeological investigations at the Inner Castle; <u>welcomes</u> the State Party's restated commitment to maintaining dialogue and undertaking impact assessments for newly planned urban, infrastructural and landscaping projects within the property and its buffer zone, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to strengthen its engagement with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, including through the timely submission of documentation for review;
- 4. <u>Notes</u> that a study has been conducted to identify illegal structures/buildings around the Ten-Eyed bridge, and <u>reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to urgently submit an Action Plan, outlining a timeline of feasible actions, to reverse the negative impacts of developments in the setting of the Bridge since inscription, to the World Heritage Centre in one of the two working languages of the Committee;
- 5. Requests the State Party to expedite its commitment to conducting further detailed analyses and to developing possible land management strategies for the Hevsel Gardens, and to mitigate the impact of the Tigris Valley Recreation and Afforestation Project and the Tourist Ring Road between Mardin and Dag Gates;
- 6. Also notes that stakeholder meetings have commenced in preparation for updating the Management Plan for the property, as well as for the preliminary Action Plan tables included in the State Party's report; recalls its ongoing concern regarding the impact of the various projects implemented within the property and its buffer zone since inscription, which have led to the erosion of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV); acknowledges the time required to develop the updated Management Plan, and reiterates its requests to the State Party to develop a comprehensive Action Plan, clearly outlining the implementation of past Committee decisions, the recommendations of the 2022 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission and the ICOMOS Technical Reviews, as a stand-alone document, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible, and no later than by 1 February 2026, for review by the Advisory Bodies, in order to provide an agreed-to framework for the property's interim management;
- 7. <u>Further notes</u> that the 2022 mission highlighted that any further demolition of the historic urban fabric should be halted as a matter of urgency, and that current expropriation decisions should cease to be in effect;
- 8. <u>Further reiterates its request</u> that the State Party, informed by the outcomes of the 2024 ICOMOS Technical Review of the 2012, 2016 and 2020 iterations of the Suriçi District Conservation Development Implementation Plan:
  - a) Re-evaluate the current development plans based on an evaluation of the status quo of the Suriçi District's built fabric and its contribution to the setting of the OUV of the property,

- b) Develop a draft update of the current development plans through an iterative Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) process aimed at delivering a Plan that strengthens the Suriçi District's contribution to the OUV as part of its setting,
- c) Submit the assessments, draft updated plans, and HIAs to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to the adoption of any irreversible decisions:
- 9. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, to inform the Committee's deliberations on the property at its 48th session, to assess the current state of conservation of the property, including:
  - a) The conservation and management of the Hevsel Gardens,
  - b) The actions undertaken to recover the contribution of the Ten Eyed Bridge and its setting to the OUV of the property,
  - c) The proposals to reduce the impact of the Tigris Valley Recreation and Afforestation Project and of the Tourist Ring Road between Mardin and Dag Gates,
  - d) The current management and development of the Suriçi District as the inner buffer zone,
  - e) To make recommendations on the necessary actions to realign the conservation, management and development frameworks, plans and legal provisions governing the property with the maintenance of its OUV;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, 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 48th session, considering that the urgent conservation needs of this property require a broad mobilization to preserve its Outstanding Universal Value, including the possible inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

# 130. Göbekli Tepe (Türkiye)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 131. Historic Areas of Istanbul (Türkiye)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1985

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 17 (from 1986-2004) Total amount approved: USD 454,566

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/assistance/</a>

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 211,900 (Conservation of Hagia Sophia); USD 36,686.30 (Convention France-UNESCO); USD 155,000 (in the framework of the International Safeguarding Campaign for Istanbul and Göreme)

#### Previous monitoring missions

November 1997: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; October 1998: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2000, May 2001, 2002, December 2003, 2004: World Heritage Centre missions; April 2006, May 2008, April 2009, November 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2016: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; October 2020: UNESCO Advisory mission; January/February 2021: UNESCO Advisory mission; June 2024: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Commercial development
- Ground/underground transport infrastructure
- · Low impact research/monitoring activities
- Management systems/management plan (including need to identify attributes which support the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property)
- Loss of integrity and authenticity: decay and loss of Ottoman/vernacular architecture
- Need for Heritage Impact Assessments for large-scale projects
- Need for notification in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines
- Impact of change of status of the Hagia Sophia and the Chora Museum
- Lack of roadmap for projects which may impact the OUV of the property

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/

#### Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation, an executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents/</a>. The report provides information on the measures implemented by the State Party in response to Decision 46 COM 7B.16, as follows:

- The study to define the attributes that convey the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and the Strategic Action Plan for the conservation of traditional Ottoman wooden houses are ongoing and will be incorporated into the property's Management Plan, which is also being revised and is expected to be finalised in April 2026. These documents will all be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review;
- Maintenance and repair work on the facades and roofs of registered civil architecture structures
  using traditional techniques and materials continues to maintain the visual coherence of the
  streetscapes in the Zeyrek and Land Walls Conservation Areas, and urgent interventions have
  occurred to 258 registered abandoned structures in the Fatih district;
- Land Walls maintenance and restoration works are being carried out in phases, with priority given to emergency interventions on high-risk towers. Once the restoration work in this first phase is complete, new tourist routes, visitor centres, landscaped garden areas, and walking paths will be created. The goal is to provide uninterrupted access along the 7.2km stretch of the Land Walls from the Marble Tower to the Golden Horn. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) report was provided for the Land Walls National Garden project in the State Party's report;
- The Süleymaniye quarter has been declared an urban renewal area and, as part of the Süleymaniye 2050 project and vision, a revision of the Conservation Plan, a Spatial Strategy Plan, and an Urban Design Guide have been prepared and are awaiting approval by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality;
- Additional facilities have been built in the southeast corner of the Chora (Kariye), including ablution areas and other facilities. Separate entrances have been provided for tourists and worshippers. Worshippers enter the prayer area (Harim-Naos) through the main entrance on the north-west façade, while the women's prayer area is accessed through the annex door on the north façade. Museum visitors use distinct entry and exit points, and a ticket office with turnstiles

is due to be installed. An additional facility on the eastern side will serve both museum and mosque visitors, offering toilets, a café and a gift shop;

- Restoration work continues at Hagia Sophia, with survey studies completed, physical and chronological analysis underway, and a reinforcement project for the Sultan Bayezid II Minaret. Seismic performance analysis is being undertaken, and reinforcement projects are being evaluated. The entrances to the ground and gallery floors have been separated. The gallery level was opened to visitors in January 2024 with an entrance fee. A Visitor Management Plan was provided as an annex to the State Party's report;
- Major infrastructure projects are ongoing. A new study is underway for the Kazliçeşme Marina, while HIAs for the Yenikapi Cruise Port and for the Abdi Ípekçi Basketball Development Centre project have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS Technical Reviews were undertaken. A Viewing Terrace and Multi-Purpose Complex are planned in Seytinburnu District;
- Numerous conservation, restoration and restitution projects are reported, including ongoing works at the Silvrikapi Hypogeum, the Anemas Dungeons, part of the Blakhernai Palace, and the Yedikule Fortress, which includes the reconstruction of the Yedikule Fatih Mosque. Additional projects include the repurposing of the Yedikule Gas House as an exhibition space, interventions at the Sultanahmet Archaeopark and the Boukoleon Palace, further repairs to the Grand Bazaar, and works at the Phanar Greek Orthodox College, the Church of Saint Euphemia, Bulgur Palas, the Council of State Building, and other administrative buildings. Restoration efforts also extend to various educational institutions, mosques, tombs, cemeteries, and historic fountains;
- Completed projects include reconstruction works at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, restoration of the Helvaî Tekke and its tomb, the Mimar Mehmet Ağa Mosque, and the Cağaloğlu Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School;
- Reconstruction of the Great Palace Mosaics Museum is about to begin, and Conservation Plans are being prepared for Sirkeci Train Station, designated as Special Project Area, and for Sultanahmet Square and the Istanbul Barbaros Houses Tourism Centre, designated as tourism area;
- Arising from the previously-reported Istanbul Provincial Disaster Risk Reduction Plan a strengthening project is to be prepared for structures identified as at risk;
- A Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan Strategy has been launched with the aim of creating a more walkable city and other initiatives are addressing accident black spots, improvements to public transport, and safe school zones:
- Promotion and awareness-raising activities include the GIS-based Istanbul Cultural Heritage Inventory Project, digitisation of Council archives, oral history studies, activities for children, tours, programmes including training, talks and presentations, and a digital library project.

ICOMOS Technical Reviews transmitted to the State Party addressed the HIA report on the restoration of Yedikule Fortress, the supplementary documentation received for the Kazliçeşme Yacht Marina, the HIA for the Abdi Ípekçi Basketball Development Centre project and several documents including technical specifications, a HIA, a Cultural Heritage Management Plan and its Appendix 2 and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (in Turkish) for the Yenikapi Cruise Port. In its 2025 State of Conservation report, the State Party resubmitted the same HIA for the Yenikapi Cruise Port, along with a new HIA for the Istanbul Land Walls National Garden project and the Visitor Management Plan for Hagia Sophia.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The 2024 Reactive Monitoring mission made two key findings regarding the management and governance of the property. Firstly, although the State Party has a robust and multi-level governance system for the protection of heritage, it does not consistently apply the processes required for the effective management of World Heritage properties as outlined in the World Heritage Convention and its *Operational Guidelines*. Numerous interventions are carried without proper alignment with these frameworks. Secondly, the property remains subject to fragmented management. In order to fulfil its obligations under the Convention, the State Party should adopt comprehensive national legislation for the protection of World Heritage and ensure that it takes precedence over other legal frameworks, and should also ensure the consistent application of paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, particularly with regard to impact assessment procedures and the timely notification of

projects. Furthermore, the property should be managed in a more coherent and participatory manner in order to safeguard its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

The continuation of efforts to update the Management Plan, particularly the inclusion of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property, and the development of a strategic plan for the conservation of wooden structures are welcome. The review process for the Management Plan may also provide an opportunity to reassess the boundaries of the property and the Committee may wish to encourage the State Party to consider establishing a buffer zone through a Minor Boundary Modification process. The revised Management Plan should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its formal adoption. Since 2017, the Committee has repeatedly requested a long-term conservation strategy for timber structures and may wish to invite the State Party to provide more regular and detailed updates on its development. The ongoing maintenance and repair of wooden civil architecture, preventive conservation in the Zeyrek, Süleymaniye and Land Walls Conservation Areas - in particular around the Yedikule Fortress - and the launch of a project for urgent interventions in derelict structures are also noted with appreciation. The Committee should also request the State Party to establish a unified conservation strategy for timber structures throughout the property and to develop comprehensive technical and financial assistance programmes owners and investors in the property, to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review. Full documentation of the Süleymaniye 2050 project and its vision, including a revised Conservation Plan, a Spatial Strategy Plan and an Urban Design Guide, should be submitted prior to finalisation and adoption in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The information provided on the additional units previously constructed in the garden of the former Church of the Holy Saviour of Chora (Kariye), the ongoing construction of new visitor facilities and the planned visitor arrangements are noted. In line with the recommendations of the 2024 Reactive Monitoring Mission, any change or improvements should be notified to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines before any irreversible decisions are taken. The State Party should be requested to provide detailed technical information on ongoing construction, design details for visitor and worshipper access, including any plans for entrance fees, and clarification on whether the three mosaics covered by mechanical curtains will remain covered outside prayer times. The development of a comprehensive master plan for the entire Chora site should be again requested by the Committee.

The restoration work and the seismic performance analysis of Hagia Sophia are welcomed, as is the submission of the Visitor Management Plan in the State Party's report. In line with the recommendations of the 2024 mission, the Committee may invite the State Party to amend the Visitor Management Plan accordingly and to submit the revised Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. Addressing the humidity of both the carpets and the air in the building is critical for the conservation of the mosaics and frescoes. The Committee may invite the State Party to conduct an indoor temperature study to monitor humidity for at least one year to inform decisions on daily visitor capacity. In addition, a comprehensive Master Plan for the entire Hagia Sophia complex is recommended to regulate circulation, improve landscaping and create an archaeological garden for the recovered pieces, as repeatedly recommended by the Committee. The revised Visitor Management Plan, the indoor temperature study and the Master Plan should all be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Although the submission of HIA for the Yedikule Fortress, Land Walls Nation Garden and Abdi Ípekçi Basketball Development Centre projects, as well as the HIA and several documents for the Yenikapi Cruise Port and the technical documentation for the Kazliçeşme Marina are welcomed, it is noted that the documentation for the Kazliçeşme Marina has not addressed the relevant ICOMOS Technical Reviews. The Committee may therefore request the State Party to implement the recommendations of the ICOMOS Technical Reviews, and recommend suspending the development of the Yenikapi Cruise Port until the Management Plan is finalised and the scheme and HIA are updated in response to the ICOMOS Technical Review, including consideration of alternative locations.

It is noted with concern that works at the Grand Bazaar, Yedikule Gas House, Great Palace Mosaics Museum and Viewing Terrace and Multi-Purpose Complex in the Zeytinburnu District appear to be proceeding without an HIA. In accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines* and previous requests by the Committee, these projects should have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre for ICOMOS review. The revised HIA for the Yedikule Gas House, which is currently under preparation, should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies. Further restoration and conservation work is underway at other sites, including the Silvrikapi Hypogeum, the Anemas Dungeons, part of the Blakhernai Palace, and various administrative buildings and mosques.

Despite repeated requests since 2019, there is still no strategic roadmap for the management of such projects, including HIAs and compliance with the *Operational Guidelines*. The Committee may therefore wish to reiterate and emphasise its previous request that the State Party develop such a roadmap and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The lack of timely submission of complete technical documentation, and the frequent delay in reporting on restoration, conservation and development work – often after such work has begun or even been completed – is regrettable. The Committee may wish to reiterate and emphasise its multiple previous requests for the State Party to comply consistently with the *Operational Guidelines*, in particular paragraphs 118bis and 172, for all major restoration and/or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property. These processes should be undertaken before any irreversible decisions are taken, allowing the Committee, through the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to assist in achieving appropriate solutions to ensure that the OUV of the property is fully maintained through early dialogue, consultation and review. Furthermore, despite the Committee's repeated requests since 2019, the property continues to lack a strategic roadmap for all types of projects. The Committee may therefore wish to urge the State Party to submit the requested strategic planning documents to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Following the recommendations of the 2024 mission, which the Committee should request the State Party to implement in their entirety, it is further recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in 2026. The mission would review and assess the level of implementation of the recommendations of the 2024 mission, with particular focus on the property's legal framework and protection mechanisms, the state of conservation of the timber structures, including their protection and rehabilitation mechanisms, the state of conservation and visitor conditions of Hagia Sophia and the Chora, and whether the property is faced with threats that could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.131

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2.
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **42 COM 7B.31**, **44 COM 7B.58** and **45 COM 7B.58** at its 42nd (Manama, 2018), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Takes note</u> of the results of the 2024 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, as well as the conclusions and recommendations contained in its report, and requests the State Party to implement them in full;
- 4. Welcomes the efforts of the State Party to establish a robust and multi-level system of governance for the protection of heritage, but notes with concern that the processes and mechanisms that contribute to the effective management of World Heritage properties, as set out in the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines, are not being systematically followed, urges the State Party to adopt comprehensive national legislation for the protection of World Heritage and ensure that it takes precedence over other laws, and further urges the State Party to ensure full compliance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 5. <u>Strongly encourages</u> the State Party to ensure that the property is managed in a more coherent and participatory manner, recognising that such an approach is essential to safeguarding its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
- 6. <u>Further welcomes</u> the continued efforts of the State Party to update the Management Plan for the property, in particular the work undertaken to enable inclusion of the attributes that convey the OUV of the property, <u>invites</u> the State Party to use this process

to consider establishing a buffer zone for the property through a Minor Boundary Modification, and <u>also requests</u> the State Party to submit the proposed outline of attributes, along with the draft updated Management Plan, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to finalisation;

- 7. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to provide regular and detailed updates on the development of the strategic plan for the conservation of wooden structures, in line with the Committee's previous repeated requests, to define a unified strategy for the conservation of timber structures across the entire property, to develop comprehensive programmes offering technical and financial assistance to owners and investors and to submit the draft strategic to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to its finalisation;
- 8. <u>Calls upon</u> the State Party to submit the complete documentation of the Süleymaniye 2050 project and vision, including the revised Conservation Plan, Spatial Strategy Plan and Urban Design Guide, prior to finalisation and adoption, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines and <u>notes</u> that failure to adhere to this review process could jeopardise key attributes that convey the OUV of the property;
- 9. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to provide technical information concerning the new construction underway in the garden of the former Church of the Holy Saviour of Chora (Kariye), to confirm whether the three mosaics covered by mechanical curtains will remain covered outside prayer times, to provide design details regarding the visiting conditions for worshippers and visitors, including information about any proposed entrance fee, to develop a Master Plan for the entire Chora area, in accordance with the Committee's previous repeated requests, and to submit these documents to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before they are finalised;
- 10. Requests furthermore the State Party to revise the Hagia Sophia Visitor Management Plan to align with the recommendations of the 2024 mission, to prepare an indoor temperature study to monitor air humidity over a period of at least one year, and to develop a Master Plan for the entire Hagia Sophia complex to regulate circulation, improve landscaping and create an archaeological garden for the recovered pieces, as repeatedly recommended by the Committee, and to submit these documents to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 11. Requests moreover the State Party to implement the ICOMOS Technical Review recommendations already provided for the Yedikule Fortress, the Abdi Ípekçi Basketball Development Centre, the Kazliçeşme Yacht Marina and the Yenikapi Cruise Port, to suspend development of the cruise port until the Management Plan is finalised and to consider alternative locations, and to submit the revised Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Yedikule Gas House, and HIAs for the proposed Viewing Terrace and Multi-Purpose Complex in Zeytinburnu District and the Reconstruction of the Great Palace Mosaics Museum to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to any irreversible decisions:
- 12. Also notes the large number of development/reconstruction/restoration and infrastructure projects proposed or in progress at the property and regrets that, despite the Committee's repeated requests, completed project documentation and associated HIAs continue not to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in a timely manner and in accordance with paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and therefore also urges the State Party to conduct HIAs in accordance with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines and based on the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context for all proposed projects that may have an impact on the OUV of the property, and to fully and consistently comply with the

obligation under Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines to submit project documentation, including HIAs, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before irreversible decisions are made;

- 13. Reiterates its previous multiple requests for the State Party to prepare a comprehensive roadmap, including short and long-term strategies covering all projects which may have an impact on the OUV of the property, in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, before any further irreversible decisions are taken, and requests moreover that the draft roadmap be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies no later than 1 February 2026;
- 14. Also requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in 2026 in order to review and assess the level of implementation of the recommendations of the 2024 mission, with particular focus on the property's legal framework and protection mechanisms, the state of conservation of the timber structures, including their protection and rehabilitation mechanisms, the state of conservation and visitor conditions of Hagia Sophia and the Chora, and whether the property is faced with threats that could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics;
- 15. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 133. Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2006

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

October 2013: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2015: Joint ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Resumption of mining activities
- Potential impact of new development projects at Hayle Harbour
- Commercial development
- Management and institutional factors / Improvements to the planning tools and approval processes not yet completed and implemented

Social/cultural uses and valuing of heritage

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215/</a>

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215/documents/</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is reported as follows:

- The World Heritage Site (WHS) Partnership continues the collaborative management of the property. The WHS Office, Planning Officer and Historic England support the maintenance of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and, with the Technical Panel, provide advice on applications and wider guidance and policy implementation. The Management Plan informs project priorities and guides decision-making, under the applicable planning system, including the Supplementary Planning Document, Planning Performance Agreements and neighbourhood development plans;
- ICOMOS, the World Heritage Centre and Historic England have been advising on design and heritage issues for the proposed developments at Hayle Harbour for a number of years. ICOMOS Technical Reviews have guided the design of the Hilltop area and the amended application has been submitted to Cornwall Council for formal consideration;
- The WHS Office continues to work with stakeholders on research and interpretation across the property. A programme funded through Historic England to revitalise the centre of the town of Redruth, including investment in historic buildings and celebration of Redruth's creative potential, has been completed. Other activities within the property include the Tamara Smallholdings project, focused on community involvement and identifying, researching and protecting the heritage of the Tamar Valley through ten funded projects, the annual Cornish Building Group Awards and collaboration with the Cornish Heritage Trust;
- The State Party continues to maintain that mining activity could represent a continuation of the
  evolving Cornish Mining cultural landscape. As requested by Decision 45 COM 7B.204, the State
  Party has submitted an information package on the current status of the modernisation of the
  South Crofty Mine and the existing permits to operate. It is stated that any new applications for
  South Crofty Mine would be subject to impact assessment;
- The State Party considers that, in view of the progress made on the issues of concern, there is no need for the property to remain under Reactive Monitoring process and assures its future commitment to comply with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The World Heritage Centre received additional information from the State Party on 29 November 2024 regarding the proposed Camborne project, which was appealed after initial refusal, and the Lower Boscaswell projects, which were finally refused after appeal.

