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WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-eighth session

Suzhou, China

28 June – 7 July 2004

Item 15B of the Provisional Agenda: State of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List

ADDENDUM

This document contains information on the state of conservation of two properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, as state of conservation reports for discussion by the Committee.

Decision required: In both cases, the Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The Committee may wish to adopt the draft decision presented at the end of each state of conservation report.

Revised Draft Decision 28 COM 15 B.27 (Volcanoes of Kamchatka, Russian Federation) : see page 3

Draft Decision 28 COM 15 B.122 (Yellowstone, United States of America) : see page 5

27. Volcanoes of Kamchatka (Russian Federation) (N 765 bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List: 1996, 2001

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

Previous International Assistance:

None

Previous Bureau/Committee Deliberations:

26 COM 21(b) 20

27 COM 7B.20

Conservation issues:

Following the joint IUCN/UNESCO mission to the site which took place from 17 to 21 May 2004, an update of the situation and revised recommendations are provided below in addition to the state of conservation report in document WHC-04/28.COM/15B. The mission identified a total of 13 key issues and provided detailed recommendations on each of these issues:

- (a) Salmon poaching: Improved coordination of activities among the agencies concerned, including monitoring, regulation and law enforcement is required; including enhancing staffing levels, ensuring that staff are empowered to take action against poachers, and increasing the penalties for those convicted of poaching.
- (b) Mining: The International Council on Mining & Metals (ICMM) policy statement on mining and World Heritage should be applied to any mining operations on the Kamchatka Peninsula; appropriate environmental impact assessments (EIA) for any mines and associated infrastructure prior to any work have to be undertaken; any mining operations outside the World Heritage area should operate according to best mining practice and latest technology; the State Party also should require all mining companies operating in the vicinity of the World Heritage property to collaborate fully with the park authority; and the boundaries of the World Heritage area should not be changed purely to accommodate mining potential.
- (c) Gas pipeline (and potential oil and gas exploration): careful monitoring is required of the impact of the pipeline on the World Heritage property; and ensure that the construction of the pipeline comply with any provisions which mitigate impact on spawning rivers.
- (d) Geothermal powerplant: EIAs should take into account the World Heritage value and any potential threats to the site.
- (e) Hunting: the Kamchatka Regional Government should progressively phase out the hunting concessions in Nalychevo Zakaznik to avoid conflicts with increasing tourism access and development. It is also necessary to improve staffing, resourcing, procedures and inter-agency coordination to ensure compliance with trophy hunting licenses.

(f) Staffing and funding: the State Party should be commended for improving the staff and budgets in recent years. Nevertheless it is urged to continue to increase the reported funding and staff levels for the reserve. This is important to ensure the State Party operates as an equal partner in financing the management of the property with international donor support.

(g) Roads: an effective monitoring and control programme should be implemented without delay; inspection stations need to be established to check poaching; best possible standards of road construction and maintenance have to be applied; and no subsidiary roads should be constructed.

(h) Tourism: careful development of ecotourism opportunities could balance the protection of the site's outstanding universal value with the great potential for year round tourism in and around the World Heritage areas. Ecotourism should become a viable and long term income generator for the site. The collaborative approach advocated within the UNEP/GEF/IUCN Ecotourism Development Programme for Kamchatka should be extended to all the reserves within the World Heritage property; Further strengthening the partnership with the private sector could enhance tourism benefits for the parks.

(i) Management planning and coordination: the completion of management plans for the two outstanding reserves within the World Heritage property should be encouraged. The finalized management plans should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN for information; consideration should be given to further strengthening cooperation between the two federal and the four regional parks, which form the World Heritage property.

(j) Boundaries: any decision on boundary adjustment, revision of boundaries or extensions should be conditional on a detailed review of the values for which the site was inscribed. The boundaries of the World Heritage property should be marked on the ground, with priority given to those areas with greatest public access.

(k) Legislative framework for management: The State Party should ensure that due legal processes are expedited.

(l) Integrated conservation and development planning for the Peninsula: the State Party is also encouraged to support integrated development and conservation planning to ensure balanced land-use decisions on the Kamchatka Peninsula. The management of the World Heritage property should be placed within the broader landscape context and in recognition of the Peninsula's economic and social issues.

(m) Other issues (forest fires, logging and timber concessions, and relations with indigenous people): research should be encouraged to better understand the natural fire patterns and regimes to ensure that these processes remain undisturbed and that human induced fires are actively suppressed;

The State Party should ensure greater communication and coordination between park authorities at both Federal and Regional levels and the Forest Service of the Ministry of

Natural Resources operating in Kamchatka and exercise every effort to ensure that the World Heritage site is managed together with indigenous people and local populations.

The mission concluded that the Volcanoes of Kamchatka is a vast site of exceptional natural beauty and diversity and that the outstanding universal value for which the World Heritage site was inscribed is being maintained, however, emerging issues have great potential to threaten the site. The State Party needs to ensure that these issues are addressed at an early stage to guarantee the integrity of the site and apply the highest possible standards of care, control and management.

