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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 7A of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of the properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

Summary

In accordance with Section IV B, paragraphs 190-191 of the Operational Guidelines, the Committee shall review annually the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. This review shall include such monitoring procedures and expert missions as might be determined necessary by the Committee. This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. 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: http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/47COM/documents

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

Decision required: The 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.

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NATURAL PROPERTIES

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

3. Everglades National Park (United States of America)

AFRICA

14. Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar)

See Document WHC/25/47.COM/7A.Add.4

16. Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

<u>Criteria</u> (ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2014-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

2014: Poaching and the ensuing dramatic declines in elephant populations, and the effects thereof on the ecosystem. In 2018 the impacts of the proposed Stiegler's Gorge hydropower dam (more recently referred to as the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP)) were added to the justification for Danger Listing.

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> A draft DSOCR was developed and submitted in 2024. It will be finalized during the next Reactive Monitoring Mission.

Corrective measures identified

A draft action plan with corrective measures was developed and submitted in 2024. It will be finalized during the next Reactive Monitoring mission.

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/documents/

<u>International Assistance</u> Requests approved: 3 (from 1984-1999) Total amount approved: USD 67,980 For details, see page <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/assistance/</u>

<u>UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds</u> N/A

Previous monitoring missions

June 2007, November 2008 and December 2013: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions. February 2017: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Significant decline of wildlife populations due to poaching
- Insufficient funding and interruption of the retention scheme
- Management challenges of trophy hunting
- Changes in legislation in 2009 permitting hydrocarbon and uranium prospecting and extraction inside game reserves
- Excision of land from the property to accommodate a uranium mine
- Operationalizing the uranium mining project and consideration of in-situ leaching by the developer

- Lack of disaster preparedness and water monitoring related to the uranium mine
- Inadequate tourism management and development
- Decision to construct and subsequent construction of the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) and its associated infrastructure without adequate impact assessment
- Logging within the reservoir area
- Proposed Kidunda Dam development without adequate impact assessment
- Other potential infrastructure developments
- Need for buffer zone
- Need for increased involvement of local communities
- Alien invasive species

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/

Current conservation issues

On 13 February 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/199/documents</u>, which reports the following:

- The State Party continues with the implementation of the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) while implementing mitigation measures for the impacts identified in the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for the project;
- An Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the project, including the findings of ten scientific studies commissioned to generate supplementary information to inform mitigation measures, is stated to be available for review but was not submitted with the report;
- The Lower Rufiji River has experienced severe cyclical floods (e.g., 1974, 1979, 2016, and the 2024 El Niño rains), which have historically posed serious threats to downstream communities. The JNHPP dam was designed to mitigate these impacts by regulating flood volume, duration, and providing an 8-hour warning window, reducing peak flows (e.g., flow in 2024 lowered from 8,444.87 m³/s to 4,663.63 m³/s);
- With a 15-year flood return rate, water flow regulation is seen as a critical improvement over natural catastrophic flooding, offering enhanced protection for downstream communities;
- Following UNESCO's recommendations, the Kidunda dam design has been updated, setting the maximum operating level at 84.5 m and peak flood level at 85.5 m above sea level. The inundation area within the property has been reduced by 58% (from 13.2 km² to 5.6 km²);
- Since the Kidunda dam project site lies outside the property and the affected zone is a natural floodplain, the project's inundation impact on the property is deemed minimum;
- The State Party has extended an invitation to the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Recalling again the history of significant concerns over the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) dam and the continued construction against the request of the Committee, it is deeply concerning to note that the project, located in the heart of the property with a water reservoir of about 32.8 billion m³, is now fully operational after the activation of all nine turbines in April 2025 reported in the media, collectively generating 2,115 megawatts. Although the State Party is reportedly implementing the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to mitigate the impacts of the dam on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), it needs to be emphasized once again that the World Heritage Centre and IUCN are of the view that the degree of impact of JNHPP on the OUV of the property is far greater than its physical footprint, with significant changes to the hydrology of the Rufiji river and major impacts on the ecosystems upstream and downstream of the dam with loss of forest cover, ecological connectivity and changes to the floodplain system. The Committee has repeatedly expressed its utmost concern over the irreversible impact of continued implementation of the JNHPP on the OUV of the property.