Following the World Heritage Centre's letters under Paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines of 3 October 2023 and 17 January 2025, the State Party provided information on 28 February 2025 confirming that the mining surveys in southern Cornwall are temporary, non-invasive and reversible and that there is no current evidence of proposals affecting the property's OUV. It further noted that the reported racetracks at Perranporth Airfield at the St Agnes component remain under investigation by Historic England and under review by Cornwall Council for possible enforcement action. However, Historic England has already determined that no remnant mine shafts, which are attributes of the property's OUV, have been impacted.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The property benefits from an effective management structure supported by national and local planning provisions. The State Party's commitment to submitting details of significant statutory changes and planning applications impacting the OUV of the property for review by the Advisory Bodies before final decisions are taken is welcomed, as are the research and interpretation initiatives.

Following several ICOMOS Technical Reviews of multi-phase development projects within and adjacent to the Hayle Harbour component between 2018 and 2024, including discussions with key stakeholders, the most recent Technical Review concluded that the scale and reduced extent of the proposed housing project aligns with the natural setting and landscape character of the Hilltop precinct and is now consistent with preserving the setting of the property and the attributes that support its OUV.

Since 2012, the State Party has reported on the re-activation application of the South Crofty Mine, which is partly located within the property. The State Party's report was accompanied by an information package on the mining history and the current status of its operations and showed that the mine has all the necessary permits to resume extraction over a large area of the component.

At the time of inscription, the mine was closed but parts outside the property boundaries remained 'active' in planning terms. Any new mining would have required permission under the Environment Act 1995. An application for such permission was approved almost immediately following the inscription, but no details were submitted to the World Heritage Centre. In 2011, planning consent for buildings associated with surface working was granted, partly located within the property. When the Committee was notified of these approvals in 2012, it called for a halt and, in Decision **36 COM 7B.94**, recommended a 'significant modification of the boundaries of the property to assure the removal of areas that are proposed for the resumption of commercial mining from the property, prior to any resumption of mining'. Notwithstanding this, a further permission for a large extension of underground workings was approved in 2013, including extraction in 12 historic shafts. Again, no details were submitted to the World Heritage Centre. These permissions allow mine operations to extend until 2071. In 2013, the mine was placed under administration and work halted. However, a new owner acquired the mine in 2016, obtained a permit for a water extraction plant in 2017, and started test drilling in 2020. Although the State Party has advised that any new mining applications would be subject to impact assessment, none are necessary before mining can lawfully resume.

While the submitted information package indicates shortcomings in the reporting of permit applications to the World Heritage Centre over the years, it does not include a timeline of planned future steps. The State Party's information package provides two maps, which, however, do not adequately address the scope and extent of the permitted mining activities and how they relate to the property boundaries, as first requested by the Committee in 2013 (Decision **37 COM 7B.89**) for review before any further permits are granted. Details available on the mining company's website [Cornish Metals, 2025, consulted on 28 February 2025] indicate that the underground permit area covers 1,490 hectares across an extensive part of the property, including 26 former producing mines and tunnels up to some 4km in length.

It was stated at the time of inscription that the resumption of mining 'could reinvigorate the cultural landscape', but any new mining development using new technologies cannot be considered as a continuation of the way in which mining traditions shaped the landscape between 1700 and 1914, the period for which the property was inscribed, and needs therefore to be considered when assessing potential impacts on OUV. Such impacts will vary depending on whether mining takes place within or outside the property.

Strong concerns remain about the resumption of active mining within the property, which would be contrary to the consistent position of the Committee that mining is incompatible with World Heritage status and to Decision **37 COM 7** on the so-called No-go commitment. The recommendation of the Committee to halt the mining project and to introduce a Significant Boundary Modification (Decision **36 COM 7B.94**) has not been heeded, nor is it mentioned in the latest State Party report, and the Committee may wish to reiterate its previous request.

The Committee may also wish to provide guidance on how the impact of the proposed resumption of mining on OUV should be assessed. The State Party has indicated that the impact should be limited to the construction of above ground buildings and not include underground activities, but this does not appear to respect the No-go commitment as applied to mining activities at other World Heritage properties, nor the importance of underground remains in the mining cultural landscape that is the property, nor the Committee's established position.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.133**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **36 COM 7B.94**, **37 COM 7**, **37 COM 7B.89** and **45 COM 7B.204** adopted at its 36th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012), 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,

- 3. Reiterating its position that mineral exploration or exploitation is incompatible with World Heritage status, which is supported by the International Council of Mining and Metals' (ICMM) Position Statement of not undertaking such activities within World Heritage properties,
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the ongoing efforts of the World Heritage Site (WHS) Partnership, and other agencies to support the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the ongoing efforts made for increased interpretation, research and stakeholder engagement across the property;
- 5. <u>Welcomes also</u> the submission of revised plans for the Hilltop area at North Quay, which respond to the recommendations provided by ICOMOS over an extended period, and takes note with satisfaction that this element of the Hayle Harbour project is now consistent with the conservation of the setting of the property and the relevant attributes which support its OUV;
- 6. <u>Acknowledges</u> the information package provided by the State Party on the South Crofty Mine, but <u>expresses great concern</u> that the mine has all the necessary permits for extraction with environmental conditions approved in 2006, planning consent for surface workings in 2011, extension of underground workings in 2013, and water extraction permit in 2017, of which only details of the approved planning consent have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- 7. <u>Regrets</u> that the information package did not include sufficient maps of the scope and extent of the approved mining activities, nor information on how they relate to the property boundaries, as first requested by the Committee in 2013, for review prior to any further permits being granted, nor a timeline for the anticipated future activities;
- 8. <u>Notes</u> that the State Party considers that only the impact of above-ground buildings needs to be appraised in terms of impact on OUV, but <u>further notes</u> that the underground workings of the Cornish mining industry were considered as 'highly significant' at the time of inscription and that wherever such networks were identified they were included within the nominated property, and <u>considers</u> that in a mining cultural landscape, both above and underground remains are inextricably linked and that both should be appraised for potential impact on attributes of the property which support its OUV;
- 9. <u>Notes furthermore</u> that at the time of inscription, it was stressed that any resumption of mining should ensure that 'the values associated with early steam technologies are not harmed', and <u>further considers</u> that mining development using new technologies cannot be considered as a continuation of the way in which the mining traditions shaped the landscape between 1700 and 1914, being the period for which the property was inscribed, and must be separately assessed for potential impacts on OUV;
- 10. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to consider proposing a significant modification of the boundaries of the property to ensure that areas proposed for resumption of commercial mining are removed from the property prior to any resumption of mining, as repeatedly recommended by the Committee;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, 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 48th session.

# 134. Derwent Valley Mills (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2001

Criteria (ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1030/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1030/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

2024: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Governance
- Legal framework
- Localised utilities
- Housing
- Development proposals in the wider setting, buffer zone, and within the property
- Poor state of conservation of the large Belper Mills complex
- Fragmented management system/management plan

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1030/

#### Current conservation issues

- On 31 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report in accordance with Decision 46 COM 7B.17, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1030/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1030/documents/</a>. Progress in implementing the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee is being reported as follows:
- The State Party considers that the condition of the property is improving due to the efforts of the local authorities and stakeholders in implementing the recommendations of the 2024 Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission;
- Several development projects within the property's buffer zone and setting were addressed: 'Amber Rock' was rejected, a revised proposal for 'Bradshaw Way' was formally submitted to the local authority, 'Eagle Quarter' was further reviewed and will be formally submitted shortly, and possible revisions to the consented 'Landmark' project are still being considered. The proposed 'Full Street' development was approved following a number of amendments;
- Only one other site in the Belper Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be connected to the
  property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), namely the Babington Hospital, which is to be
  sold. A new development plan to address development pressures in Belper is currently being
  prepared;
- The live application for the Belper Mills Complex still awaits determination, with further iterations and the supporting Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) expected to be completed in early 2025.
   Pending applications must be resolved under current legislation before alternative proposals can be considered. However, an alternative options study on the economic potential of the Belper Mills has been developed;
- It is considered that the assessment of cumulative impacts is best undertaken using live datasets rather than a fixed baseline. The State Party is committed to assessing and managing these impacts through HIAs, national and local guidelines, enhanced references to existing guidance

and the development of new ones, supplementary planning documents, design codes, restrictions within Conservation Areas and the integration of HIA requirements into the property's new Management Plan;

- The State Party notes the World Heritage Committee's concerns and remains committed to continued discussion regarding the potential to improve and enhance the management of the property. However, it does not agree that the property's management system is not fully functioning at the current time, or that it does not address the State Party's obligations under the Convention. The upcoming 2026-2031 Management Plan will refine the attributes underlying the property's OUV and track the risk management, emergency preparedness and climate change strategies of key partners to integrate the property into them;
- Updates on the new Local Plans have been provided, including an expected submission timeline
  to the World Heritage Centre. Coordination of strategic policies and relevant authorities is
  considered to be improved and in line with legal requirements;
- Legislation will soon be introduced to further reform the national strategic planning system, requiring local authorities in the new East Midlands Combined County Authority to develop a Spatial Development Strategy to guide regional growth and inform Local Plans;
- While the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (DVMWHS) Partnership plans to develop a
  planning toolkit, the Derby City Design Code is currently being developed by the Derby City
  Council and the Arkwright Society is reviewing the Cromford Mills Masterplan;
- The report also includes an Action Plan for implementing the Advisory Mission's recommendations and a report on 2023-2024 Key Monitoring Indicators.

On 10 and 29 January and on 28 February 2025, the State Party submitted to the World Heritage Centre additional information under Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines on four developments, namely 'Amber Rock' and 'Full Street', a confidential draft of the Belper Mills Development Master Plan for which an ICOMOS Technical Review was requested, and the revised 'Bradshaw Way' proposal.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party acknowledges development pressures, cumulative impacts and past shortcomings in notifying the World Heritage Centre of developments affecting the property and reaffirms its commitment to the 2024 Advisory mission's recommendations and the World Heritage Committee's requests. Positive progress can be seen in the refusal of the 'Amber Rock' development, further reviews of the 'Eagle Quarter' and 'Bradshaw Way' projects, for which the latter is now considered as adequate by ICOMOS, and renewed discussions on possible amendments to the 'Landmark' scheme, whose consent cannot be legally revoked. It is welcome that the new redevelopment proposals for the Babington Hospital will be notified to the World Heritage Centre and will be accompanied by a HIA, as is the new development plan to address development pressures in Belper.

However, there are instances where the advice provided through consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies has not been consistently followed. Approval of the 'Full Street' development was granted, after modifications, but without prior consultation with the World Heritage Centre as requested in Decision 46 COM 7B.17. The revised 'Bradshaw Way' proposal was submitted to the City Council without considering a second ICOMOS Technical Review prior to it. Similarly, no such prior review is anticipated for the amended 'Eagle Quarter' scheme including the adjacent Riverside development of the Derbion Masterplan, as the State Party reported its intention to submit notifications to the World Heritage Centre only after the local planning authority has received all the necessary documentation. The World Heritage Committee therefore might wish to request the State Party to share with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies the new and ongoing developments before formal submission to the local planning authorities to allow sufficient time for amendments to be made, if deemed necessary.

The State Party recognises the urgent need to address the deteriorating condition of the Belper Mills complex. While the development of an alternative options study (Belper Mills Development Master Plan) to facilitate informed discussions on conservation challenges and costs is a positive step, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies understand that no alternative proposals can be considered until Amber Valley Borough Council has determined the current live applications. It is also noted that the different development options in the report are not intended to replace the current applications. In its Technical Review of the confidential Belper Mills Development Master Plan, ICOMOS acknowledged that the proposal reflects a concrete effort to revise the applications that the 2024 Advisory mission

advised against. However, ICOMOS requested additional, more detailed documentation regarding the nature of the planned interventions and their impact on the structures and architectural features of the buildings. A further iteration of the live applications, along with the supporting HIA requested by the Committee, remain pending. This ongoing uncertainty about when a decision will be made on the current applications is creating significant time pressure, particularly given the urgent need for critical restoration work.

While the State Party has clarified updates on Local Plans and coordination mechanisms with the local authorities as required by law, it does not share the Committee's view that the current management and legal framework is inadequate. Nonetheless, it has committed to further dialogue on improvements, which can be opened with the submission of the new draft Local Plans and the forthcoming 2026-2031 Management Plan. It is welcomed that the new Management Plan will, amongst other, refine the attributes of OUV and require HIAs for all new development applications, taking into account cumulative impacts, as recommended by the 2024 Advisory mission. However, there are no plans outlined to grant the Management Authority legal jurisdiction or to establish a management system that would provide legal status for the Management Plan and a mandate to carry out HIAs, as requested by the Committee.

Further progress has been made in developing and reviewing policies and planning documents that address cumulative impacts and promote HIAs in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context. New legislation will require local authorities to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy to guide development across the region and inform individual Local Plans. All such documents should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by Advisory Bodies before adoption. The State Party's decision to use live datasets over a fixed baseline to assess cumulative impacts, along with its commitment to integrating these considerations into decision-making, is noted. However, this approach lacks a comprehensive overview of past and long-term cumulative impacts on OUV, and there is no clear evidence that ongoing projects are systematically evaluated against less impactful alternatives.

The new Action Plan for implementing the 2024 Advisory mission's recommendations and the 2023-2024 Key Monitoring Indicators report are both welcome. The World Heritage Committee may wish to encourage the State Party to establish clear timelines for implementing the proposed actions. However, the large number of approved planning applications within the property and its buffer zone, as identified in the Key Monitoring Indicators report, is cause for concern, including the A38 Derby Junction Scheme, which may has the potential to affect the OUV of the property about which the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies were not previously informed.

While the State Party has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the challenges facing the 'Derwent Valley Mills' World Heritage property and it is understood that implementation of the Advisory mission's recommendations has only just begun, significant concerns remain regarding the Belper Mills complex, ongoing development pressures and the overall effectiveness of the current management system. In light of these concerns, the Committee may wish to consider urging the State Party to temporarily suspend all new developments that could negatively impact the property's OUV, including those that have already been approved, until the new Local Plans and amended applications are reviewed and recommendations from ICOMOS Technical Reviews fully integrated. The range, scale and complexity of the conservation challenges at this property, coupled with a fragmented management system, call for an urgent and a broad mobilisation to preserve its OUV.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.134

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **45 COM 7B.61** and **46 COM 7B.17**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th session (New Delhi, 2024), respectively,
- 3. <u>Acknowledges</u> the commitment of the State Party to implement the World Heritage Committee's previous requests and the recommendations of the 2024 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission, in particular to address the

- development pressures and cumulative impacts that were identified as harming the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and <u>welcomes</u> the rejection of the 'Amber Rock' development;
- 4. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to continue the discussions with stakeholders to further explore possible revisions to the consented 'Landmark' project and to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of any possible progress, and <u>further welcomes</u> the State Party's intention to notify the World Heritage Centre on the redevelopment plans of the Babington Hospital once available;
- 5. Regrets that the State Party did not submit the amended proposals for the 'Full Street' development to the World Heritage Centre prior to its approval, as requested in Decision 46 COM 7B.17, notes that the amended 'Bradshaw Way' proposal, now considered as adequate by ICOMOS, was only submitted after its formal submission to the local authority, and therefore urges the State Party to ensure that all revised proposals, including for 'Eagle Quarter', undergo a review by ICOMOS prior to formal submission for approval to allow sufficient time for amendments to be made, if deemed necessary;
- 6. Notes with concern the poor state of conservation of the Belper Mill complex, also welcomes the development of the Belper Mills Development Masterplan as a study of alternative options, understands that the pending live applications for the Belper Mills complex must be determined before alternative proposals can be considered, also urges the State Party to expedite the decision-making process after further iteration and completion of the supporting Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) by the applicant, and requests the State Party to take into account the recommendations of the ICOMOS Technical Review of April 2025 as appropriate;
- 7. <u>Further welcomes</u> the State Party's commitment to refine the 2026-2031 Management Plan to include mandatory HIAs, cumulative impact assessments, and risk management strategies, but <u>remains concerned</u> that the current management and legal framework does not provide sufficient safeguards for the OUV of the property and <u>reiterates its request</u> for the State Party to establish a legal mandate for the protection of OUV, particularly regarding the Management Plan and HIA enforcement;
- 8. <u>Takes note</u> of the updates to the Local Plans and the improved coordination with local authorities, <u>reiterates its previous request</u> that draft plans and relevant HIAs be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to their adoption and <u>encourages</u> the submission of other newly developed key policy and planning documents for review prior to their adoption;
- 9. <u>Further notes</u> that the State Party considers using live datasets instead of a fixed baseline to assess cumulative impacts, <u>notes</u> that this approach does not provide a comprehensive overview of past and long-term cumulative impacts on OUV and that no clear indication is provided if ongoing projects are systematically evaluated with less impactful alternatives; thus <u>also reiterates its request</u> that an assessment should establish a cumulative impact baseline for all projects within the property and buffer zone since inscription while the HIA process for new and ongoing projects should be conducted against this baseline, systematically comparing less impactful alternatives to ensure a precautionary approach and safeguard the property's OUV;
- 10. <u>Also welcomes</u> the development of an Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the 2024 Advisory Mission and the 2023-2024 Key Monitoring Indicators report and <u>invites</u> the State Party to set clear timelines for the implementation of planned actions:

- 11. Notes with concern the high number of approved planning applications within the property and its buffer zone, as identified in the Key Monitoring Indicators Report, including the A38 Derby Junction Scheme, which may has the potential to impact the OUV of the property and was not previously notified to the World Heritage Centre, and recalls that, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, full details of projects which may affect the property's OUV need to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre prior to any decisions being made that would be difficult to reverse;
- 12. <u>Further urges</u> the State Party to halt all new development that could negatively impact the property's OUV, including projects already approved, until the new Local Plans and amended applications have been reviewed and the ICOMOS recommendations are fully integrated;
- 13. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, 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 48th session, considering that the urgent conservation needs of this property require a broad mobilisation to preserve its OUV.
- 135. Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey including Saint Margaret's Church (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

136. The English Lake District (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## **LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN**

# 141. Settlement and Artificial Mummification of the Chinchorro Culture in the Arica and Parinacota Region (Chile)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2021

Criteria (iii)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1634/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1634/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1634/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

2009: USD20,000 from the Spanish Funds-in-Trust

## Previous monitoring missions

N/A

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Factors identified at the time of inscription of the property:

- Management and governance (issue resolved)
- Documentation, inventorying and monitoring to be developed
- · General maintenance, including for unprotected archaeological remains on the surface
- Safety of visitors and protection of the property
- Potential impacts of the industrial poultry farm located in the Camarones River valley
- Illegal settlement in the Desembocadura de Camarones component part

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1634/

## Current conservation issues

On 4 December 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1634/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1634/documents/</a>, presenting progress on measures requested by the Committee at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023), as follows:

- The site manager 'Chinchorro Marka Corporation', with the Chilean government and the Chinchorro Management Center of the University of Tarapacá, implement the Management Plan with an emphasis on inclusiveness and building community awareness;
- Monitoring work and drafting plans for relocation of the illegal settlement in Component 03 'Desembocadura de Camarones' continue;
- The National Monuments Council (CMN) requested mitigation measures on the south terrace of Component 03 after the installation works of underground fiber optics. In Component 01 'Faldeos del Morro', looting has been controlled through monitoring by the Chinchorro Management Center, reinforcing perimetral fences and mitigating animal presence;
- The teams of the Corporation and the University of Taparacá (UTA) implement the articulated management of the property's components, following the Management Plan;
- The regularization of health noncompliance issues at the poultry farms located in the Camarones River valley is pending;
- Progress was reported in the update of the 'Arica Communal Regulatory Plan';

- The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage presently works on a proposal to update the National Monuments Law;
- The National Cultural Heritage Service allocated resources for the Corporation (2024-2025) to include Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) tools into the property's regulatory and management framework;
- The relocation outside the buffer zone of the illegal settlement in Component 03 is in the planning stage, with a 2021-2030 timetable;
- In June 2024, an international workshop on ethical and technical challenges from the management, conservation and exhibition of bodies of the Chinchorro Culture was held in the city of Arica, in order to establish general guidelines for the custody and management of Chinchorro heritage stored in museums;
- The 'Secretaría Regional Ministerial de Salud' (Regional Ministerial Secretariat for Health)
  confirmed after the 2022 inspection that there were no polluted areas related to sewage. The
  authorization for the sewage project was rejected in 2024 due to observations related to current
  regulations;
- Updated topographical maps with new delimitations and buffer zones, as well as zoning (archaeological sites and areas of potential interest) were included;
- The Corporation and the CMN are working on the declaration of Component 03 and its buffer zone, as 'Historic Monument and Typical Zone';
- Emergency works to stabilize the open excavations at Camarones 14 and Camarones Conchal Sur in Component 03 were contracted through a bid of tender and finalized in October 2023;
- Construction of the 'San Miguel de Azapa Anthropological Museum', is expected to resume under a direct contract by the Ministry of Public Works.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The commitment of the State Party to implement the Management Plan with an emphasis on inclusiveness and building community awareness is welcomed. The site manager 'Chinchorro Marka Corporation' works closely with the Chilean government agencies and the University of Tarapacá through its Chinchorro Management Center. The proposed inclusion of integrated monitoring in the Management Plan, which will consider the sites, the museum objects as well as the ethical issues concerning the treatment of the human bodies, is an important step forward. Advances of the establishment and functioning of this integrated monitoring system should be requested from the State Party.