Draft Decision: 28 COM 15 B.27

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Welcomes the State Party's report on the state of conservation of this site and acknowledges the efforts from the State Party to address a number of integrity issues that have been of concern to the Committee;*
2. *Further welcomes the support provided by the UNDP/GEF project on the Maintenance of Biological Diversity in the Russian Federation to enhance the management of key protected areas within this site;*
3. *Notes the detailed results of the UNESCO-IUCN mission to the site carried out in May 2004 and requests the State Party to carefully review the key findings and implement the comprehensive recommendations from the mission;*
4. *Commends the State Party for its efforts to increase staffing and resourcing for the World Heritage site and urges it to better match the level of support from international donors and the contribution from commercial tour operators to meet its obligations to maintain the site's outstanding universal value and operating as an equal partner in the management of the reserves;*
5. *Requests the State Party to ensure that the development of the Kamchatka Peninsula is balanced and integrated with the conservation of its outstanding natural values and to give urgent attention to a range of issues, including poaching, mining, tourism development, and access impacts on the World Heritage property; and*
6. *Further requests the State Party to submit by 1 February 2005 an updated report on the progress made in addressing the issues raised by the UNESCO-IUCN mission for examination by the Committee at its 29th session in 2005.*

122. Yellowstone (United States of America) (N 28)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List: 1978

Inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger: 1995 - 2003

Criteria: N (i) (ii) (iii) (iv)

Previous International Assistance:

None

Previous Bureau/Committee Deliberations:

26 COM 21(a) 8

27 COM 7A.12

Conservation issues:

The State Party provided via letter dated 30 January 2004 a detailed updated report on the situation of Yellowstone National Park.

IUCN received the State Party's report on Yellowstone National Park noting recent work and progress achieved in addressing key integrity issues that have been of concern to the World Heritage Committee. These include:

(a) Mining Activities: Clean up of toxic materials from past mining started in 2000 and is expected to take seven years, but post project maintenance will be funded in perpetuity. The report noted that, while the tailings (which are outside Yellowstone) have stabilised and water quality inside the park has improved, the park continues to work with relevant agencies and others to have the tailings removed and the site restored.

(b) Threats to Bison: In 2000, Yellowstone National Park, the State of Montana, US Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant and Animal Health Inspection Service co-signed a joint bison management plan to maintain wildlife populations and manage the risk of transmission of Brucella infection from bison to cattle within the state of Montana. IUCN recognised this initiative is a long-term plan that manages current risks and sets the stage for future discussions about eradication of the disease. IUCN noted this carefully crafted consensus based plan has been successfully implemented for three years and that discussions and research are currently underway, to consider ways of eventually eliminating brucellosis from wildlife in the greater Yellowstone area while maintaining wild and free ranging wildlife herds.

(c) Threats to Cutthroat Trout: The State Party reported that experts on fish species concluded that the risk of extinction of the native cutthroat trout from the introduced lake trout was real and substantial. However, no technology exists to eradicate lake trout from the lake nor treat or control the trout disease. In the near future, the best that could be hoped for was long-term suppression of lake trout through the deployment of "industrial strength gillnets", to resolve the declining cutthroat trout population. This was implemented by the National Park Service (NPS) beginning in 1995 targeting the estimated 7,000 reproducing adult lake trout extant that year. In addition, a no limit, no live release regulation for lake

trout has been actively promoted and the angler catch has represented 20 percent of the total harvest. Research continues to seek tools for combating whirling disease. The report indicates that gillnet fishing effort has increased each year and has resulted in the destruction of approximately 56,000 adult and juvenile lake trout. Catch per unit effort declined in 2002 and again in 2003, and for the first time gave biologists hope that exploitation was beginning to affect the population.

(d) **Water Quality Issues:** It was reported that all of the park's fuel storage tanks have been replaced with new double walled liquid tanks or environmentally friendly propane gas tanks. It notes that the US Congress has appropriated funds to replace old sewage treatment plants and these projects are underway or completed.

(e) **Road Impacts:** Yellowstone has an integrated, methodical and long-term programme to improve the condition of the park's roads and lessen unsafe conditions and unsatisfactory experiences for visitors and prevention of resource degradation. It is noted that much has been accomplished in upgrading the existing road system since 1995, it is a slow process because of the short construction season.

(f) **Visitor Use Impacts:** The report noted that concerns have been raised regarding winter use in the park, but the summer visitation levels are also a concern for many people. It noted that the numbers of visitors in the park, whether summer or winter, is a contentious subject with the US public. It noted that the completion of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) on a new winter use management plan called for protecting visitor safety and enjoyment, air quality, wildlife and natural quiet of Yellowstone by phasing out Snowmobile use over a three year period, and replacing them with non polluting, mass transit snow coaches. It notes that the decision was challenged in a federal court. A subsequent lawsuit settlement stipulated the NPS would prepare a supplemental EIS analyzing the snowmobile ban and various alternatives to the ban. The report noted the draft EIS was released to the public in 2002 and generated over 350,000 public comments. The final EIS was released in February 2003, and a record of decision signed on 25 March 2003, which approved the new winter use plan. The NPS decision allows for continued snowmobile use under strict limitations, establishing daily use limits, requiring the use of cleaner and quieter 4-stroke engines and requiring snow mobile parties to be guided.

Draft Decision: 28 COM 15 B.122

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Commending the State Party for its comprehensive report provided following the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2003 and for its continued efforts in addressing key conservation and management issues in the site,*

2. Requests the State Party to continue to report on Yellowstone's snowmobile phase-out and other efforts to ensure that winter travel facilities respect the protection of the Park, its visitors, and its wildlife;
3. Further requests the State Party to submit by 1 February 2005 an updated report on the progress made in the conservation of the property for examination by the Committee at its 29th session in 2005.