The Reactive Monitoring mission requested by the Committee was invited by the State Party, as already reported to the Committee in its 46th session; however, the State Party has not yet confirmed the proposed dates for the mission. It is recalled that the mission will be critical for assessing the status of

the OUV of the property and the options available to the State Party and the Committee, including options to conserve the wider Selous-Niassa ecosystem.

While the State Party reports on the severe cyclical floods that the Rufiji river has experienced historically, and the dam's regulation of flood volume and duration, it has not provided detailed information in response to the Committee's request (Decision **46 COM 7A.55**) on mitigation measures taken on impacts on communities, including loss of life and crops, downstream of the JNHPP following the discharge of water from the dam.

The revised Kidunda Dam design has reportedly reduced the inundation area within the property by 58% (from 13.2 km² to 5.6 km²). However, the remaining flooded reserve land still poses significant ecological concerns, particularly for migratory species and wetland ecosystems.

It must be stressed that the ESIA provided in 2024 does not adequately assess the potential impacts of the project on the property's OUV. Neither does it sufficiently address the cumulative effects of multiple dams (JNHPP and Kidunda) on the Rufiji River Delta, sediment transport, and the property's overall ecological resilience. Contrarily, it highlights that the dam's construction will flood areas of the property and the riverine habitats along the Ruvu and Mgeta rivers, reduce grazing areas for migratory herbivores, further obstruct the Selous-Wami Mbiki seasonal migration corridor, and facilitate access to protected natural resources within the property. Noting with concern that construction is reportedly already at least 27% complete, the Committee should request the State Party to halt the project and invite it to continue dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN on the ESIA revision process in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context to adequately assess the potential impacts of the project specifically on the OUV of the property, including the cumulative effects of multiple dams (JNHPP and Kidunda) on the property's overall ecological resilience.

While it is noted that the State Party continues to express its commitment to undertake ESIAs in line with the aforementioned guidelines, for any development that may impact the OUV of the property, it is of significant concern that the Tanzanian Mining Commission has awarded a drilling contract for the Mkuju Uranium Project and that drilling operations are reported to have commenced on the ground. The Committee explicitly requested for a new ESIA for the project to be undertaken to assess its potential impact on the OUV of the property prior to making any decision that would be difficult to reverse such as the approval of the project.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7A.16

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7A.Add.3,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **43** COM 7A.16, **44** COM 7A.51, **45** COM 7A.14 and **46** COM 7A.55 adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019), extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024) sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Expresses its utmost concern</u> that the Julius Nyerere Hydropower Project (JNHPP) is now fully operational with all nine turbines activated in April 2025, despite the utmost concerns and positions of the Committee, over the irreversible impact of continued implementation of the JNHPP on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and the clear position that the construction of dams with large reservoirs within the boundaries of World Heritage properties is incompatible with their World Heritage status;
- 4. <u>Regrets</u> that no information was provided regarding the previously reported flooding and its impacts on communities, including loss of life and crops, downstream of the JNHPP following the discharge of water from the dam as well as any mitigation measures taken;
- 5. <u>Acknowledges</u> the 58% reduction in the Kidunda Dam's inundation area, but <u>notes with</u> <u>concern</u> the ecological risks of the remaining flooded reserve land within the property on

migratory species, wetland ecosystems, and the Selous-Wami Mbiki seasonal migration corridor;