The illegal settlement in Component 03 'Desembocadura de Camarones' remains a concern, as the number of settlers grows even if the occupied area has not expanded significantly. It is advisable to implement the recommendations of the report 'Diagnostic of Archaeological Impact in the South Terrace of the mouth of Camarones River', which evaluates the illegal installation of fiber optics and suggests mitigating actions, considering the fragility of the site.

The continued collaboration to facilitate the integrated management and monitoring between the site manager 'Chinchorro Marka Corporation', with the support of the National Center for World Heritage Sites of the National Service for Cultural Heritage, its Regional Office and the Regional Technical Office of the CMN, should be noted with satisfaction. It is proposed that the Committee request detailed information on the functioning of the integrated management system of the World Heritage property with its newly revised legal framework.

Health noncompliance issues at the poultry farms in the Camarones River valley remain a concern and the State Party should be urged to enforce the relevant regulations.

It is recommended that the Committee request information on the update project of the 'Arica Communal Regulatory Plan' and urge the State Party to include the implementation of HIA tools into the regulatory and management framework of this World Heritage property as a priority.

Updated information should also be requested on the pending review, approval and implementation of the relocation plan for the illegal settlement in Component 03, expected to be relocated outside the buffer zone, within a proposed timeframe of 2021-2030.

An update on the clarification of the legal status of Component 03 and the systematization of geographic information on the land polygons that integrate the world heritage property, should be requested by the Committee, as well as an update on the declaration of Component 03 and its buffer zone, as 'Historic Monument and Typical Zone'.

The finalization of the emergency works to stabilize the open excavations at Camarones 14 and Camarones Conchal Sur in Component 03 in October 2023 should be welcomed.

It is recommended that the Committee request information on the direct contract by the Ministry of Public Works to resume the construction of the 'San Miguel de Azapa Anthropological Museum'.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.141**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.109**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the commitment of the State Party to implement the Management Plan with an emphasis on inclusiveness and building community awareness and <u>requests</u> the State Party to submit an updated report on the implementation of the Management Plan, including the results of the activities involving the community and stakeholders, as well as on the establishment and functioning of the integrated monitoring system;
- 4. <u>Notes with concern</u> that the illegal settlement at Component 03 'Desembocadura de Camarones' continues to grow in population, even if it has not expanded significantly in area coverage and <u>requests</u> the State Party to consider implementing the recommendations of the report 'Diagnostic of Archaeological Impact in the Southern Terrace of the mouth of Camarones River';
- 5. <u>Reiterates its concern</u> on the health noncompliance with current regulations by the poultry farms and <u>further urges</u> the State Party to enforce them;
- 6. <u>Requests</u> information on the update project of the 'Arica Communal Regulatory Plan' and <u>urges</u> the State Party to include the implementation of Heritage Impact Assessment tools into the regulatory and management framework of this World Heritage property as a priority;
- 7. <u>Also requests</u> an updated report on the pending review, approval and implementation of the relocation plan for the illegal settlement in Component 03, expected to be relocated outside the buffer zone:
- 8. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to provide the following information:
  - Updated report on the clarification of the legal status of Component 03 and the systematization of geographic information on the land polygons that integrate the World Heritage property,
  - b) The status of the declaration of Component 03 and its buffer zone, as 'Historic Monument and Typical Zone',
  - c) Information on the direct contract by the Ministry of Public Works to resume the construction of the 'San Miguel de Azapa Anthropological Museum';

- 9. <u>Welcomes</u> the finalization of the emergency works to stabilize the open excavations at Camarones 14 and Camarones Conchal Sur in Component 03 in October 2023;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

#### **AFRICA**

## 151. Royal Palaces of Abomey (Benin)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1985

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1985-2007

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/323/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 6 (from 1985-2014) Total amount approved: USD 118,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/323/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 450,000 from the Government of Japan and from the Riksantikvaren (Norwegian Cultural Heritage Directorate); USD 50,365 through funding from the Netherlands; USD 100,000 in 2021-2022 through UNESCO/Government of Norway cooperation

#### Previous monitoring missions

May/June 2004: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2006: Joint World Heritage Centre/CRAterre-ENSAG/Getty Conservation Institute mission; February 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission; December 2012, April 2016: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; October 2018: ICOMOS Advisory mission; February-March 2022: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Absence of a national legislative mechanism for the protection of cultural heritage (issue resolved in 2007, but significant again in 2020)
- Major deterioration of almost 50% of the earthen structural components (issue resolved in 2007, but significant again in 2020)
- Lack and loss of documentation on the site (issue resolved in 2007, but significant again in 2020)
- Lack of presentation and interpretation at the site
- Lack of sharing of knowledge between site managers and among authorities
- Need to distinguish between the site museum and the World Heritage site
- Lack of effective firefighting measures
- Need to improve the governance, communication, organization and implementation of mechanisms for monitoring, coordination and involvement of the different parties concerned
- Need to revise the risk management plan as well as the plan for the management, conservation and enhancement of the property
- · Need to take priority measures for the prevention of fire risks

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/323/

#### Current conservation issues

On 14 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/323/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/323/documents/</a>.

In January 2024, a Progress Report on the creation of a Museum of the Kings and Amazons of Dahomey and the enhancement of the palatial site of Abomey had also been submitted by the State Party.

Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in those reports, as follows:

- Details have been provided on the layout of the Museum of Kings and Amazons of Dahomey (MuRAD), and construction is scheduled to start in January-February 2025;
- In advance of the foundation work for MuRAD, preventive excavations have been carried out on the Court of the Amazons;
- Studies to underpin the rehabilitation of the four Royal Palaces of Ghezo, Glélé, Béhanzin, and Agoli Agbo have almost been completed and a call for tenders is being prepared. A second phase in 2026 will cover the restoration of the other six Palaces of Houegbadja, Akaba, Agadja, Tegbessou, Kpengla, and Agonglo;
- The majority of the remaining structures that were in danger have been the subject of work and/or protection measures to control degradation;
- The construction of fire walls surrounding the entire site is almost complete;
- Construction of the Project House on the IFAN site has commenced, which will inform the local community and visitors on the museum project's progress and host conferences and events;
- An agreement has been signed between the Abomey and Region Tourist Office, the National Agency Touristic Heritage (ANPT), and the Benin Tourism Agency, to mobilise the support of political and administrative authorities, royal families, local populations, youth, the media, and development associations for the rehabilitation and enhancement of the property;
- The MuRAD Prefiguration Committee, which was set up in October 2023, is functioning and its 2023-2025 roadmap is being implemented with State resources;
- Partnership agreements have been set up with the Centre for Vocational Training and Learning (CFPA) in Abomey, the School of African Heritage (EPA), and the Laboratory of Art, Archaeology, Analysis of Cultural Dynamics, Expertise (LACEPT);
- Consultations are underway with various stakeholders to find solutions to the problems of illegal constructions;
- The 2020-2024 Management and Development Plan is being evaluated to be replaced by a transitional management plan for 2025-2026 for the duration of restoration works on the palaces, the construction of the MuRAD and the development of the heritage promenade. A more holistic plan will then cover the period 2027-2031.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The submission of some details for the execution of the museum project is to be welcomed. These include the layout of a large, landscaped garden with 12 bronze statues depicting Amazons in front of the proposed museum in the Court of the Amazons. The importance of the Court lies in its relationship to the adjacent Royal Palaces, and particularly to its historic spatial functions. The Committee has requested that the museum should appear relatively small in terms of size, form, and materials so as not to diminish the authenticity of the Royal Palaces and has specifically requested that the Court should continue to be intelligible as a large ceremonial open space. As currently proposed, the garden with its statues and palm trees would appear to be out of keeping with the Court's primary function and should be greatly simplified to ensure the palaces' dominance.

Some details remain to be provided such as the surface treatment of the Amazon Court, functional links between the different spaces, visitor access, as well as a detailed timetable for implementation beyond the start date of January-February 2025.

Work undertaken on preventive archaeological excavations in areas beneath the proposed museum are also to be welcomed. No details have been provided on the outcomes, and it would be desirable if these could be provided and published to enrich knowledge of the property.

In terms of conservation, Phase 1 of the rehabilitation programme covering the four Royal Palaces of Ghezo, Glélé, Béhanzin, and Agoli Agbo, will shortly go out to tender. It is also now confirmed that in 2026, this will be followed by Phase 2 for the remaining six Palaces of Houegbadja, Akaba, Agadja, Tegbessou, Kpengla, and Agonglo. This is to be greatly welcomed as the Committee has long requested that the ten palaces should be conserved, managed, and perceived as a single entity.

Nevertheless, a comprehensive recovery and retention plan for all the palaces has not yet been submitted as requested. It appears that on-going conservation will be undertaken on a site-by-site basis with high level expertise and experience in restoration, being available on site at the present time. Training is also underway with a programme having been completed for 111 participants working on seven different traditional building trades.

The Committee may wish to reiterate its request for a detailed recovery and conservation plan for all 184 components mentioned in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in order to set out a documented conservation approach and outcomes, as well as modifications related to appropriate uses for individual buildings, in the light of discussions on the refunctionalisation of the six palaces in advance of rehabilitation work.

The documentation provided mentions the construction of the Project House, as a place of information and participation for the local population in relation to projects being carried out. However, further details have not been provided on the links between the palaces, the museum, and the city of Abomey in relation to tourism management. ICOMOS has issued recommendations in its latest technical review on the link between the property, its future museum, and its role as a tourist hub for the city of Abomey.

The 2023-2024 Management Plan will be replaced by an Interim Management Plan 2025-2026 for the implementation phase of the project, and then by a Revised Management Plan for 2027-2031. No details of the Interim Management Plan have been provided. The need for a comprehensive management of the property which integrates the palaces with the new museum, gives priority to the preservation of OUV, and includes a comprehensive risk and disaster management plan, still remains.

While it is noted that an agreement has been signed between the ANPT, the Abomey and Region Tourist Office and the Benin Tourism Agency to mobilise the support of political and administrative authorities, royal families, local populations, youth, the media and development associations for the rehabilitation and enhancement of the property, and that consultations are being undertaken with stakeholders to address illegal settlements, such collaboration needs to be underpinned by agreed policies in the Management Plan.

It is however unfortunate that the new large-scale project dedicated to the "Strengthening, safeguarding and promoting tangible and intangible cultural and historical heritage" under that agreement, for an amount of USD 4,85 million, still has not been officially approved by the State Party, despite the extension until end of 2027 of the UNESCO-Benin Framework Agreement (originally signed in 2017). This project would provide valuable capacity-building for professionals to protect and promote the property and provide technical and scientific support for the development of the new museum, and the State Party should be encouraged to consider approval of this project as soon as possible.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.151**

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 45 COM 7B.34, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the details provided so far on the execution of the museum project, including excavations of the site within the Court of the Amazons;
- 4. Notes that the museum plans now include a large landscaped garden in front of the proposed museum building with palm trees and 12 bronze statues depicting Amazons, recalls its request that the museum should not diminish the authenticity of the Royal Palaces and that the Court should continue to be intelligible as a large ceremonial open space; considers that as currently planned the garden would be out of keeping with the Court's primary function and requests the State Party to greatly simplify the garden plans so as to ensure the palaces' dominance and to submit these plans for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies:

- 5. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to provide the remaining requested details of the surface treatment of the Amazon Court, functional links between the different spaces, visitor access, as well as a detailed project implementation timetable;
- 6. Also notes that Phase 1of the rehabilitation programme covering the four Royal Palaces of Ghezo, Glélé, Béhanzin, and Agoli Agbo will shortly go out to tender, and greatly welcomes confirmation that a Phase 2 in 2026 will cover the remaining six Palaces of Houegbadja, Akaba, Agadja, Tegbessou, Kpengla, and Agonglo, as it has long been requested that the ten palaces should be conserved, managed and perceived as a single entity;
- 7. Reiterates it requests for a detailed recovery and conservation plan to be provided for all 184 components mentioned in the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in order to set out a documented conservation approach and outcomes, as well as how modifications related to appropriate uses for individual buildings will respect OUV, in the light of proposed refunctionalisation of the further six palaces, before the start of rehabilitation work and, requests that this plan is submitted for review to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before it becomes operational:
- 8. <u>Further notes</u> that an Interim Management Plan will be in place for the duration of the Museum project 2025-2026, to be followed by a Revised Management Plan for 2027-2031, <u>stresses</u> the need for a comprehensive management of the property which integrates the palaces with the new museum, gives priority to the preservation of OUV, and includes comprehensive risk and disaster management plans, and <u>urges</u> the State Party to start work as soon as possible on this overall plan so that it is functional when the museum project is completed;
- 9. While noting that an agreement has been signed between the National Agency Touristic Heritage (ANPT), the Abomey and Region Tourist Office and the Benin Tourism Agency to mobilise the support of political and administrative authorities, royal families, local populations, youth, the media and development associations for the rehabilitation and enhancement of the property, and that consultations are being undertaken with stakeholders to address illegal settlements, stresses the need for such collaboration to be underpinned by agreed policies in the Management Plan;
- 10. Notes with regret that despite the extension until end of 2027 of the UNESCO-Benin Framework Agreement, originally signed in 2017, the large-scale project dedicated to "Strengthening, safeguarding and promoting tangible and intangible cultural and historical heritage" proposed under that agreement for an amount of USD 4,85 million, has still not been officially approved by the State Party, and encourages the State Party to consider approval of this project as soon as possible in order to provide valuable capacity-building for professionals involved in the protection and promotion of the property;
- 11. <u>Finally, requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 152. Koutammakou, the Land of the Batammariba (Benin, Togo)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2004

Criteria (v)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 2001-2020) Total amount approved: USD 36,991

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 21,472 for an emergency mission (see below) following the collapse of several Sikien (Heritage Emergency Fund); USD 202,298 from the Government of Norway for the period 2020-2025

#### Previous monitoring missions

October 2018: Emergency mission funded by the Heritage Emergency Fund; May 2024: Joint WHC/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring Mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Destruction of several Sikien during the 2018 rainy season
- Management Plan/Management system (lack of human, material and financial resources, as well as insufficient legal and legislative frameworks; Management and Conservation Plan to be finalized and adopted)
- Emergence of new forms of modern construction and uncontrolled urbanization
- Deforestation

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/

## Current conservation issues

On 18 October 2024, the State Party of Benin submitted a State of conservation report for the part of the property located on its territory, a summary of which is available at: <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/documents/</a>. It provides the following information:

- The property is subject to anthropogenic pressures from urbanization and agricultural activities.
   Mayors have been invited to support landscape protection through the adoption of municipal decrees;
- To compensate for the scarcity of plant species used in the construction of *sikien*, reforestation campaigns have been carried out with Eco Bénin and the support of the French Embassy in Benin:
- A joint management plan will be developed with the State Party of Togo by the end of 2025;
- The impact of climate change on the property has been reported and community awareness sessions on the risks have been initiated;
- Detailed mapping of the *sikien* and occupied areas has been carried out, including the demarcation of traditional territories;
- Training workshops were organized by private entities to teach communities construction and maintenance techniques.

On 31 October 2024, the State Party of Togo submitted a State of conservation report for the part of the property located on its territory, which is available at: <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/documents/</a>. Progress achieved is presented as follows:

The property continues to face cyclical deterioration of the sikien after the rainy seasons;

- Most of the damaged sikien have been restored or rebuilt, including 42 sikien in 2024 through community-based projects supervised by the Koutammakou Conservation and Promotion Service (Service de Conservation et de Promotion du Koutammakou - SCPK);
- Disaster monitoring and warning committees are set up in villages to report deforestation and damage to sikien;
- Tree felling is now subject to obtaining a permit issued by local councils;
- During community-based reforestation campaigns, 729 seedlings were planted between 2023 and 2024, with the involvement of local authorities and populations. However, these seedlings are at risk due to roaming animals and drought;
- The municipality of Nadoba is experiencing growing urbanization without fully enforced regulations, pending the Urban Planning instrument, which is supposed to incorporate the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011). The Nadoba Town Hall building is one of the projects that does not comply with vernacular architecture standards;
- SCPK continues to face constraints in terms of human, technical and financial resources.

In addition, as part of cross-border cooperation, a preparatory meeting for the transnational body was held in Boukoumbé in August 2024, but the joint management body has yet to be established.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission was held in Togo from 25 to 31 May 2024 in response to Decisions **44 COM 7B.122** and **45 COM 7B.133**, the report of which is available at: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1140/documents/.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The efforts made by the two States Parties of Togo and Benin in conserving the transboundary property are very encouraging.

In Togo, the restoration and reconstruction of 42 *sikien* in 2024, the training of 20 young people in traditional techniques, as well as reforestation and community awareness campaigns demonstrate a concrete commitment to the protection of the cultural landscape and are to be commended. The work carried out on the *sikien* damaged during the 2023 rainy season has been summarized, classified by village, including details about the operations undertaken as well as before-and-after photographs. These initiatives should be continued and thoroughly documented.

However, the *sikien* baseline does not appear to factor in a fixed number of *sikien*. The State Party of Togo should analyze the various documentary sources in order to establish a baseline for the state of conservation of the *sikien*, identifying them, determining their number (1724, 1801, and 2312 according to sources), and assessing their state of conservation. Without this baseline, it will not be possible to estimate the deterioration or alteration of the *sikien*, which are attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

Furthermore, the 2024 mission found that implementation of the 2022–2024 Management Plan remains very partial, with only 10 of the 34 planned actions actually completed, and no monitoring indicators are in place.

SCPK still lacks an autonomous operating budget and sufficient human and logistical resources. Dedicated resources should be allocated, qualified staff should be increased, and stable operations should be ensured for the effective implementation of conservation and management plans.

Moreover, the Management Committee, which was established by Ministerial Decree in 2004, still lacks an implementation decree and rules of procedure. This shortcoming weakens the governance of the property, which should be addressed by a formal regulatory framework.

The growing urbanization in Nadoba is also becoming a concern, particularly in the absence of a binding regulatory framework and a local urban planning service, as noted by the Reactive Monitoring mission. Although the municipality was a semi-urban center prior to the inscription of the site, it is not clear how this center is developing or to what extent this urban pressure threatens the property's OUV. It is therefore important that the State Party of Togo assess the impact of urban pressure on the previously identified attributes, considering, in particular, a growing preference for modern materials and forms to the detriment of traditional architecture, which could affect the authenticity of the property. It would be recommended to establish monitoring indicators to assess the mitigation of pressure and the impact on the attributes and OUV.

Furthermore, the Nadoba Town Hall project, whose dimensions and materials are incompatible with the traditional setting, was undertaken without prior notification to the World Heritage Centre and after the donor rejected the architectural study submitted by the State Party for this project, whose concept and form were inspired by traditional *sikien* architecture and integrated into the cultural landscape of the site. As a mitigation measure, a visual impact study should be encouraged to determine whether the *takienta* to be built in front of the town hall would be sufficient to limit visual intrusion.

It is imperative that the State Party of Togo notify any future projects that may affect the property's OUV, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and finalize the Local Urban Plan (*Plan Local d'Urbanisme* - PLU) for Kéran 3 in order to effectively regulate architectural transformations in the area and incorporate the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. Similarly, specifications will need to be drawn up for the typologies, architectural forms and building materials that may be used in a way that is compatible with the property, its architecture and its OUV. In addition to "Letter No. 0147/MCTL/CAB/SG/DPPCT of 20 March 2007, relative to respect for architecture and urban planning at the Koutammakou site", the adoption of more restrictive legislation to regulate interventions at the Koutammakou site and prohibit any unauthorized projects is highly recommended.