- 6. <u>Also expresses its utmost concern</u> that the State Party has reportedly commenced construction of the Kidunda Dam project, despite the Committee's request not to proceed with any decision that would be difficult to reverse, including to approve the project, before a new Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) has been undertaken, <u>also notes with concern</u> that the new ESIA submitted in 2024 does not assess the potential impacts of the Kidunda dam project on the OUV of the property, nor does it consider the cumulative effects of the dam with other developments such as the JNHPP on the Rufiji River's hydrology and the property's ecological resilience;
- 7. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to suspend the Kidunda Dam project implementation and continue dialogue with the Secretariat and Advisory Bodies on the revision of the existing ESIA in line with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, to include a comprehensive assessment of impacts on OUV and cumulative effects and agreed actions to address actual and potential impacts on OUV, prior to any resumption of project activities;
- 8. <u>Further recalling</u> the State Party's commitment to ensuring that previously planned major developments, including the suspended Mkuju uranium mine, would be subject to a new ESIA process should they be considered in the future, <u>expresses its deep concern</u> over the awarding of a driling contract by the Tanzanian Mining Commission and the reported commencement of drilling for the Mkuju Uranium Project without a new ESIA having been undertaken as requested by the Committee, and <u>urgently requests</u> the State Party to suspend all operations immediately until the potential impacts of the project on the OUV of the property have been rigorously assessed in line with the aforementioned guidelines and the ESIA submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
- 9. <u>Recalling</u> that the State Party has invited the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission, and <u>urges again</u> the State Party to organize this mission as soon as possible, to assess amongst other matters, the status of the elephant population, the impacts of the JNHPP implemented within the property, as well as of various other construction projects on the OUV of the property, as it was inscribed on the World Heritage List, and assess future scenarios for the property, including options to conserve the wider Selous-Niassa ecosystem;
- 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;
- 11. <u>Decides</u> to retain Selous Game Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

26. The Historic Centre of Odesa (Ukraine)

ARAB STATES

34. Abu Mena (Egypt)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

<u>Criteria</u> (iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2001-present

Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

- A land-reclamation programme and irrigation scheme with no appropriate drainage mechanism for the agricultural development of the region has caused a dramatic rise in the water table
- The destruction of numerous cisterns, disseminated around the property, has entailed the collapse of several overlying structures. Huge underground cavities have opened in the north-western region of the property
- A large, banked road has been built to enable movement within the property

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Adopted, see page <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1279</u>

Corrective measures identified

Adopted, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1279

<u>Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures</u> Adopted, see page <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1279</u> but outdated and needs to be revised

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/documents/

<u>International Assistance</u> Requests approved: 2 (from 2001-2023) Total amount approved: USD 63,504 For details, see page <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/assistance/</u>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

2002: Expert mission; 2005, 2009 and 2012: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; 2018: UNESCO and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations mission; April 2025 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Water (rain/water table): Rise of the underground water table level and ensuing damage to the structures (works completed)
- Impact on structures due to earth trembling and other forms of damage likely to result from the use of heavy earth-moving equipment (works completed)
- Housing: Encroachments within the property and inappropriate recent constructions
- Lack of conservation plan, defining short-, medium-, and long-term objectives and establishing technical parameters (materials, techniques, etc.) (works completed)
- Management systems/management plan: need for a management plan, to include research, presentation and interpretation, the role of stakeholders (e.g. the Mar Mena community), staffing, sponsorship, visitor facilities, access, etc. (works completed)
- Governance: Lack of engagement with local communities and other stakeholders (works completed)
- Management activities: Failure to implement corrective measures (works completed)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/

Current conservation issues

On 28 January 2025, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, a summary of which is available at <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/documents/</u>. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by previous Committee sessions is presented in this report:

- The groundwater-lowering system at Abu Mena is now fully operational and functions effectively. The system maintains the water table at the required depth of -7 meters. A specialized contractor is in charge of routine maintenance and monitoring, supported by an automated monitoring system and piezometers to record groundwater levels and system performance;
- Financial resources for activities contributing to the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property is provided by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities;
- The Conservation Plan for Abu Mena (2025–2035), including a strategic visitor management plan and prepared through an International Assistance request, is finalized. It was developed through a capacity-building programme. The plan will only be implemented following review by the Advisory Bodies;
- Restoration and stabilization works have been carried out to protect fragile structures, including to the basilicas and the tunnel network. These activities included mechanical cleaning and the installation of scaffolding and temporary supports to prevent collapse;
- Vegetation clearing and site maintenance were implemented from October to December 2024 to reduce physical threats to buried structures and ensure continued visibility and access;
- The Management Plan has been revised in response to ICOMOS' Technical Review and submitted by the State Party to the World Heritage Centre. It contains sections on visitor interpretation, access regulation, and a plan for the development of tourism services;
- The Supreme Committee for the Management of the Egyptian World Heritage Sites has established a special sub-committee to monitor the property and respond to challenges. The Prime Minister has directed all relevant entities not to implement any projects in or around the property's boundaries without notifying UNESCO and submitting Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to the World Heritage Centre;
- The State Party reiterated its invitation for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to visit the property.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property between 9 and 12 April 2025. The report of the mission will be available at: <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/90/documents/</u>.

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

Following the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2001 (Decision **25COM X.3-4**), the Committee adopted as Desired state of conservation for its removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) providing that the archaeological structures should be consolidated, that the water table be lowered and monitored through an established system, and that a Management Plan be implemented. The 2025 mission reports that the consolidation of critical archaeological remains has been undertaken and further consolidation and monitoring continues. The Committee may wish for the State Party to keep the Committee informed of all future conservation actions at the property.

A Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) was adopted by the Committee in Decision **45 COM 8E**. The State Party reports that it has finalised the stabilization of the archaeological structures, that its interventions to address the rising water table at the property have proven to be fruitful and that it has been successful in maintaining the water table level at -7 meters since 2022. An automated monitoring system is in place and a contractor is appointed to oversee the system. A constant maintenance budget needs to be available to commission a contractor.

The Management Plan has been completed, revised in response to ICOMOS' Technical Review, which, according to the 2025 mission, is currently being implemented. The State Party has also completed the corrective measures set out to achieve the DSCOR, including the completion of a draft Conservation Plan, which also includes a strategic plan developed for visitor management and sustainable development. The State Party reports that it will not implement the Conservation Plan until it has been

technically reviewed by the Advisory Bodies and that all individual development projects in the property should be notified to the World Heritage Centre and accompanied by HIAs. All of these measures are appropriate. It is pertinent to not proceed with the implementation of the draft Conservation Plan, until it is reviewed and accordingly finalized.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies conclude that the property no longer faces either ascertained or potential danger and that the State Party has substantively achieved the DSOCR for the property, although the Conservation Plan should still be technically reviewed to test its appropriateness. The Committee may wish to congratulate the State Party for these efforts, and to remove the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Other previous requests by the Committee not related directly to the established DSOCR still need to be implemented, specifically with regard to establishing the buffer zone or, at least, establishing mechanisms that guarantee the effective management of the immediate and wider settings of Abu Mena in a way that is supportive of the property's OUV and the maintenance of the rural character of the property's surroundings. In 2022 the State Party submitted a proposal for a minor boundary modification to this aim, which was deemed to be insufficient. The Committee requested in Decision **45 COM 8B.57**, amongst others that an ad-hoc management body be established for the property. This request is now fulfilled by the establishing of the special sub-committee. The Committee may however wish to reiterate its request to the State Party to consider enlarging the buffer zone then proposed or, at least, establish mechanisms that guarantee the effective management of the immediate and wider settings of the property in a way that is supportive of the property's OUV and the maintenance of the rural character of the property in a way that is supportive of the property's OUV and the maintenance of the rural character of the property is surroundings. Confirmation of the protective designation of the entire property by explicit legal protection would be welcome.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7A.34