A feasibility study for the Koutammakou site enhancement project was prepared and reviewed by ICOMOS, but this study does not include OUV as a structuring element and proposes an urban development project whose forms, design and materials are incompatible and would likely affect the authenticity of the property.

In Benin, since the property was extended, several measures have been taken. A detailed map of the cultural landscape, including the *sikien*, groves and terraces, has been drawn up. Training in construction techniques has been provided to the community, and an original community dynamic has been established, fostering the transmission of traditional skills. These initiatives are good practices that should be strengthened and sustained, in particular through regular support for training, documentation, and promotion of traditional knowledge.

An inventory of the *sikien* under deterioration has identified ten priority units for rehabilitation. These rehabilitations must be thoroughly documented and carried out in strict accordance with traditional materials and forms, along with appropriate technical monitoring. At the same time, municipal by-laws aimed at regulating modern construction are being drafted. These texts should be finalized and implemented quickly to complement national instruments and ensure local regulatory consistency.

Continuous deforestation, unregulated logging and the scarcity of building materials are causes for concern and may have a longer-term impact on the viability of traditional architecture and associated practices, thereby threatening the property's OUV.

Finally, the joint meeting held in Boukoumbé in August 2024 between the two States Parties is a step forward in setting up the planned transnational management body. However, this body is not yet operational, and no binational management plan has been developed to date. It is essential that the two States Parties formalize the setting up of this body, provide it with operational resources, and develop, as soon as possible, a joint management plan incorporating shared coordination, monitoring, and assessment mechanisms.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.152

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2.
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **43 COM 7B.112**, **44 COM 7B.122**, **45 COM 7B.133** and **45 COM 8B.7**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019) and at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions, respectively,
- 3. <u>Notes with satisfaction</u> the efforts made by the States Parties of Togo and Benin in the conservation of the transboundary property of Koutammakou, the Land of the Batammariba, in particular the actions undertaken to restore the sikien, pass on traditional skills, mobilize and train communities, reforest and develop detailed mapping

- of the Benin part, and <u>encourages</u> their long-term consolidation and harmonization through transboundary initiatives;
- 4. <u>Commends</u> the initiatives undertaken by the State Party of Togo, in particular the restoration of 42 sikien in 2024, the training of young craftsmen, community awareness-raising, and the documentation of activities at the village level, and <u>encourages</u> their continuation on a regular basis, ensuring that they are thoroughly and systematically documented:
- 5. <u>Notes</u> the discrepancies in the data on the number of sikien inventoried and <u>urges</u> the State Party of Togo to conduct a thorough analysis of available sources in order to determine an accurate and consolidated reference number for the inventory of sikien, and to assess the state of conservation of the identified attributes of the property in accordance with the requirements for monitoring the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
- 6. Also notes that the 2022-2024 Management Plan has come to an end and that its implementation rate has been limited, and reiterates its request to the State Party of Togo to provide Koutammakou Conservation and Promotion Service (Service de Conservation et de Promotion du Koutammakou SCPK) with adequate human, technical and financial resources, including an autonomous operating budget, to ensure effective management of the property;
- 7. <u>Notes with concern</u> that the Management Committee for the property, established by Ministerial Decree No./MC/CAB of March 2004, still lacks an implementing decree and rules of procedure, and <u>strongly encourages</u> the State Party of Togo to adopt these instruments without delay to ensure a clear governance framework in line with the requirements of the Convention;
- 8. <u>Expresses its concern</u> about urban expansion in Nadoba and the lack of assessment of its impact on the property's OUV, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party of Togo to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, including the development of indicators to monitor the potential effects of this pressure on the attributes of the property;
- 9. <u>Notes with regret</u> that the construction of the Nadoba Town Hall was undertaken without prior notification to the World Heritage Centre and that the concept and form of the building, inspired by traditional sikien architecture and integrating the cultural landscape of the site, initially submitted by the State Party of Togo to the donors, have been rejected, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to submit a visual impact study, including an analysis of the planned mitigation measures, namely the construction of a takienta in front of the building, and to notify any future projects that may have an impact on the property's OUV, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 10. <u>Invites</u> the State Party of Togo to finalize and implement the Local Urban Plan (Plan Local d'Urbanisme PLU) for Kéran 3, incorporating the provisions of the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, to develop specifications for the typologies, architectural forms and materials that may be used in a way that is compatible with the property and its OUV, and <u>recommends</u> the adoption of more restrictive regulations to regulate interventions at the Koutammakou site and prohibit any unauthorized projects, in addition to Letter No. 0147/MCTL/CAB/SG/DPPCT of 20 March 2007 relative to respect for architecture and urban planning at the site;
- 11. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party of Benin to finalize and implement the municipal decrees currently being drafted to regulate modern construction, in addition to the national

protection framework, and to develop specifications defining the types, materials, and construction techniques compatible with the property's OUV, ensuring consistency with the specifications developed for Togo, in order to guarantee harmonized and coherent management of the transboundary property;

- 12. <u>Also recommends</u> that the State Party of Togo revise the 2024 feasibility study for the Koutammakou site enhancement project to ensure that it is based on the property's OUV, in order to guarantee that any proposal is fully compatible with its authenticity and integrity;
- 13. <u>Welcomes</u> the identification of ten sikien under deterioration in Benin and the announced rehabilitation projects, while stressing the need to ensure respect for traditional techniques, with thorough technical monitoring and adequate documentation;
- 14. <u>Also welcomes</u> the joint meeting held in Boukoumbé in August 2024 between the two States Parties with a view to setting up the transnational property management body, and <u>urges</u> that this body be formalized, adequately resourced, and that a transnational management plan be developed and adopted as soon as possible, in accordance with Decision **45 COM 8B.7**;
- 15. <u>Finally requests</u> the two States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 49th session.

# 154. Lower Valley of the Omo (Ethiopia)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1980

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/documents/</a>

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1996-2015) Total amount approved: USD 17,018

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: 400,000 euros from the European Union (project launched in 2016)

#### Previous monitoring missions

April 2015: Joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Erosion and siltation/ deposition
- Development projects
- Housing
- Industrial areas
- Land conversion
- Absence of established boundary

#### Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/

# Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/17/documents/</a> and reports on the progress made on several issues requested by the World Heritage Committee at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023):

- The efforts initiated in 2014 to clarify the property's boundaries had led to the submission, in 2022, of a general location map developed with the support of a European Union-funded project in partnership with UNESCO. The map was of an insufficient scale, lacked supporting evidence from archaeological surveys, and did not include related protection and management proposals;
- The State Party is working on creating large-scale maps of the property to support effective protection and management. This work is undertaken by the Ethiopian Space Science and Geospatial Institute, a government organisation responsible for cadastre registration;
- A brief revised version of the 2017 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) within the State Party's report provides additional information as requested by the Committee and concludes that the Kuraz Sugar Development Project (KSDP), as so far developed at Kuraz I, II and III, has not caused significant harm to the four component parts of the property that are between 100 and 180 km away, and are not in historically or archaeologically sensitive areas;
- Kuraz V, which is currently on hold, is the closest to the property at around 50 km away from of
  the Kibish formation component and its development might impact on fossil or archaeological
  deposits and could have an impact on the property as irrigation water runoff of the sugarcane
  plantation's agrochemicals might permeate fossiliferous strata;
- The Steering Committee does not meet on a regular basis to review and monitor the project's overall plans and implementation, and communication arrangements have been inactive;
- The State Party of Ethiopia also intends to continue seeking dialogue with the State Party of Kenya regarding the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) execution for assessing the potential impacts of the Kuraz project, and particularly its Gibe III dam, on Lake Turkana.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Establishing an explicitly defined boundary and buffer zone of the property remains a fundamental and urgent issue to be further solved. The State Party submitted a general location map of the property in 2022 under the support of a European Union-funded project, whereas larger maps with precise data and evidence of relevant surveys are still in need to better define areas of potential archaeological importance.

Maps of accurate data based on comprehensive archaeological surveys are crucial for the reliability and effectiveness of the Management Plan. It is therefore appreciated that the State Party has engaged the Ethiopian Space Science and Geo-spatial Institute in collecting on-site data and processing the digital information, and it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit the maps as soon as they are finalized, noting that this submission should occur prior to the implementation of any development activities that could impact the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

The submission of a revised version of the 2017 HIA by the State Party is welcomed, as are the proposed recommendations that it includes, even though the full data upon which it is based has not been provided. It indicates that there is no direct impact on the property from the first three parts of the overall KSDP (Kuraz I, II and III), located between 100 and 180 km away and on land which is not historically or archaeologically sensitive. It is however acknowledged that overall KSDP would have irreversible and long-lasting consequences on part of the setting of the property. In that context, it would also be advisable for the Steering Committee to ensure regular meetings in order to review and monitor more efficiently the project's overall plans and implementation.

The HIA report also indicates that the site of Kuraz V, which is closest to the property and where development is currently halted, is a linear extension of the Kibish Formation (one of four fossiliferous parts of the property), and its construction activities could impact on significant paleoanthropological material which appears not to have been fully explored.

The HIA's recommendations are welcome in relation to the sensitivity of the land on which Kuraz V is planned, the need to more clearly define the scope of fossil bearing areas and how they relate to those within the boundaries, as suggested by the Committee in 2014, and as recommended by the first HIA in

2017, and the need for an active Steering Committee that monitors the project's overall plans and implementation, and takes on the duty of project screening for each and every intervention through impact assessments.

There has been no further update regarding the Management Plan of the property, after the feedback received from the Advisory Bodies in November 2019. Therefore, it is not clear whether the Plan has been revised or implemented.

Regarding the SEA process for assessing the potential impact of the Gibe III dam and the Kuraz project on the Lake Turkana basin, it is also noted with regret that little progress has been reported since the previous Committee session. For this purpose, it is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party of Ethiopia to pursue the dialogue with the State Party of Kenya through the established mechanism of the Joint Technical Experts Panel (JTEP).

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.154

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **44 COM 7B.4**, and **45 COM 7B.124** adopted at its extended 44th (Fuzhou/Online, 2021) and extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> submission of a revised version of the 2017 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) by the State Party and the proposed recommendations it includes, even though the full data upon which it is based has not been provided, <u>acknowledges</u> the conclusion of the HIA that there is no direct impact on the property from the first three parts of the overall Kuraz Sugar Development Project (KSDP) that is Kuraz I, II and III, as they are between 100 and 175 kilometres distance from the property, and are on land which is not historically or archaeologically sensitive; and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to continue the dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies on the implementation of its recommendations following its revision;
- 4. <u>Notes</u> that the HIA also considers that the site of Kuraz V, where development is currently halted, lies in an area of paleoanthropological importance that has a linear link with the Kibish Formation; and that there is need to more clearly define the scope of fossil bearing areas and how they relate to those within the boundaries, as suggested by the Committee in 2014, and as recommended by the first HIA in 2017;
- 5. <u>Expresses concern</u> that the HIA also acknowledges that the overall KSDP would have irreversible and long-lasting consequences on part of the setting of the property;
- 6. Notes with appreciation the ongoing work to develop large-scale maps of the Lower Valley of the Omo, reiterates the importance of an assessment of fossil-bearing sediments in the setting of the property to better define areas of potential archaeological importance and how they relate to those within the property, and requests the State Party to submit these maps for review by the Advisory Bodies as soon as they are finalized, together with evidence from surveys upon which they are based and related protection and management proposals;
- 7. <u>Commends</u> the State Party for revising the HIA but <u>notes</u> a discrepancy in the information and the lack of detailed evidence to substantiate the report; and <u>requests</u> the State Party to supplement the information provided in the revised HIA with details of prior archaeological and paleontological research, the desktop study, field survey and consulting sessions that underpinned its conclusions;

- 8. Requests the State Party to clarify the information regarding the distance between the Kuraz V project and the property's component and provide details of relevant survey and research regarding possible impact during the Kuraz V's building phase in Nyangatom Woreda, particularly from earthworks and waste water discharges from the sugarcane plantations, that could disturb and pollute subterranean deposit containing possible fossil remains, and submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies details of proposed measures for impact mitigation to address these risks during the building and operating phases of Kuraz V;
- 9. <u>Regrets</u> that the revised Management Plan that integrates feedback provided by the Advisory Bodies in 2019 has not been received for review and <u>requests</u> the State Party to submit the updated Management Plan for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies; and to reactivate the Steering Committee to monitor the project's overall plans, implementation and through impact assessments as recommended in the HIA:
- 10. Notes the State Party's intention to continue its dialogue with the State Party of Kenya on the execution of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to evaluate the potential impacts of the Gibe III dam and KSDP on the Lake Turkana basin, as requested by the Committee since 2012, and encourages the State Party to pursue this dialogue through the established mechanism of Joint Technical Experts Panel (JTEP) for this purpose;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 157. Thimlich Ohinga Archaeological Site (Kenya)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2018

Criteria (iii)(iv)(v)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1450/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 2010-2023) Total amount approved: USD 67,190

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1450/assistance/

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

N/A

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Need to expand the property boundary at the south-eastern end of the property
- Lack of exact demarcation of the extended buffer zone
- · Lack of an indicator-based monitoring system

#### Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1450/

#### Current conservation issues

The State Party did not submit the state of conservation report on time, as the World Heritage Committee requested at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).

The analysis below is therefore largely based on the final report submitted by the State Party in July 2024 on the implementation of Emergency International Assistance granted on 20 September 2023 by the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee for the "Reconstruction and stabilization of sections of Thimlich Ohinga dry stone walls" for an amount of USD 15,800.

The International Assistance Request was submitted following the unusually heavy rainfall in 2023, which could also be attributed to the effects of climate change. The objective of the request was to conduct a technical assessment of the condition of the affected fortifications, rebuild the collapsed sections of the walls and stabilise the weak sections to withstand acute and varied weather conditions in the future.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party did not provide a timely report on the state of conservation of the property. This delay in reporting by the State Party makes it difficult for the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to provide in-depth analysis to the World Heritage Committee, which would allow it to monitor the state of conservation of the property effectively.

It is noted that, through the Emergency International Assistance, the State Party took urgent action to reconstruct the fallen sections of the site's walls and stabilise their weak parts. It is worth noting that these reconstructions were carried out with the strong engagement of the local communities, particularly the youth and elders. Indeed, the involvement of elders (stone-laying masons) and the participation of the youth in such reconstruction processes is the best approach in transmitting the traditional skills and know-how of traditional construction techniques, and the State Party is to be encouraged to pursue such efforts.

The communities involved in the project, including local elders, women groups, youth, and herbalists, acknowledged its benefits, also owed to the fact that the project aimed to contribute to improving the social-economic development of the local residents through job creation, skills development and facilitating interactions among community members. The Committee may encourage the State Party to upscale the project and promote the exchanges of experience with other sites within the country.

It is, however, also noted with concern that the property remains threatened by the lack of availability of traditional materials.

It is recommended that the Committee express its regret that the report on the state of conservation of the property was not provided in a timely manner to allow for its analysis and requests the State Party to provide further information on the status of the project, particularly its social and economic impact, following the implementation of urgent actions through the Emergency Assistance.

The Committee may wish to encourage that the State Party continue the process to develop monitoring indicators, if deemed useful by the State Party, through technical assistance of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and to extend the property and buffer zone boundaries, as requested at the time of the inscription of the property (Decision **42 COM 8B.14**) and submit a boundary modification request in accordance with paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.157

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **42 COM 8B.14** and **45 COM 7B.127**, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018) and extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023) respectively,

- 3. <u>Regrets</u> that the State Party has not submitted in a timely manner a report on the state of conservation of the property, as requested by the Committee;
- 4. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the urgent actions undertaken through Emergency International Assistance to reconstruct the fallen sections of the walls of the site and to stabilise their weak parts;
- 5. <u>Welcomes</u> the approach used for these emergency actions to fully engage local communities, especially the youth, in the reconstruction process through consultative meetings and the involvement of elders in transferring the traditional skills and know-how on traditional construction techniques to the youth living around the property, and encourages the State Party to further develop this approach;
- 6. <u>Notes with concern</u> the challenges related to the lack of availability of local materials and the preference for modern materials, which may be potential challenges to the sustainable conservation of the site;
- 7. <u>Also encourages</u> the State Party to continue to pursue the extension to the property boundary at its south-eastern end near the entrance to Koketch, and the extension and demarcation of the buffer zone, and submit a boundary modification request in accordance with paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 8. <u>Recalls</u> its invitation to the State Party to further develop the selection of indicators and reporting methodology utilised in the monitoring system for the property, making use if required, of technical assistance provided by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies:
- 9. <u>Calls</u> for increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through International Assistance, to further continue with the reconstruction and stabilisation work with the involvement of local communities and stakeholders to conserve the site and improve the social, economic development of the local residents in job creation and skills development;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.

## 161. Memorial sites of the Genocide: Nyamata, Murambi, Gisozi and Bisesero (Rwanda)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2023

Criteria (vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/documents/</a>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 2014-2024) Total amount approved: USD 59,604

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/assistance/

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

N/A

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Factors identified at the time of inscription of the property:

- Management plan to be updated
- Need for documenting all key attributes for future conservation of the property

<u>Illustrative material</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/</a>

## Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1586/documents/</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- The key attributes for the component parts of Gisozi and Bisesero have been set out to inform conservation and management. The attributes include memorial buildings, victims' bodies, mass graves, weapons such as spears and machetes, personal belongings, and memorial testimonies;
- The key attributes for all four component sites have yet to be fully defined and mapped. This work will be undertaken in line with the Management Plan;
- A workshop was held in January 2025 on the conservation and management of all of the component sites;
- The tangible aspects of the property have been classified as national cultural heritage by Ministerial Order No. 001/MINUBUMWE/24 of 08/02/2024, which was submitted with the state of conservation report;
- The updated 2024-2028 Management Plan for the property was also submitted with the report.
  This aims to coordinate all stakeholders' actors involved in the management and conservation of
  the property including institutions responsible for management, genocide survivors, genocide
  survivors' associations, local population, development partners, researchers and students;
- The Management Plan does not yet include an interpretive strategy plan. Work on this was started in two workshops supported by the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) and the International Centre for Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (WHIPIC), in October and November 2024. Once developed, the plan will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- Integrating Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) into the planning framework is being considered as part of the Management Plan;
- A monitoring system for the key attributes is being developed in line with the Management Plan.

The State Party's report also mentions the development of a Minor Boundary Modification that will include a slight extension to the Nyamata component site in order to incorporate 'new attributes' and proposals for development within the site of Murambi and immediately outside the site of Nyamata.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The work undertaken on the updated Management Plan and the formal designation of the property under national law are to be welcomed. The draft Management Plan will be the subject of a Technical Review by ICOMOS.

At the time of inscription, the two component sites of Gisozi and Bisesero were nominated mainly for memorials constructed in the aftermath of the Genocide. The ICOMOS evaluation noted that while narratives associated with the massacres that occurred at these sites were included in the provided documentation, potential attributes had not been clearly described or mapped. To understand how these two sites contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) as sites of memory, the Committee requested for attributes to be clearly defined as a basis for conservation and management.

The State Party's report provides a table of attributes for these two component sites. They include the memorial buildings, personal belongings of the victims, weapons such as spears and machetes, victims' bodies, mass graves (15 closed graves in Bisesero and three closed graves and one open grave in Gisozi), gardens of remembrance, and memorial testimonies associated with the sites. The sites are inscribed as physical places within which are physical attributes. These don't include movable objects which, however, are important in contributing to a clear understanding of the OUV. Not all physical aspects contribute to the OUV. The memorial and gardens of remembrance give these two sites prominence and signify their importance but cannot be seen as attributes of the OUV.

Therefore, it is necessary that the table of attributes be revised to differentiate between the mass graves with their associated memories as key attributes and other aspects of the sites that contribute to understanding and memorialisation. More details should be provided on the location of the graves, within which lie the victims, and on the amount of space that is necessary to allow for a full understanding of the associations that these sites hold. Clarity should also be requested on the open grave at Bisesero because at the time of inscription, additional information provided clarified that there would be no new burials or graves in the serial nominated property.

The State Party indicates that further work is needed to define the attributes at the other two component sites, Murambi and Nyamata. For these, the buildings are clearly attributes as places where massacres occurred and have been minimally changed since. The movable objects and remains such as bodies, skulls and clothing contribute to an understanding of the sites rather than being attributes.

The State Party indicates that it does not have the capacity to conserve large numbers of bodies on display in the sites. It has introduced a new policy that will allow for only a few bodies to remain on display. This is to be welcomed as the display of human remains is part of a much broader debate on the right to a decent burial.