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7A.Add.3,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decisions **25COM X.3-4**, **45 COM 8B.57** and **46 COM 7A.14**, adopted at its 25th (Helsinki, 2001), extended 45th (Riyadh, 2023) and 46th (New Delhi, 2024), sessions respectively,
- 3. <u>Welcomes</u> the State Party's efforts in implementing the corrective measures, and particularly:
 - a) Consolidating the archaeological features of the property,
 - Establishing a monitored system to stabilise the ground water table, the efficacy of which has been confirmed through continuous periodic measurements, and confirmed by the 2025 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission,
 - *c)* Updating the Management Plan in response to the Technical Review undertaken by ICOMOS;
- <u>Notes</u> the conclusions and recommendations contained in 2025 Reactive Monitoring mission report, and <u>requests</u> that the State Party consider the conclusions and implement all of its recommendations;
- 5. <u>Considers</u> that the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSCOR) has been met and <u>congratulates</u> the State Party for achieving this important milestone;
- 6. <u>Decides</u> to remove Abu Mena (Egypt) from the List of World Heritage in Danger;

- 7. <u>Acknowledges</u> the State Party's commitments to:
 - a) Revise and implement the Conservation Plan following its review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - b) Ensure adequate and continuous financial resources for the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, including for the operation and maintenance of the water table management installations,
 - c) Notify of any development included in the Conservation Plan to the World Heritage Centre, accompanied by Heritage Impact Assessments, to the World Heritage Centre,

and <u>also requests</u> that no decisions be made on the implementation of such projects until agreement has been reached on their details with the World Heritage Centre, advised by the Advisory Bodies,

- 8. <u>Further requests</u> that the State Party to adapt the Conservation Plan, and if needed, the Management Plan, to accommodate the recommendations of the forthcoming ICOMOS Technical Review of the Conservation Plan to ensure their appropriateness to the maintenance of the property's OUV;
- 9. <u>Requests furthermore</u> that the State Party establish mechanisms that guarantee the effective management of the immediate and wider settings of the property in a way that is supportive of the property's OUV and the maintenance of the rural character of the property's surroundings, either through the submission of a Minor Boundary Modification for the property that proposes a buffer zone to this effect, or through the establishment of other legally binding mechanisms;
- 10. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to:
 - a) Provide a detailed update on the ongoing conservation actions undertaken at the property,
 - b) Provide the monitoring records of the water table level,
 - *c)* Confirm the protective designation of the entire property through explicit legal protection;
- 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.

38. Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (site proposed by Jordan)

41. Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna (Libya)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

<u>Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Conflict situation prevailing in the country

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> In progress

<u>Corrective measures identified</u> In progress

Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures In progress

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/documents/

International Assistance Requests approved: 3 (from 1988-1990) Total amount approved: USD 45,500 For details, see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/assistance/

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 24,543 for the European Project "Protecting Cultural Heritage and Diversity in Complex Emergencies for Stability and Peace". June 2020: UNESCO/Netherlands Funds in Trust: USD 49,620 for Strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of corrective measures for Libyan World Heritage properties.

Previous monitoring missions

1988: UNESCO mission; March 2003: World Heritage Centre mission; May 2006: World Heritage Centre mission; January 2007: World Heritage Centre Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2025: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Illegal Activities
- Desertification
- Flooding (tidal flooding and continuous sea encroachment on the circus area)
- Conflict situation
- Sand covering certain areas of the property
- Graffiti and fires
- Localised utilities: discharge of domestic wastewater at the west of the property (issue resolved)
- Relative humidity (deterioration of monuments/alarming state of conservation of the Hunting Baths)

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/

Current conservation issues

On 15 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/documents/. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report as follows:

• Restoration, maintenance and rehabilitation work continued, addressing the Decumanus street, deteriorated doors in the Severan Basilica, the museum square fence, displaced street stone

elements, and documentation of architectural elements of the Arch of Trajan in cooperation with the Italian Macerata University mission, in order to develop a restoration proposal;