Proposals for a slight extension of the Nyamata sites to include potential new attributes are noted and should be submitted for review, as should details of a proposed Garden of Remembrance and craft shop at Murambi and new buildings on land adjoining the Nyamata site, along with HIAs that take into account how any utilitarian new construction might interact adversely with the memorial nature of the sites, as such uses might need to be confined to areas outside the boundaries.

## **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.161**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. Recalling Decision 46 COM 8B.30, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
- 3. <u>Welcomes progress</u> with the development of a draft updated Management Plan and the designation of the property under National Law and <u>notes</u> that the Plan will be the subject of a Technical Review by ICOMOS;
- 4. <u>Further welcomes</u> the work undertaken on defining the attributes for the Gisozi and Bisesero sites, as requested by the Committee, as these go beyond the physical places associated with massacres to include movable objects and remains such as victims' bodies, personal belongings and weapons, as well as memorials built after the massacre, none of which are attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), requests the State Party to refine and map the mass graves as key attributes of these two sites along with the defined attributes of the other two sites, and to submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS;
- 5. <u>Further notes</u> that there is an open grave at the Bisesero site and <u>requests</u> the State Party to clarify its purposes and/or uses as, at the time of inscription, additional information from the State Party clarified that there would be no new burials or graves in the serial nominated property;

- 6. <u>Also welcomes</u> the new policy that will allow for only a few bodies to remain on display in order to optimise limited resources, and <u>strongly supports</u> the State Party in considering decent burials for all the victims;
- 7. Also notes that new types of media will be used to evoke the horrors of the massacre and that an interpretive strategy plan is being developed on the basis of two workshops, supported by the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) and the International Centre for Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (WHIPIC), held in October and November 2024; and that this draft strategy will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre to be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies;
- 8. Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies the proposed slight extension of the Nyamata sites to include potential new attributes for review before a Minor Boundary Modification is submitted, the proposed Garden of Remembrance and craft shop at Murambi, as well as any proposals for new buildings on land adjoining the Nyamata site, together with appropriate Heritage Impact Assessments that take into account how any utilitarian new construction might interact adversely on the memorial nature of the sites;
- 9. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.

## 162. Island of Saint-Louis (Senegal)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2000

Criteria (ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/956/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1997-2007) Total amount approved: USD 11,500

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/956/assistance/

# UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 192,697 from the France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement

# Previous monitoring missions

March-April 2004: Joint World Heritage Centre/France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement mission; April 2006: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM mission; 2007: France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement mission; February 2009: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission with participation of an expert from the France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement; May 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission with the participation of an expert from the European Space Agency (ESA)

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of a site manager (Issue resolved)
- Lack of monitoring and control mechanism
- Lack of a conservation and management plan (existence of a Safeguarding and Enhancement Plan serving as a Conservation and Management Plan)

- New constructions, architectural modifications and urban projects affecting authenticity and integrity
- Inappropriate housing restoration
- Environmental disorder due to the modification of the mouth of the Senegal River
- Extremely poor state of conservation of numerous derelict buildings endangering occupants

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/956/

#### Current conservation issues

On 2 November 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at the following address: <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/956/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/956/documents/</a>, as well as annexes to the report, providing information on developments and measures implemented:

- Construction, renovation, modification and demolition projects are studied, submitted for authorisation and checked for compliance by various municipal and departmental bodies. A committee has been set up to oversee the restoration of buildings of great architectural interest, and in the event of demolition, to ensure compliance with the Safeguarding and Valorisation Plan (PSMV). Neighbourhood councils also play an alert role. A monitoring and control mechanism is therefore put in place to avoid non-conforming restorations affecting the authenticity and integrity of the item. However, from 2022 to 2024, it operated without physically meeting;
- The Maison du Patrimoine (MdP), the central body responsible for implementing heritage policy, is currently being set up. To this end, a workshop on the operation of the MoP is planned for 2025, and work on refurbishing the building that is to house it has been launched for 2023;
- Work to renovate and extend the Grand Mosque has been completed, and its built-up area has increased from 340m² to 1,410m²;
- A 2,175m coastal protection structure has been built. A study has been carried out into the design and operation of an environmental monitoring and modelling system for the Saint-Louis coastal zone;
- Work is underway on Place Baya Ndar, formerly Place Faidherbe (95%), and Avenue Jean Mermoz;
- The Saint-Louis Tourism Development Programme (PDT), extended to the end of December 2026, is continuing with the renovation of 16 private architectural units and the extension of 20 units;
- The State Party sent a letter dated 11 December 2024 inviting a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission to the property.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party has taken major steps to restore the heritage and landscape of Saint-Louis. However, the report submitted by the State Party highlights several problems, and some of the Committee's recommendations remain unanswered.

The State Party has not provided a heritage impact assessment (HIA) on the possible weakening of the quays following the development of the former Place Faidherbe, as recommended by the Committee at its extended 45th session. However, the quay inspection report submitted by the State Party highlights the advanced state of disrepair of the Roume, Jay and Pointe Sud quays. In light of this report, it is essential to implement urgent rehabilitation measures.

Despite the efforts already made, the scale of the need to renovate the private housing stock and its continuing deterioration between 2017 and 2021 mean that it is not only necessary to continue and accelerate the actions undertaken as part of the PDT, but also to do more to mobilise property owners so that they become actively involved and invest in renovating their properties.

Although a construction monitoring and control system has been implemented, the project to refurbish the Municipal Technical Services building has been called into question as to whether it complies with the PSMV regulations. It is essential that the monitoring and control mechanism in place guarantees strict compliance with the PSMV for all current (bringing into compliance) and future construction.

In this respect, it is worth noting that in February 2025 a seminar to raise awareness of the PSMV was organised by the association "Les Amis du Patrimoine", following which the government announced that measures would be stepped up, particularly in terms of monitoring construction sites and issuing construction permits. In addition, it was decided to set up a college to monitor the protection and safeguarding of the property by local stakeholders from Saint-Louis, underlining the importance of civil society, particularly in the governance of the property and the promotion of its heritage. However, the State Party has not provided information concerning progress in the development of the first Management and Conservation Plan for the property, and the Committee may again encourage the submission of an international assistance request for this purpose.

With regard to regular monitoring of coastal protection in Saint-Louis, it is essential to implement the recommendations of the study on the design and implementation of an environmental monitoring and modelling system for the Saint-Louis coastal zone, in particular the first stage (year 1), which consists of validating the proposed strategy and setting up the Project Coordination Unit.

The SINDAR database, set up in 2004, requires data management software to be updated. It is recommended that they be updated, taking care to recover all the data already produced, and to train operators within permanent structures such as the municipality or universities.

The information on the Great Mosque gives a brief overview of the work carried out, the programme, dimensions, materials and participants. However, it is regrettable that this work was completed without more detailed information (plans, sections, analysis of compliance with the PSMV, etc.) being submitted, which would have enabled an analysis of its impact on the authenticity of the property to be carried out prior to the implementation of this project, which was finally inaugurated in January 2024. Given the scope of this work, the State Party is reminded of the importance of keeping the Committee informed of its intentions to undertake or authorise major restorations or new constructions in an area protected by the Convention in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. It was also noted that detailed information on the island's emblematic squares undergoing rehabilitation had not been submitted, despite being requested by the Committee.

Regional consultation workshops on the Grande Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) gas project were held in October 2024. They brought together regional and departmental institutions and local community players. However, no detailed information has been provided on the consultations with BP Petroleum or on the commitments made by the ministry responsible for the environment, or on the guarantees concerning the consideration of ecological and heritage issues, as previously requested by the Committee. In this respect, it would also be advisable to resume and continue, in cooperation with BP Petroleum, the consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, initiated in January 2021, in particular for the sustainable monitoring of the possible economic, social and environmental impacts of this project.

The State Party has undertaken major work on the property and has set up a concerted system for monitoring rehabilitation and reconstruction, which has made it possible to resolve or remedy a number of problems. However, certain challenges remain and new issues are emerging. In the light of the aforementioned observations, it would appear that the property is still under serious threat, and the management and monitoring systems need to be further strengthened in order to guarantee compliance with the PSMV. The Committee may wish to thank the State Party for inviting the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission, which has been requested since 2021.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.162

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **43 COM 7B.110**, **44 COM 7B.120**, and **45 COM 7B.131**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019), its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021), and its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023) respectively;

- 3. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to continue its efforts to rehabilitate private built heritage, in particular by encouraging owners to become more involved and to invest in the rehabilitation of their property
- 4. Notes with appreciation the results of the seminar to raise awareness of the Safeguarding and Valorisation Plan (PSMV) organised by the Association "Les Amis du Patrimoine" in February 2025, in particular the announcement by the State services to strengthen measures for monitoring construction sites and procedures for issuing construction permits, and the setting up of a monitoring committee by local stakeholders in Saint Louis for the protection and safeguarding of the property, requests the State Party to speed up the process of drawing up the first Management and Conservation Plan for the property, and reminds it of the opportunity to submit a request for international assistance for this purpose by 31 October 2025 at the latest;;
- 5. <u>Also encourages</u> the State Party to update the SINDAR database software and to train staff to manage it;
- 6. <u>Encourages further</u> the State Party to implement the recommendations of the study on the design and implementation of an environmental monitoring and modelling system for the Saint-Louis coastal zone:
- 7. <u>Recommends</u> the precise definition and implementation of priority rehabilitation work on the Roume, Jay and Pointe Sud quays;
- 8. <u>Notes with regret</u> that the extension works to the Great Mosque were completed without more detailed information being submitted in advance of the project, which would have enabled a more in-depth analysis of its impact on the authenticity of the property;
- 9. <u>Reminds</u> the State Party of the need to inform the Committee of its intentions to undertake or authorise, in an area protected by the Convention, major restorations or new constructions in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and reiterates its request to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre detailed information on the emblematic squares of the island under rehabilitation;
- 10. <u>Considering</u> the major stake represented by the Grande Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) gas project, <u>also requests</u> the State Party to:
  - a) To resume and continue, in cooperation with BP Petroleum, the consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, undertaken in January 2021, particularly for the sustainable monitoring of the possible economic, social and environmental impacts of this project;
  - b) Provide more information on the commitments made by the Ministry responsible for the environment and assurances that ecological and heritage issues are taken into account;
  - c) Continue to raise awareness and provide information to all government bodies involved in heritage prerogatives to protect the property and which could be impacted by this project;
- 11. <u>Thanks</u> the State Party for inviting the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM reactive monitoring mission, requested by the Committee at its extended 44th and 45th sessions, to assess the general state of conservation and progress made in implementing the recommendations of the 2017 mission, and <u>requests</u> that this mission be carried out as soon as possible;

12. <u>Finally Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 163. Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa (South Africa)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1999

Criteria (iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915/assistance/</a>

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

N/A

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground water pollution
- Mining
- Surface water pollution
- Water (rain/water table)
- Climate change and severe weather events
- · Acid mine drainage
- Integrated Management plan to be finalized (resolved)
- Interpretative and visitation facilities in case of concern re. additional material requested

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915/

# Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <a href="http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915/documents">http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/915/documents</a>, which reports on the following:

- Efforts are ongoing to monitor the risk reductions along with prevention interventions within the property, including submission of an International Assistance request in 2024 to develop a risk preparedness strategy for the Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa;
- The Integrated Management Plans (IMPs) and the Integrated Management Plan Framework (IMPF) are being implemented, and the State Party has annexed the monitoring report of the IMPF implementation, also highlighting the challenges faced in addressing its strategic objectives, notably budget constraints and limited capacity for stakeholder engagement;
- The terms of reference and memorandum of agreement for the establishment of the Joint Management Committee are under finalization;
- The development of the Western Basin Treatment Long term solution (LTS) has been halted with the report prepared by the specialist committee, including recommendations for the most appropriate course of action in lieu of the Long-Term Solution still under review and awaiting approval;

- The implementation of the Short-Term Solution (STS) has reportedly resulted in the improved discharge effluent in the basin, with neutral pH values upstream of the Hippo Dam and sub-acidic pH values downstream:
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mogale Local Municipality (MCLM) is planned to be established to formalize collaborative efforts with the Fossil Hominid Sites of Sterkfontein, Swartkrans, Kromdraai and Environs (FHSSSKE), focusing on heritage conservation, environmental preservation, sustainable tourism, and socio-economic development within the area:
- Severe water pollution and deterioration of the surface water quality downstream from the Percy Stewart Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) was observed, specifically in the Blougatspruit and Bloubankspruit, with plans to address the operational efficiency of the Percy Stewart Waste-Water Treatment Works and initiatives to address and monitor the bacteriological contamination of the surface water:
- There is an ongoing restoration of the Percy Stewart WWTW intended to reach full operational capacity in June 2025, with measures such as stopped spillage and cleaning of the pipes already undertaken, including bioremediation to assess the improvements of the facility;
- The Heritage Management plan, the updated Masterplan and a report highlighting the concept and approach of the proposed renovation of the old mine buildings located in the Taung skull component of the property have been annexed to the report.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The efforts by the State Party, particularly in maintaining consistent monitoring of risk reduction measures, including the water quality monitoring and submission of an International Assistance request for a risk preparedness strategy for the Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa are welcomed. The State Party is encouraged to continue with these efforts and ensure that this strategy aligns with existing management frameworks and ongoing conservation initiatives to support a cohesive approach to risk management in the property.

The submission of the monitoring report for the implementation of the Integrated Management Plan Framework (IMPF) is noted, along with the challenges in addressing its strategic objectives, notably budget constraints and limited capacity for stakeholder engagement. The State Party should be encouraged to mobilize resources to ensure implementation, including through International Assistance and its technical and financial partners, recalling the Committee's request in Decision **45 COM 7B.132**.

The Short-Term Solution (STS) has reportedly improved effluent quality, but downstream water quality issues persist, especially sub-acidic pH levels. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to continue monitoring treated mine water quality and reporting on the observations in the downstream area.

Whilst it is noted that the specialist committee's recommendations on an appropriate course of action in lieu of the Long-Term Solution (LTS) for acid mine drainage contamination are pending approval, it is crucial that the State Party work closely with the specialist committee to pursue a suitable and permanent LTS. The report of the specialist committee and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the selected approach should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for technical review by ICOMOS as soon as possible.

Bacteriological contamination from the Percy Stewart Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) continues to be of major concern, with high *Escherichia coli* levels posing severe environmental and health risks. Given the positioning of the Blougatspruit as a tributary of the Bloubankspruit that flows through the property, the contamination could potentially impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. It is crucial that the State Party conduct detailed studies and monitoring of water quality, focusing on downstream surface water bodies.

The State Party's continued commitment to formalizing a MoU with the Mogale City Local Municipality is favourably noted as it aims to comprehensively address heritage conservation, environmental preservation, sustainable tourism, and socio-economic development. It is worth recalling, however, the Committee's previous Decision **45 COM 7B.132** requesting that this MoU address in particular the Percy Stewart WWTW's functioning to reduce the instances of bacteriological contamination in the surface waters of the FHSSSKE component.

The ongoing rehabilitation of the Percy Stewart WWTW, initiated by the Local Municipality, is welcomed. As the fully operational capacity of the Percy Stewart WWTW is expected by mid-2025, continuous monitoring and reporting on bioremediation and infrastructure upgrades will be essential. The State Party should also submit detailed information on the intervention scope to ensure avoiding any adverse impacts on the OUV of the property.

The proposal for adaptive reuse of the old mine buildings in the Taung skull component, as outlined in the submitted masterplan, preliminary design report, and heritage management plan, is acknowledged. Noting that substantial groundwork has begun, the emphasis on minimal alteration, compatible materials, and respect for original design features is noted. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to temporarily halt rehabilitation efforts pending ICOMOS' technical review of the submitted documentation.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.163**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.132**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the efforts made by the State Party in monitoring of risk reduction measures of the property, including through the water quality monitoring information provided and the submission of an International Assistance request for the development of a risk preparedness strategy for the Fossil Hominid Sites of Sterkfontein, Swartkrans, Kromdraai and Environs (FHSSSKE), and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to ensure that the risk strategy is aligned with existing management frameworks and ongoing conservation initiatives to promote a cohesive approach to risk management at the property;
- 4. <u>Takes note</u> of the monitoring report for the implementation of the Integrated Management Plan Framework (IMPF) along with the challenges highlighted in addressing the strategic objectives set out, and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to mobilize the necessary resources needed to ensure its implementation including through international assistance request and with support from its various technical and financial partners;
- 5. <u>Notes</u> that the specialist committee recommendations of the appropriate course of action in lieu of the Long-Term Solution (LTS) of the acid mine drainage is pending approval, and <u>urges</u> the State Party to continue working in close coordination with the specialist committee to identify and pursue an appropriate and permanent LTS for the acid mine drainage and ensure that the report and the Environmental Impact Assessment of the identified approach is undertaken in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage context, to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for technical review by ICOMOS prior to implementation:
- 6. <u>Also welcomes</u> the initiatives of the Short-Term Solution (STS) put in place to monitor the acid mine drainage, which have shown improvement of the effluent quality, with relative sub-acidic pH levels reported downstream, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to continue to monitor the quality of the treated mine water downstream and report on the observations made;
- 7. <u>Appreciates</u> the State Party's continued commitment to formalizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Mogale City Local Municipality to comprehensively address heritage conservation, sustainable tourism, socio-economic development, and the preservation of the natural landscape and biodiversity;

- 8. Also notes with concern the reported high level of the bacteriological contamination caused by the Percy Stewart Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW), also requests the State Party to conduct comprehensive studies and monitoring of water quality, with particular emphasis on surface water bodies downstream of the WWTW, and also reiterates its request to the State Party that the functioning of the Percy Stewart WWTW and the reduction of the instances of bacteriological contamination in the surface waters of the FHSSSKE component be addressed in the MoU to be etstablished with the Mogale City Local Municipality;
- 9. <u>Further welcomes</u> the ongoing rehabilitation of the Percy Stewart WWTW, initiated by the Local Municipality and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to ensure continuous monitoring on bioremediation progress and infrastructure upgrades and to provide the Committee with detailed information on the extent of the planned intervention, to ensure no negative potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
- 10. <u>Further notes</u> the submission of the masterplan, the infrastructure development preliminary design report and the heritage management plan of the proposed adaptive reuse of the old mine buildings located in the Taung skull component of the property and <u>requests furthermore</u> the State Party to ensure that the rehabilitation efforts take consideration of the technical reviews to be provided by ICOMOS;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

#### **ARAB STATES**

## 167. Memphis and its Necropolis – the Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur (Egypt)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (i)(iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/</a>

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1991-2007) Total amount approved: USD 81,450

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 100,000 for the Sphinx of Giza; Special Account for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Egypt; USD 310,381 for 'Memphis and Thebes Sites Management Support'; USD 45,871 from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds in Trust for strengthening national capacities for the implementation of World Heritage impact assessments; EUR 150,000 from the Government of France for Enhancing Capacities for the Protection of World Heritage Properties in Egypt (2020).

#### Previous monitoring missions

1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001: missions concerning the conservation of the site and the Cairo Ring Road project. November 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; July 2015: ICOMOS Advisory mission; March 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; January-February 2021: UNESCO Advisory mission; February 2022: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Deterioration of the monuments (issue resolved)
- Development and Urban Infrastructure projects (including Ring Road project and its archaeological effects, and the Pyramids Security Project)
- Growing number of visitors (issue resolved)
- Housing
- · Interpretative and visitation facilities
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure: Infrastructure and tourism developments
- Management System/Management Plan: Absence of a single integrated Plan of Management for the property
- Uncontrolled development of the nearby village (issue resolved)
- Underground transport infrastructure: Tunnel construction project (issue resolved)
- Urban encroachment
- First Line High-Speed Railway Project (Green Line, Alamain Ain Sokhna)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at: <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/</a>. Progress with issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- The Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the property has been prepared and will be submitted
  to the Word Heritage Centre following review and endorsement by the Supreme Committee for
  the Management of World Heritage Sites. This Plan affords high priority to identification of a buffer
  zone for the property and indicates that this would occur within the first year of the activation of
  the approved management system;
- Proposed projects within or surrounding the boundaries of Egyptian World Heritage properties require Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs), which will be submitted to the Word Heritage Centre following review by the Supreme Committee;
- HIAs and other documentation have been submitted for the 'First Line High-Speed Railway Project (Green Line, Alamain – Ain Sokhna)' and the 'Tourist Walkway Project to Link the Grand Egyptian Museum and the Pyramids Area';
- Following ICOMOS Technical Review of an initial study for the First Line High-Speed Railway Project in 2022, further documentation has been reviewed by ICOMOS in June 2024, and an amended study, will be submitted to the Word Heritage Centre;
- Reports have been provided on the 'Subsurface Imaging and Investigation by Geophysical Techniques of Ground Penetrating Radars (GPR) and Magnetic Surveys for the area of Ring Road located Underneath Dahshour – Pyramids Plateau' and the 'Pyramids Security Project';
- Regarding archaeological excavation and restoration works, details of recent discoveries and a list of restoration projects at the property during 2023-2024 have been provided;
- The Supreme Council of Antiquities continues to enhance the experience of visitors and highlight the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and the State Party report includes a list of actions to improve visitor services;
- Training programs and workshops on site management and conservation were organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in cooperation with the UNESCO Cairo Office to raise awareness and build capacity for World Heritage specialists.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The State Party has continued its focus on compliance with the requirements and processes of the World Heritage Convention and Operational Guidelines. The IMP will be critical to future conservation and management of the property and should be reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies prior to being formally adopted. It is welcomed that the State Party proposes to identify a buffer zone for the property as a priority within the first year of activating the management system under the new IMP.

The State Party has submitted extensive documentation relating to major projects with potential to affect attributes that support the OUV of the property. This material has been reviewed by ICOMOS, but there are significant issues and concerns about potential impacts on OUV. The Technical Review of the First Line High-Speed Railway Project (Green Line, Alamain – Ain Sokhna) raises important questions, including the need to clarify whether the line coincides with the former alignment, the extent of cuttings and embankments, likely impacts from visibility, noise or light, and overall mitigation strategies. On 5 May 2025, the State Party submitted an amended HIA and visual impact assessment for the project.

The new Grand Egyptian Museum is an important major initiative, that aligns strongly with the commitment of the Supreme Council of Antiquities to enhance visitor experience and highlight the OUV of the property. However, the proposed Tourist Walkway between the Museum and the Pyramids of Giza, which has been subject to Technical Review by ICOMOS, would have an unacceptable impact on the property and its cultural landscape, affecting attributes which support its OUV. The mitigation measures currently proposed would not sufficiently address these impacts, and the State Party should therefore be advised to revise the design and to re-submit an amended proposal with updated HIA before the project is completed.

Provision of the previously requested report on geophysical investigations of the Ring Road is acknowledged, but the related ICOMOS Technical Review concludes that the absence of any identified archaeological features may reflect the methodology used and highlights that additional investigations would have enabled this work to be more definitive in its understanding of potential impacts on the OUV of the property. The information submitted by the State Party regarding the Pyramids Security Project is also acknowledged, but has revealed that the project extends beyond security to interpretive lighting. The data submitted has been subject to Technical Review by ICOMOS. Further assessment of potential

impacts, such as the intrusion to underground archaeology caused by installation of buried infrastructure, visual impacts of electrical poles and a transformer station, and the effects of lighting on coloured surfaces and those with inscriptions, all warrant further understanding and consideration.

In light of the extensive set of significant infrastructure projects being implemented or proposed at the property, the State Party is encouraged to confirm its previous invitation for an Advisory mission to facilitate consultations with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS. Such a mission would contribute to provide further technical advice on projects, whether planned or under execution, in order to mitigate potential profound impacts on attributes which support the property's OUV.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.167**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.137**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. <u>Commends</u> the State Party on the continuing progress made in compliance with the requirements and processes of the World Heritage Convention and its Operational Guidelines, including the requirement for Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) for all projects within or surrounding the property, and the preparation of an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the property, and reiterates its previous request that the draft IMP be submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, prior to being adopted and implemented;
- 4. Notes that within the first year of activation of the approved management system under the IMP, the State Party proposes to identify a buffer zone for the property, and <u>also</u> <u>reiterates its previous request</u> to the State Party to further strengthen the protection and management of the property, with particular regard to its retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), by defining a buffer zone and submitting a Minor Boundary Modification request, in line with paragraphs 163-164 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 5. <u>Acknowledging</u> that an amended HIA and visual impact assessment were submitted by the State Party in May 2025 for the 'First Line High-Speed Railway Project (Green Line, Alamain Ain Sokhna)' in response to the related ICOMOS Technical Review, <u>requests</u> the State Party to not proceed with execution, pending a new ICOMOS technical review;
- 6. Also acknowledging the need for connection between the new Grand Egyptian Museum and Pyramids of Giza, the recommendation of the 2022 Reactive Monitoring mission that the area located between the Grand Egyptian Museum and the property should be kept free from any construction project, and the findings of the related ICOMOS Technical Review of the Tourist Walkway Project, considers that this project would have an unacceptable impact on the property and its cultural landscape, affecting attributes which support its OUV, since the mitigation measures currently proposed would not be sufficient to address the adverse impact, and therefore urges the State Party to revise the proposed walkway design and to re-submit an amended project proposal with updated HIA to the World Heritage Centre for further Technical Review by ICOMOS before the project is completed;
- 7. <u>Further acknowledges</u> the report on 'Subsurface Imaging and Investigation by Geophysical Techniques of Ground Penetrating Radars (GPR) and <u>also requests</u> the

State Party to address the findings of the related ICOMOS Technical Review, with respect to future geophysical investigations at the property;

- 8. <u>Welcomes</u> the additional information provided about the 'Pyramids Security Project', noting that the scope of this project has extended beyond security to include interpretive lighting, and <u>further requests</u> the State Party to implement the findings of the related ICOMOS Technical Review, including assessment of the potential impacts, such as intrusion into underground archaeology, visual consequences of new infrastructure and effects of additional coloured lighting on inscribed and coloured surfaces, and to submit the results to the World Heritage Centre for further Technical Review;
- 9. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to confirm its previous invitation for an Advisory mission, with the main purpose being to advise on current major projects, evaluate progress with implementation of previous Committee decisions, mission recommendations and Technical Review findings, and assess any additional conservation issues;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

## 168 Saint Catherine Area (Egypt)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2002

Criteria (i)(iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/954/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (1999)

Total amount approved: USD 19,500

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/954/assistance/

## UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 45,871 from the Netherlands Funds in Trust for strengthening national capacities for the implementation of World Heritage impact assessments; EUR 150,000 from the Government of France for Enhancing Capacities for the Protection of World Heritage Properties in Egypt (2020)

## Previous monitoring missions

UNESCO Advisory mission to Egypt in 2021

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Visitor management
- Impacts of tourism/ visitor/ recreation
- Management systems/ management plan

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/954/

#### Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/954/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/954/documents/</a>, providing the following information:

- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) follows international standards in excavation work, recording and documenting fixed and movable archaeological discoveries, including those undertaken in coordination with international missions. An overview of archaeological excavations undertaken between 2008-2023 is annexed to the State Party's report;
- MoTA coordinates periodic maintenance and restoration work of archaeological attributes in the property;
- The State Party, in full commitment to protecting the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Egyptian World Heritage properties, issued recommendations on the required coordination between relevant authorities before commencing any projects located within or surrounding the boundaries of World Heritage properties. The Supreme Committee for the Management of Egyptian World Heritage Sites has created separate sub-committees to review the status of the projects being proposed or/and to be implemented within or near to the boundaries of Egyptian World Heritage properties;
- A Prime Ministerial directive mandates Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) be undertaken for any project located within or surrounding the boundaries of World Heritage properties;
- An HIA for the 'Great Revelation Initiative the Land Peace' was submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by ICOMOS. The recommendations made by ICOMOS are being addressed;
- The urgent conservation needs at the Saint Catherine Monastery have been inventoried. These relate, amongst others, to water/moisture issues and timber restoration;
- Road upgrades and rainwater drainage infrastructure have been implemented, including the main road leading to Mount Moses and Wadi El Deir Road, in addition to the ongoing rehabilitation of Wadi Feiran Road to improve connectivity to Saint Catherine town. Bedouin residences have been rehabilitated and flood channels established;
- The site manager for the property attended the UNESCO/ICOMOS capacity building workshop on Strengthening World Heritage Site Management Planning Egypt;
- The State Party welcomes the request to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, noting that the time will be determined through diplomatic channels.

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The stated commitment by the State Party to protect the OUV of the World Heritage properties located on its territory is welcome and important, in the context of the large-scale tourism and infrastructure development projects that may negatively affect these properties. The Prime Ministerial directive on HIAs is both welcome and necessary.

Among the current major initiatives is the 'Great Revelation Initiative – the Land Peace' project, which includes the construction of large-scale tourism facilities and other infrastructure within the boundaries of property. The State Party has made progress in assessing this project through an HIA. The extent to which hotels have already been partially constructed is evidenced by the photographic documentation provided in the HIA. The HIA reports that the aim of the project is not only to stimulate touristic and spiritual visitation of the property, but also to increase the population of Saint Catherine Area (the property) to 12,000 residents. It should be noted that the property includes in its boundaries the town of Saint Catherine. In its review of the project, ICOMOS notes that: "it is clear that the RSOUV (Retrospective Statement of OUV) and the justification of the application of Criteria (i), (iii) and (iv) relies to a great extent on the relationship of the key attributes: the Monastery, its rugged natural environment and their remoteness." The extent to which the key attribute of 'remoteness' can be maintained in the context of the foreseen developments in the context of this project remains questionable.

ICOMOS' recommendations include improving the HIA to comprise a thorough analysis of the attributes of the OUV of the property and the impacts of the 'Great Revelation' project. ICOMOS further recommends that the HIA be informed by a landscape character study, visual assessment and assessment of the tourism carrying capacity, and considers that it would be prudent for the project to remain on hold until clarity on its impacts has been reached. The statement in the State Party report that road upgrades are continuing, may indicate that aspects of the project have not been halted pending the outcome of the HIA.

On 4 June 2025, the State Party submitted a revised HIA of the project, for which a Technical Review will be undertaken by the Advisory Bodies.

The State Party has undertaken an inventory of the conservation needs at the monastery and presented these in its annex, and noted the participation of the site manager in a management capacity building activity. However, it has not reported on progress in expanding its assessment to the rest of the property, and in developing the Conservation Plan and the Management Plan with a tourism management component. Such a Management Plan should also include periodic inspection of consolidated archaeological attributes of the property.

Towards the end of May 2025, the World Heritage Centre was informed through third party reports about a legal process that has led to changes in the status of land ownership. The World Heritage Centre has requested further information from the State Party, in line with Paragraph 174 of the Operational Guidelines. On 19 June 2025, the State Party provided a formal reply to the World Heritage Centre, informing that the court ruling issued on 28 May 2025 recognized the right of the Monastery and its affiliates to benefit from and use the religious and archaeological sites in the Saint Catherine Area.

The Reactive Monitoring mission, urgently requested by the Committee in Decision **45 COM 7B.138**, should visit the property as soon as possible, also to provide guidance to the State Party in its further development of the HIA for the 'Great Revelation' project and the development of the Conservation Plan and the Management Plan for the property.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.168

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.138**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the information provided by the State Party that mandates Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) be undertaken for any projects located within or surrounding the boundaries of World Heritage properties;
- 4. <u>Notes</u> the establishment of sub-committees of the Supreme Committee for the Management of Egyptian World Heritage Sites to review the status of the projects being proposed or/and to be implemented within or near to the boundaries Egyptian World Heritage properties, and <u>requests</u> that the State Party provide the outcomes of these reviews to the World Heritage Centre;
- 5. <u>Also notes</u> that the State Party's confirmation that all archaeological excavations and their consolidation within the property are undertaken according to international standards and are regularly monitored;
- 6. Acknowledging that a revised HIA was submitted by the State Party in June 2025, and while noting that the rehabilitation of roads that forms part of the 'Great Revelation Initiative the Land Peace' is being implemented, urges that further developments foreseen in this 'Initiative' remain halted until a Technical Review of the revised HIA has been undertaken by the Advisory Bodies, and its recommendations have been provided to the State Party;
- 7. <u>Also noting</u> that an inventory of urgent conservation needs has been initiated for Saint Catherine Monastery, but not yet for the rest of the property, <u>reiterates its requests</u> to the State Party to complete this inventory and develop a Conservation Plan for the entire property;

- 8. <u>Also reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to develop a Management Plan with a tourism management component that also makes provision for the implementation of the Conservation Plan for the property, and submit these to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Considering</u> that the justification of the application of Criteria (i), (iii) and (iv) relies also on the rugged natural environment and remoteness of the property, which are integral attributes of OUV, <u>further requests</u> that the State Party safeguard these characteristics through all its plans and policies that may affect the property;
- 10. <u>Further notes</u> the State Party's welcoming of the request to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, and further reiterates its request that this mission take place urgently, to assess the state of conservation of the property, the already executed components of the 'Great Revelation Initiative the Land of Peace' project, and the efficacy of the protection and management system of the property, and to provide guidance to the State Party in its further development of the HIA for the 'Great Revelation' project, and the development of the Conservation Plan and the Management Plan for the property, and requests furthermore that the mission be invited to the property in time for its report to be tabled before the Committee at its 48th session;
- 11. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2026**, 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 48th session.

## 170. Baptism Site "Bethany Beyond the Jordan" (Al-Maghtas) (Jordan)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.3

## 171. Petra (Jordan)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1985

Criteria (i)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/326/documents/

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1987-2010)
Total amount approved: USD 167,079

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/326/assistance/

# UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted:

- USD 3,743,125 for the Siq Stability projects (Phases I, II, and III) and the Youth for Heritage Conservation and Risk Prevention in Petra project
- USD 1,136,360 for Preserving Petra's Nabataean Architectural Heritage Through the Study of the Royal Tombs Water Management System and the Conservation of the Palace Tomb, funded by Italy

- USD 70,871.70 in total from the Heritage Emergency Fund since 2017, in relation to protection against flooding hazards
- USD 1,706,490 for the project on Employment Opportunities for Cultural Heritage Safeguarding in Jordan (Petra is one of the sites chosen by the project), funded through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- USD 1,607,717 for Local Communities and Sustainable Tourism in Petra and Wadi Rum funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)

#### Previous monitoring missions

September 2000: ICOMOS mission; March 2004: UNESCO mission; 2009: UNESCO technical expert missions; December 2010: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, November 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Heavy flooding in 1996 (issue resolved)
- Insufficiency or non-existence of sewage disposal facilities (issue resolved)
- Insufficient conservation of antiquities (issue resolved)
- Housing (uncontrolled development of villages in the vicinity of the site)
- Ground transport infrastructure (construction or road widening projects leading to the site)
- Other encroachments upon the integrity of the site
- Lack of management plan for the property (issue resolved)
- Lack of buffer zone boundary delimitations
- Land conversion
- Urban growth and urban encroachment
- Development projects and major visitor associated infrastructure in the property and its vicinity (new hotels under construction, eco-village and cultural village)
- Commercial development
- · Interpretative and visitation facilities
- Need for a moratorium on new buildings and infrastructure that are visible from the property
- Proposed back exit road

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/326/

### Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/326/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/326/documents/</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- Despite a sharp decline in tourism caused by regional conflict, alternative sources of support have enabled ongoing conservation, sustainable development and community engagement initiatives;
- The State Party accepts that an Integrated Territorial Master Plan (ITMP) is required for the property, and progress to this end includes an Integrated Site Management Plan, Tourism Master Plan, Development Plan for the Six Communities and improved governance;
- The "Rule of Law and Development" campaign, has targeted illegal activities and removed violations, improving visitor safety and experiences;
- A Global Navigation Satellite System base station and GIS mapping are assisting with monitoring, and an accurate map will be produced in 2026;
- Determination of a buffer zone remains challenging, as does the requested permanent moratorium on new infrastructure, and owing to local issues and opposition. Therefore, support is sought for a Master Plan and specific land use guidelines to facilitate sustainable development aligned with community needs and aspirations:
- Efforts have been made to improve socio-economic well-being of local communities and showcase their cultural heritage. Specific initiatives included the Nabatean Cultural Village and rehabilitation of cultural spaces like Elji Village. There is a sustained commitment to empowering local communities, fostering sustainable economic growth, and ensuring that the benefits of

tourism are widely shared. Community awareness campaigns have addressed capacity-building for site preservation, tourism and animal welfare. The "Local Community Capacity Building Project and Rehabilitation of the Archaeological Site – Petra Maintenance" has provided training for 116 community members;

- Excavation and documentation of the Treasury has continued, focused on chronological analysis and structural investigations;
- Major improvements at Um Sayhoun village include construction of residential units, infrastructure upgrades, creation of sustainable economic opportunities, improved security and better living conditions:
- The 'Al Dara project', which was subject to Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and an ICOMOS Technical Review, is complete and a weekly market has been introduced;
- Environmental management includes construction of water harvesting infrastructure, check dams in high-risk flood zones, and a proposed renewable energy project. Restoration and maintenance projects include graffiti removal, erosion control, and structural rehabilitation;
- Petra is a pilot site for the ICOMOS "Preserving Legacies: A Future for Our Past" programme, addressing the impacts of climate change on cultural heritage sites, with the Al-Harimiyah site chosen for detailed study;
- The Petra Tourism Development Master Plan (2023-2033) has been finalized including a tourism strategy, visitor management and infrastructure, local community engagement, environmental protection and risk management, and integration with broader regional planning. Actions to optimize visitor experience and reduce mass tourism impact include marking secondary trails, shuttle services, a planned e-ticketing system, crowd management strategies, development of new attractions and dispersing visitors across lesser-known areas. A comprehensive crowd management study will address visitor circulation, site carrying capacity, and experience optimization;
- An agreement has been signed with the Jabal Masouda Tourism Cooperative Association to establish and rehabilitate tourist trails within the Dalaqa area;
- The back exit road, proposed as an alternative exit, remains a current issue and a coordinating meeting is planned with the UNESCO Office in Amman;
- There is an ongoing commitment to collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and compliance with established guidelines and processes.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The property continues to face many challenges, which have been exacerbated by the recent substantial downturn in visitation owing to conflict in the region. Nevertheless, progress has been made with overall conservation, sustainable development and community engagement, and initiatives are being implemented to address tourism management and improve visitor experiences. The information submitted by the State Party about the Um Sayhoun village provides insight about this project and how it addresses densification within the property's setting while supporting the local community. The GIS-based mapping project previously welcomed by the Committee is now being progressively implemented, as are collaborative projects with international partners.

A range of initiatives to support the local community, including awareness programmes, training, water management, and a proposed renewable energy project are all welcome, as are reports on site maintenance, graffiti removal, erosion control and structural rehabilitation. Actions to mitigate high-risk floods, such as with check dams, are essential, considering the occurrence of flash floods, the latest being in May 2025, which reportedly, entailed the evacuation of hundreds of tourists as a precautionary measure.

The Committee has previously emphasized the importance of an ITMP and, although such a plan is yet to be prepared, there has been progress, with the completion of the Integrated Management Plan, Tourism Masterplan and a Development Plan for Six Communities. The Committee may wish to remind the State Party of its request to prioritize the ITMP, which should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for Technical Review by the Advisory Bodies before being finalized and implemented.

The HIA for the AI Dara project was assessed through an ICOMOS Technical Review as being conducted with an appropriate methodology and, although it was concluded that the project has no significant negative impacts on the property, further analysis is recommended to identify and implement opportunities to reduce the visual impact of aspects of the AI Dara project on the setting of the Siq, which is the main 'entry' to the property.

The comprehensive nature of the Tourism Development Management Plan 2023–3033 was acknowledged in the ICOMOS Technical Review, but the review also concluded that the property remains fundamentally threatened by the prospect of over visitation and that the State Party should be encouraged to closely manage the growth of tourism and to assess the carrying capacity of the property. The proposed comprehensive crowd management study which will address visitor circulation, site carrying capacity, and experience optimization, is therefore welcome. This study should also be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before it is finalized and implemented.

The proposal for a designated buffer zone, the proposed back exit road, and the Committee's repeated request for a moratorium on new buildings and infrastructure that are visible from the property are clearly challenging and contentious issues which are yet to be satisfactorily resolved. However, the State Party has indicated its commitment to ongoing collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and therefore it would be appropriate to address these matters within the scope of the previously invited Advisory mission.

# Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.171

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.141**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).
- 3. <u>Acknowledges</u> the efforts of the State Party in conservation, sustainable development and community engagement, despite the recent downturn in visitation to the property, including ongoing work to address densification within the property's setting and divert urban growth to the east, the GIS mapping program, and the information submitted about Um Sayhoun village;
- 4. <u>Welcomes</u> the commitment of the State Party to an Integrated Territorial Master Plan (ITMP) and the progress achieved through the completion of an Integrated Site Management Plan, Tourism Master Plan, Development Plan for the Six Communities, and, <u>recalling its previous request</u> to the State Party to afford priority to the ITMP, <u>reiterates its requests</u> the State Party to submit a comprehensive draft of the ITMP to the World Heritage Centre at the earliest opportunity, for review by the Advisory Bodies before the ITMP is finalized, formally adopted, and implemented;
- 5. <u>Also welcomes</u> the State Party's advice about community awareness and training programmes, new water harvesting infrastructure and check dams in high-risk flood zones, the proposed renewable energy project, graffiti removal, erosion control, and structural rehabilitation, and initiatives directed at improving the visitor experience and reducing the impact of tourism;
- 6. <u>Notes</u> that the Heritage Impact Assessment for the AI Dara project concluded that the project has no significant impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, but consistent with the 2025 ICOMOS Technical Review, <u>also requests</u> the State Party to undertake additional analysis and to identify and implement opportunities to reduce the visual impact on the setting of the Siq;

- 7. <u>Further welcomes</u> the completion of the Tourism Development Master Plan (2023-2033), and, consistent with the 2025 ICOMOS Technical Review, <u>further requests</u> the State Party to closely manage the growth of tourism at the property and identify its carrying capacity, so as to ensure sustainable tourism, and in that regard <u>requests furthermore</u> the State Party to submit the proposed crowd management study to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before it is finalized and implemented;
- 8. Recalling its previous requests regarding new regulations for a designated buffer zone and its larger setting, in line with the proposed ITMP and, while <u>noting</u> the concerns expressed by the State Party, <u>reiterates its previous requests</u> to the State Party to submit a Minor Boundary Modification request, in line with Paragraphs 163-164 of the Operational Guidelines, and to clarify the protective urban regulations of the planned buffer zone, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Further welcomes</u> the previous invitation by the State Party for an Advisory mission in order to provide advice on this process and the steps needed to define a framework for a comprehensive planning approach to address related matters, including the proposed back exit road, the requested moratorium on new buildings and infrastructure that are visible from the property, and the mitigation of densification, tourism and development pressures;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 172. Um er-Rasas (Kastrom Mefa'a) (Jordan)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2004

Criteria (i)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1093/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 2007-2009) Total amount approved: USD 34,750

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1093/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1093/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 6,000 from the Italian Funds-in-Trust

#### Previous monitoring missions

March-April 2005: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; November 2006: Joint World Heritage Centre/ ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive monitoring mission; July 2008: World Heritage Centre expert mission for the Stylite tower.

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/ management plan: Aspects need to be explored in more detail, including work-plan, Public Use Plan and archaeological research policy
- Important tourism development project with new constructions (issue resolved)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (issue resolved)
- Unstable structures requiring conservation action

- Lack of security (issue being addressed)
- Lack of Management systems / plan / structure (issue resolved)
- Lack of comprehensive conservation plan (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1093/

#### Current conservation issues

On 28 November 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the executive summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1093/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1093/documents/</a> and presents progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions, as follows:

- A review found that some objectives of the 2017 Management Plan have not yet been achieved. In response, the Department of Antiquities (DoA) is establishing a permanent technical and multidisciplinary site management committee with a long-term mission to ensure the effective implementation of the Plan and the sustainable development of the site, aligning resources with milestones. An updated Management Plan will be submitted once completed. An integrated tourist trail connecting components of the property will be developed;
- In December 2023, the UNESCO Jordan Office submitted a report recommending a design for roofing the Stylite Tower and structural reinforcement. A multidisciplinary team of DoA recommended that further studies be undertaken to evaluate potential structural and visual impact, and alternate solutions, such as temporary roof sheltering, and establishing a structural monitoring system;
- Considering the challenges posed by limited resources and the scale of the Castrum site, the approach aims to maximise resources allocated to the Castrum for the development of a longterm restoration programme;
- Following a pilot project at the Church of the Lions to develop several permanent shelter design options, two issues were identified: permanent shelter structures would have an adverse impact on the visual values of the churches, and they would be expensive to construct. As a result, the DoA has reconsidered its earlier approach to build permanent shelters at six churches (The Peacock Chapel, Church of the Lions, Church of Priest Wa'il, Church of the River, Church of the Palm Tree and Church of Saint Paul), to focus on temporary season shelters as a more practical and less impactful solution. An annual event to showcase the church mosaics, utilising the proposed tourist trail, is being developed;
- Security systems have been further developed; DoA will have access to 54 CCTV cameras, with another system provided by the Public Security Department, and six guards stationed on site, resulting in decreased illegal excavations;
- An Advisory mission should be invited after the finalization and approval of the updated Management Plan;
- The buffer zone boundaries have been reviewed, and a revised map is appended to the report;
- An excavation and restoration programme was carried out at the Church of the Reliquiarium (Madkhar).

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The review of the 2017 Management Plan and the establishment of a new integrated planning process through an expert committee is welcomed. It is recommended the Committee encourage the State Party to maintain this new direction and submit the draft updated Management Plan for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, when completed. The timing of the foreshadowed Advisory mission, discussed below, might be best undertaken at the draft stage of the Management Plan, before the Plan is finalized and adopted.

The efforts undertaken by the State Party in considering options for interventions at the Stylite Tower, avoiding any structural or visual impacts, is welcomed. It is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to progress its investigations and design work and implement a conservation programme that addresses all values as soon as possible.

The scale of the conservation exercise at the Castrum is recognised, and the balancing of limited resources to achieve its protection would be well-served by the development of a long-term restoration

plan that sets realistic priorities. It is recommended that the Committee reiterates its concern and urges the State Party to proceed with the planning for structured long-term conservation actions at the Castrum and their implementation.

The reconsideration of the development of shelters at the six churches (The Peacock Chapel, Church of the Lions, Church of Priest Wa'il, Church of the River, Church of the Palm Tree and Church of Saint Paul) is to be commended, as the revised approach is more likely to result in positive conservation outcomes and require fewer resources. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to proceed with the planning for temporary shelter approach, and the linking of the churches with the proposed tourist track in an annual mosaics-themed event.

The implementation of an effective security system is to be commended as well. While illegal excavations have decreased, the report does not indicate the number and scale of such illegal excavations.

The revision of the boundaries of the property and the buffer zone, as presented on the appended map, is noted. However, in accordance with Paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines, any modifications to the boundaries of a World Heritage property and/or its buffer zone must be submitted to the World Heritage Centre in the foreseen format, for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies and examination by the Committee. Therefore, it is recommended that the Committee recall that, in case the State Party wishes to propose a modification to the boundaries of the property as inscribed, this must be done through a boundary modification request in accordance with the Operational Guidelines.

The proposal to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission is welcomed, though it is considered more productive to invite the mission before the draft updated Management Plan is finalized and adopted, so that the mission findings might be considered in the revision process. The mission should address the number of recurrent conservation issues identified in former state of conservation reports, such as the Management Plan, the prioritisation of site work, the urgency of works at the Stylite Tower and Castrum, site security issues, and the long-term planning for church conservation.

## Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.172

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.142**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the State Party's efforts in reviewing the content of the 2017 Management Plan, establishing a new expert committee, and integrating other elements of the management into the planning process, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to maintain this new direction and submit the draft updated Management Plan for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- 4. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to continue its study of options for the Stylite Tower and the monitoring of its condition, and submit the final conservation project proposal for the Stylite Tower for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- 5. Reiterates its concern that the urgent conservation work at the Castrum, identified in the 2017 Management Plan and highlighted in the new survey drawings, does not appear to have taken place, and urges the State Party to proceed with the planning for structured long-term conservation actions at the Castrum and their implementation;
- 6. <u>Commends</u> the State Party on its research of temporary shelter options that reduce impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value on six churches (The Peacock Chapel, Church of the Lions, Church of Priest Wa'il, Church of the River, Church of the Palm Tree

and Church of Saint Paul), and <u>urges</u> the State Party to proceed with the planning for a temporary shelter approach, and the linking of the churches with the proposed tourist track in an annual mosaics-themed event;

- 7. <u>Also commends</u> the State Party on the steps being taken to substantially augment the site security measures and address illegal excavation and <u>requests</u> information on the extent of illegal excavation taking place before and after the new security measures be provided to the World Heritage Centre:
- 8. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the State Party's undertaking to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission, possibly when the draft updated Management Plan is being finalized and before its final approval;
- 9. <u>Recalls</u> that, in case the State Party wishes to propose a modification to the boundaries of the property as inscribed, this should be done through a boundary modification request in accordance with Paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2026, 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 49th session.

# 174. Baalbek (Lebanon)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1984

Criteria (i)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294/documents/</a>

### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1998-1999) Total amount approved: USD 10,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294/assistance/

# UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

## Previous monitoring missions

Expert Mission, Baalbek and Tyr (24 November - 4 December 1995); 2006: UNESCO expert mission to Lebanon; 1997: Mission to Lebanon; 1997; Mission to Syria, Jordan and Lebanon; March 2025: Rapid Cultural Heritage Damage Assessment Mission to Lebanon

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Water (rain/water table): Water infiltration affecting the walls
- Ground transport infrastructure: Road project
- Management systems/ management plan: Lack of master plan and Management Plan
- Urban pressure
- Extensive rehabilitation work contrary to established procedures (issue resolved)
- Conflict

#### Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294/

#### Current conservation issues

On 9 January 2025, the World Heritage Centre informed the State Party that the property would be subject to a report on its state of conservation to be presented at the 47th session of the Committee, following concerns regarding the potential impact of hostilities in 2024. On 7 February 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294/documents">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294/documents</a>, providing the following information:

- The Directorate General of antiquities (DGA) has not yet provided precise assessment of the damage caused by hostilities in 2024, including at the Roman northern city entrance and the 'Manchieh' of the new parking facility. These impacts have demonstrated the need for specialized expertise to assess and mitigate damage caused by severe strikes on archaeological surroundings;
- In November 2024, 'Baalbek archaeological sites' was granted provisional enhanced protection under the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Decision 4 EXT.COM 4.5);
- An urban master plan for Baalbek (2013) emphasizes protection of the site and its surroundings, preventing inappropriate construction, maintaining green spaces and ensuring local community integration;
- Significant discoveries, carried out in collaboration with partners, primarily the German Archaeological Institute (DAI), contribute to a clearer understanding of the site's historical and archaeological landscape;
- Between 2013 and 2019, conservation projects focused on preserving major structures, including temples. However, since the onset of the economic crisis in 2019, no new restoration or conservation projects have been implemented;
- Despite financial constraints, several projects have been initiated to enhance accessibility and interpretation, while maintenance work is currently restricted to controlling excessive vegetation growth;
- Site boundaries are being reviewed to ensure better protection, a unified database for all archaeological sites in Lebanon, including Baalbek, has been developed, and a 3D movie titled "Baalbek Reborn" was created to promote Baalbek, incorporating data from recent excavations;
- In cooperation with a non-governmental organization, the DGA is preparing plans for a project centred around the rehabilitation of an area called 'Masdakhane' at the site of the Temple of Jupiter.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

In November 2024, the cultural property 'Baalbek archaeological sites' was granted provisional enhanced protection by the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict following concerns due to the regional hostilities.

Additionally, and upon the request of the Lebanese authorities, a UNESCO mission to Lebanon took place from 9 to 14 March 2025, with the purpose of conducting a rapid cultural heritage damage assessment of several sites, including Baalbek, for which concerns had been reported during the hostilities in 2024, or where preliminary damages were observed. The damage identified includes the destruction of the heritage building (Manchieh) situated at the entrance of the site that comprises the temple complex (Bustan el-Khan). This damage affected the surrounding structures, such as the parking, pedestrian sidewalks, and lighting features. It was not feasible to assess the potential impact on buried remains during the mission. Some remains of debris and rubble were still visible, including within the archaeological site, and the recently rehabilitated building, known as Beit Nassif and comprising the site's visitor centre, has been impacted, with relatively minor damage on windows, exterior shutters and interior false ceiling. Damage was also confirmed in the area of Gouraud barracks within the city, where the Roman tower was impacted with the collapse of some of its masonry and part of its internal vault. While the archaeological remains and monuments in the area of the temple complex (Bustan el-Khan), such as the Temple of Jupiter, do not seem to have been directly damaged, some parts may be vulnerable or may have been indirectly impacted, requiring further in-depth structural monitoring and damage assessments on a case-by-case basis.

The efforts made by the State Party in continuing research, site enhancement, and maintenance work, although limited, and despite the challenges, are commendable. It is recommended to encourage the State Party to further pursue these actions to the extent possible, in addition to addressing any needed repair, relaunching the monitoring programme at the temple complex, particularly for the Temple of Jupiter, and conduct in-depth structural damage assessments as needed.

Work has also been initiated to enhance visitor accessibility and experience at the property, which is welcomed. It is recommended that all of these activities and efforts are implemented within an overall visitor management plan, and in the framework of a management plan for the property, to be initiated as soon as possible.

It is further recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to submit a boundary clarification for the property, based on consultations undertaken with the World Heritage Centre.

In light of the challenges faced by the State Party, it is recommended that the Committee also encourage the State Party to request for International Assistance through the World Heritage Fund to support its efforts in ensuring adequate management of the property.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.174**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Takes note</u> of the provisional inscription of the property on the International List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection, under the mechanism established by the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Decision 4 EXT.COM 4.5);
- 3. <u>Takes note with appreciation</u> of the March 2025 UNESCO mission to Lebanon to conduct a rapid damage assessment of several sites, including Baalbek;
- 4. <u>Expresses concern</u> about the damage incurred at, and in the vicinity, of the property resulting from hostilities, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to address any urgently needed repair work when possible, relaunch the monitoring programme at the temple complex, particularly for the Temple of Jupiter, and conduct in-depth structural damage assessments as needed;
- 5. <u>Commends</u> the efforts made by the State Party in continuing research, site enhancement and maintenance work, and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to further pursue these actions to the extent possible;
- 6. <u>Welcomes</u> the initiation of works to enhance visitor accessibility and experience at the property, <u>recommends</u> that these activities and efforts are implemented within an overall visitor management plan, to be provided in the framework of an overall Management Plan for the property, and <u>further encourages</u> the State Party to initiate the preparation of a Management Plan as soon as possible;
- 7. <u>Encourages furthermore</u> the State Party to submit a boundary clarification for the property, based on consultations with the World Heritage Centre;
- 8. <u>Recalls</u> the need to submit details of planned projects at the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, comprising Heritage Impact Assessments to be conducted in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;

- 9. <u>Encourages moreover</u> the State Party to submit an International Assistance request to support its efforts in ensuring adequate management of the property;
- 10. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 175. Byblos (Lebanon)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1984

Criteria (iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/295/documents/

## International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (1999)

Total amount approved: USD 10,000

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/295/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

1995, 1997, 1998 and 2001: Different missions for the evaluation of the state of conservation and project execution in Lebanon, including Byblos; November 2001: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; September 2006: UNESCO expert mission to Lebanon; February 2017: World Heritage Centre mission; 2018: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

# Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Port expansion project (issue resolved)
- Need for a Management Plan and a Master Plan (issue resolved)
- Plans for an extension of the jetty (issue resolved)
- Tourism infrastructure: "Diplomatic Club" project with above ground structures of reinforced concrete built at the south of the property on potentially archaeologically sensitive grounds
- Management systems/ management plan: Unclear boundary definition of property and buffer zone
- Erosion and siltation/ deposition: Environmental risks coastal erosion of the Byblos mound due to the heavy tidal impact of the sea and weathering of the exposed archaeological remains
- Housing

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/295/

#### Current conservation issues

On 3 December 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/295/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/295/documents/</a>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in those reports, as follows:

- Collaboration with the Directorate General of Urbanism to enforce zoning regulations implemented since 2007 and to control constructions in and around the Historic City;
- The maritime buffer zone, extending 300 meters from the site into the sea, is continuously monitored to protect submarine cultural heritage, which is protected by 'Hima' law that is applied

to natural reserves in Lebanon. An archaeological research programme 'Byblos et la mer' focuses on marine and coastal studies of Byblos;

- Plans to transform the archaeological site into a natural reserve are ongoing in collaboration with academic institutions, aiming to preserve flora and fauna, including endemic species. Additionally, the coastline of the maritime western buffer zone, has been listed as a marine protected area under the Environmental Law to conserve marine biodiversity while supporting selected maritime activities;
- Archaeological excavation continues at the Byblos Hypogeum, the Old Town and the adjacent modern city. Regular maintenance is focused on vegetation control to preserve exposed wall structures;
- Management activities include the development of a unified database for archaeological sites and artifacts in Lebanon, a vegetation Management Plan, in collaboration with the Nature Conservation Centre of the American University of Beirut, addressing growth of species harmful to the conservation efforts, and security measures such as reinforcement and installation of a new fence and an updated alarm system donated by the ALIPH Foundation (International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage);
- Efforts to promote Byblos World Heritage is focused on community engagement, technological tools, and global outreach. Initiatives include the documentation of cultural traditions, the integration of AR/VR technologies to enrich visitor experiences, and the organisation of international exhibitions, publications, and documentaries;
- The State Party reaffirms that all construction and archaeological work related to the "Diplomatic Club" tourism project adjacent to the property have remained completely suspended since April 2017;
- In November 2025, Byblos was granted provisional enhanced protection under the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies take note of the many challenges currently faced by the State Party. The efforts of the Directorate General of Antiquities in this difficult context are highly commendable as they address some of the issues reflected in previous Committee decisions and some of the recommendations of the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission.

At the urban level, zoning regulations are being implemented, and plans are proceeding to transform the archaeological site into a natural reserve. Underwater archaeology is being addressed through research and protection measures, including relevant legislation. Moreover, upon the request of the State Party, the property was provisionally inscribed on the International List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection under the mechanism established by the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention. The measures taken to enhance protection for the property under different international and national legislative measures will significantly strengthen overall management practice at the property.

Activities related to research, conservation and management have also proceeded at the property. The reported efforts in the adequate management of harmful vegetation indicate a vital step forward in establishing sustainable maintenance practices at the property, particularly considering its challenging environmental conditions. No major efforts are reported on stone surface conservation of the exposed archaeological remains.

The State Party has reaffirmed the ongoing suspension of the "Diplomatic Club" beach resort tourism project. Given the potential impact that a project of such scale may have on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, future projects in the area must undergo a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) following the new Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, taking into account the results of thorough archaeological findings. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its invitation to the State Party to notify the World Heritage Centre of any future major restoration or construction plans that may affect the OUV of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, before decisions are made that would be difficult to reverse.

Despite several preservation and promotion initiatives, a comprehensive Management Plan that integrates sustainable tourism, conservation, and maintenance for the Old Town of Byblos is not explicitly mentioned, suggesting that this recommendation remains insufficiently addressed. While the State Party has enhanced control over construction in and around the historic city, full implementation of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) methodology is advised, integrating the Management Plan with the urban development for the Old Town of Byblos. Current activities show some alignment with HUL principles, but formal adoption of this approach within a management framework seems necessary to reinforce preservation efforts and enhance synergies with other UNESCO conventions, specifically the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

It is further recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit a boundary clarification for the property, based on consultations with the World Heritage Centre, and subsequently consider developing a proposal for a Minor Boundary Modification, including the establishment of a buffer zone, Such a proposal should take into account the results of the archaeological surveys conducted.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.175**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add 2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **42 COM 7B.56**, **43 COM 7B.48** and **44 COM 7B.130**, and **45 COM 7B.143**, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018), 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/Online, 2021), and extended 45th (Riyadh) sessions respectively;
- 3. <u>Welcomes with satisfaction</u> the efforts undertaken towards improving the state of conservation of the property under these difficult conditions;
- 4. <u>Takes note</u> of the provisional inscription of the property on the International List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection, under the mechanism established by the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Decision 4 EXT.COM 4.7);
- 5. <u>Noting</u> that all works on the "Diplomatic Club" touristic beach resort project adjacent to the property remain suspended, as requested by the Committee in its previous decisions, and that no further archaeological investigations have been conducted since, <u>reiterates its request</u> that any future project should ensure appropriate environmental and archaeological outcomes for the World Heritage property and be subject to a Heritage Impact Assessment prior to development;
- 6. <u>Invites</u> the State Party to inform the Committee, through the World Heritage Centre, of any future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 7. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to implement the recommendations of the 2018 mission report, with particular attention to developing a Management Plan with provisions for sustainable tourism, conservation activities, regular maintenance, and research at the property, and to consider the adoption of the Historic Urban Landscape approach for integrating the Management Plan with the urban development for the Old Town of Byblos;
- 8. <u>Encourages</u> the State Party to continue its efforts towards enhancing synergies with the UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage and the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage;

- 9. <u>Requests</u> the State Party to submit a boundary clarification for the property, based on consultations with the World Heritage Centre, and subsequently consider developing a proposal for a Minor Boundary Modification request, including the establishment of a buffer zone;
- 10. <u>Also encourages</u> the State Party to submit an International Assistance request to support efforts in the elaboration of the required management tools;
- 11. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.