- Access to the Hunting Baths was cleared, allowing the cleaning of its interior and undertaking a condition assessment by the participants of the Libyan Antiquities Support Conference;
- In cooperation with the International Center for Archaeological, Historical and Anthropological Research mission, the area of the Temple of Flavio was cleaned and documented to prepare a 3D digital model, the Hunting Baths area with the surrounding sand was documented through a short film, and the mission's warehouse of archaeological finds was restored. The Rome III University mission classified murals in the warehouse for display in the Mosaic Museum of Leptis Magna;
- Vegetation removal was undertaken in areas of the property, through the project 'Managing Libya's Cultural Heritage' (MaLiCH), supported by the ALIPH Foundation (International Alliance for the Protection of Heritage), in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities (DoA);
- Cleaning work continued in the Amphitheatre area and the gardens of the Leptis Museum, while water accumulated from rainfall was pumped out;
- Wadi Al-Rasaf was cleaned after completing the cleaning of Wadi Lebda to mitigate impact of flooding;
- No impact is noted in the Circus, as there was no sea encroachment;
- Sand encroachment is a major threat to the Hunting Baths, and support has been requested in this regard;
- Challenges include the lack of financial resources, extensive vegetation growth, and water accumulation due to rainfall;
- A new highway construction project is planned near the boundary and buffer zone of the property that is currently being reviewed. A survey is being undertaken and a report is being prepared to be submitted. There is a need for further examination of the proposed buffer zone before submitting it to the World Heritage Centre.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property in February 2025. The mission report will be available at: <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/183/documents/</u>.

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

Progress has been made in addressing conservation issues at the property, despite ongoing constraints. Restoration, cleaning, and documentation efforts continue, along with flood mitigation measures. The continued conservation activities demonstrate commitment to the property's protection. Nevertheless, in order to ensure a sustained and comprehensive approach, the development of a Conservation Action Plan and a Management Plan remains crucial.

Significant challenges related to the impact of climatic factors and the property's proximity to the sea persist. While the State Party has reported that there has been no impact of tidal flooding and sea encroachment on the Circus area, sand accumulation at the Hunting Baths continues to pose a major threat. Hence, the development of a comprehensive conservation strategy for the Hunting Baths is urgently needed, as is an overall risk assessment of the impact of sea encroachment on the property with the elaboration of related mitigation measures.

The retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was adopted by the Committee at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024). It is therefore an opportune time to continue the process for the review and finalization of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), with corrective measures and a timeframe for implementation. It is also recommended to continue consultations with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies concerning the elaboration of a Minor Boundary Modification proposal, with the designation of a buffer zone, and to submit it in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines.

The State Party has provided information regarding a highway project with information stating that no works will be carried out until an archaeological survey is conducted in accordance with national legislation. All further detailed information should be provided about this project, including a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) undertaken in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact

Assessments in a World Heritage Context, in line with paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property in February 2025, which allowed for an overall assessment of the state of conservation of the property. The State Party should be encouraged to pursue implementation of the mission's recommendations.

Financial constraints continue to hinder substantial conservation efforts. The lack of restoration materials and equipment has led to the suspension of some activities. It is therefore recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to submit an International Assistance request to address pressing issues currently facing the property. Additionally, the Committee may wish to reiterate its call for increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party to pursue urgent conservation and risk prevention measures.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the property remains on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7A.41

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7A.Add.3,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision 46 COM7A.21, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
- 3. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the efforts of the State Party and its partners in implementing conservation measures, undertaking documentation and restoration activities, and engaging with partners to address challenges at the property, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to continue its efforts for the conservation of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) to the extent possible and to seek the necessary funds as needed;
- 4. <u>Continues encouraging</u> the State Party to initiate the development of a comprehensive Conservation Action Plan for the property, and to pursue the development of a Management Plan, while seeking the necessary technical and financial support in this regard;
- 5. <u>Strongly urges</u> the State Party to finalize the process of developing the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), with a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- 6. <u>Reiterates its concern</u> about the alarming state of conservation of the Hunting Baths and its request to the State Party to:
 - a) Pursue the development of a conservation strategy for the Hunting Baths, with urgent conservation measures aiming to preserve and protect the monument, and to seek the necessary technical and financial support in this regard,
 - b) Present the proposed conservation plan for the Hunting Baths to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies,
 - c) Continue consulting the Advisory Bodies with regard to restoration materials and techniques planned to be used at the Hunting Baths and the other archaeological remains at the property before their implementation;
- 7. <u>Also reiterates its concern</u> about the issue of tidal flooding and sea encroachment, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to carry out an overall risk assessment of its impact on the

property with the elaboration of related mitigation measures, and to present them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;

- 8. <u>Reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to continue, in close consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, the elaboration of a Minor Boundary Modification proposal, and to submit it in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 9. <u>Also requests</u> the State Party to provide further detailed information about the highway project, including a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) undertaken in accordance with the Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context, in line with paragraphs 172 and 118bis of the Operational Guidelines;
- 10. <u>Further requests</u> the State Party to keep the Committee informed, through the World Heritage Centre, on the evolution of the property and its setting, and to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information on all plans and ongoing works that may impact the OUV of the property, including HIAs before making decisions that are may be difficult to reverse;
- 11. <u>Takes note</u> of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission that visited the property in February 2025, and <u>also encourages</u> the State Party to implement its recommendations, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- 12. <u>Further encourages</u> the State Party to submit an International Assistance request to address the pressing conservation and management issues and lack of resources that the property is currently facing;
- 13. <u>Continues to call</u> for an increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
- 14. <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;
- 15. <u>Decides</u> to retain Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

42. Archaeological Site of Sabratha (Libya)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

<u>Criteria</u> (iii)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2016-present

<u>Threats for which the property was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Conflict situation prevailing in the country

<u>Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger</u> Not yet drafted

<u>Corrective measures identified</u> Not yet identified

<u>Timeframe for the implementation of the corrective measures</u> Not yet identified

Previous Committee Decisions see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/documents/

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0 Total amount approved: USD 0 For details, see page <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/assistance/</u>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: June 2020: UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust: USD 49,620 for Strengthening national capacities for the elaboration of corrective measures for Libyan World Heritage properties.

Previous monitoring missions

June 2000: World Heritage Centre mission; March 2003: World Heritage Centre mission; January 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2025: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Urban encroachment/Housing
- Invasive/alien terrestrial species
- Land conversion
- Natural degradation
- Management System/Management Plan: Absence of a management plan and a holistic conservation strategy
- Conflict situation prevailing in the country
- Other Threats: Excessive vegetation growth; Impact of humidity and seawater salt on stone
 masonry

Illustrative material see page https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/

Current conservation issues

On 15 January 2025, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/documents/. Progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is presented in this report, as follows:

- Minor restoration and cleaning work was carried out, mainly due to limited resources. Works included installing wooden supports for the deteriorated Sea Baths, conservation interventions using hydraulic lime, and treating the murals in the funerary temple of Sidrat al-Balik by injection;
- Vegetation removal was undertaken by the project 'Managing Libya's Cultural Heritage' (MaLiCH), in cooperation with the Department of Antiquities (DoA), in many parts of the property, during a 10-day campaign;
- The most notable damage results from erosion from wind and sea humidity. The Roman Theatre suffered some collapse and presents cracks on the third floor due to previous restoration work, in addition to weathering; the columns of the Temple of Liber Pater, made of sandstone, are at risk of collapse due to erosion; erosion is visible along the arch of the Curia, including its mortar layer used in previous restoration work; the Sea Baths and the Temple of Isis are directly impacted due to their proximity to the sea, especially due to high waves, with some collapse observed, and hence protection form waves is needed.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property in February 2025. The mission report will be available at: <u>https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/184/documents/</u>.

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

The State Party report highlights ongoing conservation challenges faced by the property, emphasizing environmental threats and limited resources for conservation work. Despite these constraints, efforts have been made to address urgent conservation issues. Nevertheless, it is recommended that consultations take place with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies for further advice on materials and methods for stabilizing fragile remains.