# 176. Tyre (Lebanon)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1984

Criteria (iii)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

<u>Previous Committee Decisions</u> see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/documents/</a>

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1986-2001) Total amount approved: USD 29,000

For details, see page <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/assistance/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/assistance/</a>

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 19,173 (1997-2001) for the International Safeguarding Campaign; USD 362,391 (2015-2017) from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation through the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR); USD 320,673 from the Lebanese Government for capacity- building exercise

# Previous monitoring missions

February 2004: Evaluation mission by the UNESCO Office in Beirut; September 2006: UNESCO mission following the 2006 summer conflict; February 2009: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; September 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2017: visit of the property by the World Heritage Centre; October 2018: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2025: Rapid Cultural Heritage Damage Assessment Mission to Lebanon.

#### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Need for an international safeguarding campaign (issue resolved)
- Construction of a tourist complex (land fill of the bay) (issue resolved)
- Construction project of a large fish market (issue resolved)
- Construction project of a coastal motorway (issue resolved)
- Project to build a new tourist marina (issue resolved)
- Road construction project (issue resolved)
- Buildings and development: Uncontrolled housing development next to the property; need for an Urban Master Plan for the city
- Management systems/ management plan: Absence of a management plan, unclear property boundaries and legal status on the extent of the property; lack of management mechanism (including legislation)
- Legal framework: Insufficient legal framework for an efficient buffer such as lack of a maritime protection zone around the seashores of Tyre

- Human Resources: Management system affected by the shortage of human resources directly leading to insufficient maintenance, vegetation control and fire prevention and lack of consistent preservation plan
- Transport infrastructure: planning of major highway near the property and repeated local intentions of the redevelopment of the port
- Sea-shore environmental local conditions affecting physical fabric, especially soft stone surfaces
- Water (rain/water table): Insufficient drainage of stagnating waters and uncontrolled surface water flows undermine wall foundations and stability of structures
- Tourism / visitor / recreation
- Conflict

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/

### Current conservation issues

On 3 December 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/299/documents/</a>. Progress in conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- The deteriorating security situation has severely impacted conservation efforts. The worsening conditions have further exposed the site to danger. Hostilities have led to the absence of the archaeological team who was impacted. Nevertheless, the Directorate General of Antiquities (DGA) remains committed;
- In November 2024, the property was granted provisional enhanced protection under the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Decision EXT.COM 4.32);
- An agreement has been reached between the Ministry of Culture Directorate General of Antiquities and the Municipality of Tyre to use a state-owned area adjacent to the archaeological site (Al-Bass - Tyre) as a parking lot, with no construction or excavation allowed. Further administrative and technical details will be provided;
- A marine survey revealed the city's historical extension into the sea. As a result, DGA will prepare
  two legal decrees to expand protection seaward, and propose including the borders of the marine
  area with the World Heritage property;
- The Management Plan has been finalized, with details to be completed in 2025 before submission to the World Heritage Centre;
- Despite current challenges, the Ministry of Culture Directorate General of Antiquities has secured resources for maintenance and preservation of the site;
- The site boundaries are also being reviewed to enhance preservation based on recent archaeological findings;
- Proposals are being reviewed to create a centralized database for all archaeological data on the property, aiming at improving information management and overall site management;
- A preliminary traffic and mobility plan has been presented to experts, covering vehicle circulation, parking, and population pressure. Updates will be provided on any developments affecting the property.

# Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

In November 2024, the property was granted provisional enhanced protection by the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, following concerns due to the regional hostilities.

Additionally, and upon the request of the Lebanese authorities, a UNESCO mission to Lebanon took place from 9 to 14 March 2025, with the purpose of conducting a rapid cultural heritage damage assessment of several sites, including Tyre, for which concerns had been reported during the hostilities in 2024, or where preliminary damages were observed. At Tyre, the mission was able to confirm damaged areas that were previously identified by UNESCO through satellite imagery analyses. While no direct impact could be observed on archaeological remains and monuments, several modern

buildings incurred damage, in addition to collateral damage in relation to fences, debris accumulation, visitor facilities and various impacts at the offices of the DGA that are hosted in heritage buildings. In total, nine locations of damage at, or in close vicinity of the property, were confirmed by the mission. This includes locations such as the offices of the DGA, the site of Ain Hiram, modern buildings, and visitor facilities and fence at Tyre al-Bass. The mission recommended actions pertaining to repair and rehabilitation work, preparation of a risk management plan and completion of the Management Plan, in addition to further detailed structural assessments and monitoring.

The challenges faced by the State Party in the implementation of adequate conservation and management of the property are well acknowledged. Despite this situation, the State Party has progressed in executing several actions addressing previous requests of the Committee, particularly in relation to underwater archaeological research, preparation of a Management Plan, and a traffic and mobility plan. It is commendable that the State Party is pursuing a plan to establish a central archaeological database to store excavation reports, research data, regular monitoring, and administrative records. It is therefore recommended to encourage the State Party to further pursue these actions and reiterate the previous requests regarding the finalization of the overall Management Plan for the property, with a detailed action plan, and submit it for review to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies; creation of a detailed manual for the long-term preservation of mosaics and structures, describing measures according to the principles of minimal intervention and building on the numerous experiences gained from previously implemented pilot projects; undertaking regular maintenance of vegetation, drainage and sewage control through appropriate preventive measures; establishment of a maritime protection zone to protect the underwater archaeological remains; and conducting an in-depth study of traffic and the urban road network.

Moreover, the World Heritage Centre has received concerns through third party reports about development projects planned in the areas of Shawakir - Ras al-Ain and al-Kharab/Ras al-Jamal, which may impact the archaeological and natural heritage in the area. The World Heritage Centre has requested detailed information from the State Party, in line with Paragraphs 172 and 174 of the Operational Guidelines. In light of the challenges faced by the State Party, it is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to request for International Assistance through the World Heritage Fund to support its efforts in ensuring adequate management of the property.

#### Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.176

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.145**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023).
- 3. <u>Acknowledges</u> the submission of the State Party's report in light of the severe challenges faced;
- Takes note of the provisional inscription of the property on the International List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection, under the mechanism established by the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (Decision 4 EXT.COM 4.32);
- 5. <u>Takes note with appreciation</u> of the March 2025 UNESCO mission to Lebanon to conduct a rapid damage assessment of several sites, including Tyre;
- 6. <u>Expresses concern</u> about the damage incurred at, and in the vicinity, of the property resulting from hostilities, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to address urgent repair and rehabilitation work, when possible, as well as initiate detailed structural assessments and monitoring of archaeological structures:

- 7. <u>Also takes note</u> of the establishment of the agreement between the primary stakeholders for the use of a lot adjacent to the archaeological site (Al-Bass Tyre) as a parking area, and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to submit further details when available, for review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- 8. Commends the efforts made in improving the status of documentation on the property and undertaking a marine survey that will inform the expansion of the protected area, as well as the progress in the preparation of a Management Plan, and <u>further encourages</u> the State Party to finalize this plan, with the inclusion of provisions for a maritime protection zone, to preserve the underwater archaeological remains, and submit this plan, once available, for review;
- 9. Recalling the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission, reiterates its request to the State Party to implement its recommendations with particular attention to establishing a comprehensive management strategy for the property that covers all aspects of documentation, conservation and monitoring, summarizing the knowledge on techniques and procedures in a manual, with an updated action plan, as a core component of the future Management Plan for the property, including:
  - a) Defining approaches to improving current maintenance practices concerning vegetation, drainage and sewage control through appropriate preventive measures,
  - b) Establishing principles of minimal intervention in the conservation of mosaics and structures as lessons learned from the pilot projects,
  - Developing and implementing a monitoring protocol to be available for scientific conservation research and to enable evaluation of the efficacy of conservation measures,
  - d) Developing and implementing a comprehensive presentation strategy for the property to reflect the actual understanding of its values as reflected in the various architectonic technologies and funerary practices of past generations, as well as conservation challenges,
  - e) Considering integrating the Management Plan with regional and urban development and traffic-mobility plans to manage the development pressures in the long term;
- 10. <u>Also reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to revise the proposed boundary of the property, identify a buffer zone and develop regulations and procedures for the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property in accordance with Decision 37 COM 8B.45, and to submit a minor boundary modification, in line with paragraphs 107 and 164 and Annex 11 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the Advisory Bodies;
- 11. <u>Welcomes</u> the initiation of a traffic and mobility plan, and <u>further reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to submit this study to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies;
- 12. Recalls the Committee's invitation to the State Party to submit details of planned projects at the property, including any proposed road and infrastructure projects, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, comprising Heritage Impact Assessments to be conducted in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context;
- 13. <u>Encourages furthermore</u> the State Party to submit an International Assistance request to support its efforts in ensuring adequate management of the property;

14. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

# 177. Medina of Essaouira (formerly Mogador) (Morocco)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2001

Criteria (ii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/753/documents/

#### International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1997-1998) Total amount approved: USD 52,500

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/753/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

#### Previous monitoring missions

September 2003: reactive monitoring mission; February, 2005: Rabat Office mission; April 2006: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS reactive monitoring mission.

### Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Maritime transport infrastructure: development project for the port (partially resolved)
- Building and development: major urban development and upgrading project (partially resolved)
- Lack of a rehabilitation policy for the Mellah Quarter

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/753/

# Current conservation issues

On 24 December 2024, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/753/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/753/</a>. The progress made is presented as follows:

- The Medina has benefited from an ambitious programme of rehabilitation, enhancement of its urban space and presentation historical heritage, promotion of access to social services and strengthening as a tourist attraction. The State Party is resubmitting the tables containing summary information on the operations completed and those still in progress relating to the urban rehabilitation provided for under the supplementary upgrading programme (2019-2023), illustrated by some new visuals;
- The remaining challenges relate to the Mellah Quarter, whose state of conservation remains critical due to progressive abandonment and complex legal issues connected to property ownership;
- To strengthen heritage conservation while ensuring its sustainable development, a heritage
  protection bill aims to introduce the concepts of protection of intangible heritage, the cultural
  landscape and the historic urban landscape. The bill provides for the establishment of
  management plans, the conducting of heritage impact assessments and the development of
  preventive archaeology.
- The roles of the Plan for the Development and Safeguarding of the Medina (PASME) and Master Plan for the Urban Development of Greater Essaouira (SDAU) have been recalled.

- Stakeholder consultations are being conducted to finalise a draft management plan, initiating a management structure, before it is submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- With regard to the port development project, some visuals illustrating ongoing actions at the port
  were submitted without explanation. The specific measures needed to minimise potential negative
  impacts have been recalled (enhancement of heritage views, preservation of the site's visual
  integrity and management of parking issues);
- A three-dimensional model of the property and the delineation of the property's buffer zone have been drawn up using digital technology. The boundaries of the property will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre;

#### Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

Since the last report, the State Party has submitted little new information to the World Heritage Centre, and several elements are still pending. It is therefore recommended to recall the Committee's requests in Decision **45 COM 7B.146**, in particular for the State Party to provide more information on all work carried out and scheduled, so that a more accurate overall assessment of the property's state of conservation can be established. The World Heritage Centre is also still awaiting information on the management structure in place for the property, as well as the traffic study to regulate traffic and manage parking around the port.

Planning tools such as the SDAU and the PASME should be submitted in their entirety to the World Heritage Centre for review to ensure that these plans incorporate provisions on private property, contribute to maintaining the property's Outstanding Universal Value and are based on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach to ensure the property's integration with its surrounding environment.

The State Party should also be reminded that information on any major project should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse, in compliance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines.

The governance of the Mellah Quarters (both new and old) and the restoration of buildings that are in a particularly critical state of conservation, remain unresolved and, according to the State Party, constitute a major obstacle to the complete rehabilitation of this important part of the historical and cultural identity of the Medina. It is recommended that the State Party be requested to make progress in resolving legal issues related to property ownership and to establish a rehabilitation strategy for this quarter, in close collaboration with the stakeholders.

As a follow-up to the retrospective inventory project launched in 2004, the State Party has begun work on a three-dimensional digital map of the property and delineation of its buffer zone. A clarification of the property's boundaries is therefore pending, as well as a proposal for minor boundary modifications in the event that changes are to be made to the delineation of its buffer zone.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.177**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision **45 COM 7B.146**, adopted at its extended 45th session (Riyadh, 2023),
- 3. Reiterates its request to the State Party to:
  - a) Provide to the World Heritage Centre, detailed technical information, including visuals, on all work carried out and planned which may affect the monumental attributes of the property and its urban fabric, so that a more accurate overall assessment of the property's state of conservation can be established.

- b) Provide to the World Heritage Centre the expected information on the management structure in place for the property, as well as the traffic study to regulate traffic and manage parking around the port, as soon as it is prepared,
- c) Submit to the World Heritage Centre, as part of the retrospective inventory and as soon as possible, a proposal for a boundary clarification of the property;
- 4. Requests the State Party to submit the Master Plan for the Urban Development of Greater Essaouira (SDAU) and the Plan for the Development and Safeguarding of the Medina (PASME) in their entirety, for review by the Advisory Bodies, in order to ensure that these plans include provisions on private property, are based on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach to ensure the integration of the property with its surrounding environment, and contribute to maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, and the other multiple values of the property, such as those relating to its socioeconomic aspects;
- 5. Noting with concern the critical state of degradation of the Mellah Quarter, which constitutes an important part of the historical and cultural identity of the Medina, also requests the State Party to make progress in resolving the legal issues related to the ownership of the Mellah properties and to establish, while interacting closely with stakeholders, a strategy for the rehabilitation of the quarter;
- 6. <u>Reminds</u> the State Party of its obligation to submit information on any other major projects to the World Heritage Centre, in compliance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the Advisory Bodies, before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse:
- 7. <u>Finally Requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2026**, 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 49th session.

## 182. Kairouan (Tunisia)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1988

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger N/A

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/documents/

# International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (2010

Total amount approved: USD 4,995

For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/assistance/

#### UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount: EUR 35,000 from the French Government for the integration of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape in Kairouan and in four other medinas in Tunisia

### Previous monitoring missions

January 2023: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory Mission

## Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Factors identified by the 2023 mission

- Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system: Use of modern materials in restoration, lack of services, gradual abandonment of the property
- Water (Rain/Water table): Capillary rise, salinity
- Governance: lack of coordination and consultation among local stakeholders, violations of construction regulations
- <u>Management System/Management Plan</u>: Absence of Management Plan

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/

#### Current conservation issues

On 11 September 2024, the World Heritage Centre informed the State Party that the property would be the subject of a report on its state of conservation, in accordance with the recommendation of the joint UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM advisory mission to Kairouan on 12 January 2023. On 30 January 2025, the State Party submitted a detailed report, a summary of which is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/documents/</a>. The report describes the conservation and management of the property as follows:

- The medina has preserved its authentic character despite dilapidation, urbanisation and socioeconomic change. Most of its tangible and intangible values have been preserved, but some attributes are deteriorating and require specific action;
- The property is managed by the National Institute of Heritage (INP) and the municipality of Kairouan. However, the protection and management of the medina remain fragile in the absence of a management system adapted to the socio-economic development of the traditional fabric. The participatory process was strengthened after the workshop on the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL). The INP has begun to define the boundaries of the protected area, prior to drawing up the Safeguarding and Valorisation Plan (PSMV);
- Four major projects, whose technical studies are appended to the report, are ongoing:
  - Enhancement of the Aghlabids Basins and their buffer zone, including restoration of the monuments, integration of facilities and development of the surrounding park (the project for a performing arts centre and open-air theatre has been cancelled),
  - Restoring and enhancing the Great Mosque and its immediate surroundings,
  - Partial reconstruction of the ramparts following a collapse in 2023, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre. Documentation is planned for the remaining sections in anticipation of a major works campaign,
  - The Medina Regeneration and Development Programme (PRCA), which has led to the preparation of a study on the development of the Rahba area in 2021.

## Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM

The report on the 2023 Advisory mission is available at <a href="https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/documents/">https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/499/documents/</a>. The mission found that the property retains an authentic character but that the urban fabric had been impacted by socio-economic factors, the alteration of buildings and the use of unsuitable building materials, insufficient control of urban infringements, the absence of a management plan adapted to the property and of a PSMV, and finally, limited human and financial resources and a lack of consultation between stakeholders and with the World Heritage Centre on planned projects, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. The mission made a number of recommendations, concluding that the State Party should make substantial efforts to improve the management and conservation of the property.

The report submitted by the State Party is very detailed and documented by technical annexes, and bears witness to the major efforts made by the State Party. In 2024, diagnoses and preliminary designs for the restoration and enhancement of the Great Mosque and the Aghlabid Basins and their immediate surroundings were submitted (two ICOMOS technical studies were carried out), as well as a diagnosis of the condition of the ramparts.

Launched in 2022, the PRCA plans to carry out a pilot project on a representative sample of urban issues in the medina, the Rahba area, which could serve as a model for developing the urban fabric on a larger scale and improving the living conditions of residents. On the basis of this project and the UNESCO HUL Recommendation, it is recommended that the State Party carry out, on the scale of the medina, an in-depth study of the urban fabric and its attributes. This study could also examine the characteristics of the buffer zone and the visual fields to be preserved, and analyse the traditional and current patterns of use of the urban infrastructure to enable the PSMV to incorporate appropriate provisions for the socio-economic regeneration of the urban fabric while protecting its Outstanding Universal Value.

In the absence of a management plan, it is also recommended that the preparation of the PSMV should be used to establish a mechanism for the joint management of the medina, including representatives of the resident community and involving civil society to a greater extent in the preservation, enhancement and management of the property. In the meantime, efforts to raise awareness among local populations need to be reinforced.

It is worth recalling that the last revision of the urban development plan (PAU) dates from 2008 and that it must be taken into account in drawing up the PSMV, but that the PSVM must take precedence as soon as it is adopted, as a crucial regulatory tool for ensuring better preservation of the property.

The State Party acknowledges that the work carried out in 2016 on the Zawiya Sidi Sahbi was inadequate, as the INP was not consulted at the time. Although the major change - the installation of a roof in the prayer room - is reversible, it would be necessary to undertake rehabilitation measures that are appropriate to the status of the monument.

UNESCO had proposed an online technical follow-up and two expert missions (carried out in May 2024 and January 2025) to meet the challenges of restoring the collapsed sections of the Kairouan wall. A third monitoring mission is planned for September 2025 to take stock of the work carried out, monitor the progress of certain additional interventions and draw up a detailed list of priority interventions in the medina, for structures facing similar problems of capillary rise.

In view of the dynamics involved in the conservation and management of the property and the time required to implement the above-mentioned points, a state of conservation report is requested by 1 December 2027.

# **Draft Decision: 47 COM 7B.182**

- 1. Having examined Document WHC/25/47.COM/7B.Add.2.
- 2. <u>Thanks</u> the State Party for its invitation and hosting of a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM advisory mission in January 2023;
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the efforts made by the State Party to improve the conditions of the urban fabric as well as of the main attributes that contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, notably through several projects submitted to the World Heritage Centre, and the delimitation of the protected area, and <u>encourages</u> it to continue its efforts, in particular to increase the awareness and participation of local populations in the preservation and management of the property;
- 4. <u>Taking note</u> of the conclusions and recommendations of the 2023 advisory mission, <u>requests</u> that the State Party:
  - a) Carry out an in-depth study of the attributes of the property, the buffer zone and the visual fields to be preserved, including in the buffer zone and its surrounding context, in order to better understand how they support the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and better protect it:

- b) Based on the pilot project provided for in the Medina Regeneration and Enhancement Programme (PRCA) and the UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), to carry out a documentation and analysis of traditional and current patterns of use of the urban infrastructure to provide a basis for the socio-economic regeneration of the medina's urban fabric, and to enable the Safeguarding and Enhancement Plan (PSMV) to incorporate suitable provisions to support the regeneration of the property, while protecting its OUV;
- c) Take advantage of the preparation of the PSMV to establish a mechanism for the joint management of the medina, including representatives of the resident community, and involving civil society more closely in the preservation, enhancement and management of the property.
- d) To ensure that the PSMV takes precedence over the Urban Development Plan (PAU) as soon as it is adopted, in order to provide better protection for the property;
- 5. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to consider rehabilitation measures appropriate to the status of a major attribute of the property, the Zawiya Sidi Sahbi, and to transmit them to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, prior to their implementation;
- 6. <u>Finally requests</u> the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2027**, 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 50th session.