There is continuous weathering and deterioration at the property, exacerbated by coastal erosion, high waves, and the impact of previous interventions. This underscores the need for a comprehensive conservation plan that should comprise detailed documentation and assessments, establishment of a clear strategy for interventions, with technical specifications and materials for conservation work, prepared in full consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies. In its technical review of the project undertaken for the Roman Theatre, ICOMOS considered that the report provides an excellent basis for further onsite investigations, which would help determine areas for direct interventions and a sustainable monitoring and conservation strategy. Managing vegetation is a conservation challenge that needs to be addressed on a regular basis and hence it would be pertinent to include a site maintenance strategy as part of the conservation plan.

Moreover, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its previous requests to the State Party to develop, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a retrospective Statement of Outstanding universal Value (OUV) as a priority, as this will establish a basis of the elaboration of the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). It is also recommended to pursue efforts in defining an appropriate buffer zone and submitting a Minor Boundary Modifications proposal, in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines, to strengthen protection and management of the property, and prevent encroachment.

The development of a Management Plan for the property remains essential as well, and it recommended to continue to invite the State Party to seek the necessary technical and financial support and allocate the resources required for its implementation.

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property in February 2025, which allowed for an overall assessment of the state of conservation of the property. The mission concluded that, while the direct threat resulting from the conflict appeared to be no longer present, the property is still vulnerable to many environmental factors, and the effects of the lack of maintenance for some time. The State Party should be encouraged to pursue implementation of the mission's recommendations, particularly with regard to addressing vulnerable remains that are at risk, and the development of a comprehensive conservation plan, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies.

Given the persistent resource constraints preventing the implementation of substantial conservation programmes, it is recommended that the Committee encourage the State Party to submit an international Assistance request to address the pressing issues currently facing the property. Additionally, the Committee may wish to reiterate its call for increased mobilization of the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party to pursue urgent conservation and risk prevention measures.

It is recommended to retain the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 47 COM 7A.42

- 1. <u>Having examined</u> Document WHC/25/47.COM/7A.Add.3,
- 2. <u>Recalling</u> Decision 46 COM 7A.22, adopted at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024),
- 3. <u>Notes with appreciation</u> the efforts of the State Party in undertaking conservation and cleaning work despite resource constraints, and <u>encourages</u> the State Party to continue its efforts for the conservation of the property and safeguard of its Outstanding Universal

Value (OUV) to the extent possible, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, and to seek the necessary funds as needed;

- 4. <u>Urges</u> the State Party to develop, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, a draft retrospective Statement of OUV, for examination by the World Heritage Committee;
- 5. <u>Also urges</u> the State Party to develop a set of corrective measures and a timeframe for their implementation, as well as the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- 6. <u>Reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to pursue close consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for the elaboration of a Minor Boundary Modification proposal, and to submit it in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 7. <u>Continues encouraging</u> the State Party to pursue the development of a Management Plan for the property, and <u>invites</u> it to seek the necessary technical and financial support and allocate the resources required for its implementation;
- 8. <u>Takes note</u> of the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission that visited the property in February 2025, and <u>requests</u> the State Party to implement its recommendations, particularly with regard to safeguarding vulnerable remains that are at risk, and the development of a comprehensive conservation plan, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;
- 9. <u>Also encourages</u> the State Party to submit an International Assistance request to address the pressing conservation and management issues that the property is currently facing;
- 10. <u>Continues to call</u> for an increased mobilization by the international community to provide financial and technical support to the State Party, including through the UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund;
- 11. <u>Reiterates its request</u> to the State Party to continue to keep the Committee informed on the evolution of the situation at the property and to inform it, through the World Heritage Centre, on any ongoing and future plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may impact the OUV of the property, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
- 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 implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 48th session;
- 13. <u>Decides</u> to retain Archaeological Site of Sabratha (Libya) on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

45. Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town (State of Palestine)

47. Saint Hilarion Monastery/ Tell Umm Amer (State of Palestine)