The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE)

THE KONSO CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION DOSSIER

SUBMITTED TO THE
WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

By
The Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH),
Ministry of Culture and Tourism
FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

January, 2009
### Executive Summary

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<th>Ethiopia</th>
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<td>State, Province or Region</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), the Konso administrative district (Special Woroda).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Property</td>
<td>The Konso Cultural Landscape.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographical coordinates to the nearest second</td>
<td>Between 5°16'15&quot; and 5°21'20&quot; North and 37°20'15&quot; and 37°26'49&quot; East.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property</td>
<td><strong>To the North</strong>- the lowland and the northern limits of the Gocha, Gamole and Dokatu terraces. <strong>To the North East and East</strong>- the lowland and the Arbaminch Konso road, the Bekawle town and south of it, and just east of Darra town. <strong>To the South East and South</strong> - the lowland south east and south of the Bamale forest, the road that runs from Busso to Fasha. <strong>To the South West and West</strong> - the Burjo and Fasha terraces and then joining the Fasha - Bekawle road, and passes to the West of the Kala forest and includes the northern limits of the Gocha terraces. This boundary defines the traditional core Konso settlement.</td>
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<td>A4 (or &quot;letter&quot;) size map of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone (if present)</td>
<td>A4 size map attached.</td>
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<td>Justification</td>
<td>- The Konso have a history of at least 500 years old terrace agricultural system and water conservation techniques which they developed as a response for the dry environment. The terraces are very extensive and are made using dry stone techniques contouring the hills. These terraces are culturally maintained . - Their traditional towns are located at strategic locations and surrounded with multiple rings of dry stone walls. The social organization and cultural life of the communities in these towns revolve around a ward system and common spaces, connected to each other, where all cultural activities take place. - They maintain traditionally protected forests which continue to be used for medicine, rituals and as places of residence and burial for their ritual chiefs. - They erect stomes/stelae to commemorate the transfer of generation responsibilities conducted ritually, and as grave markers. This puts them among the last living megalithic people on Earth.</td>
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<td>Statement of Outstanding Universal Value</td>
<td>(iii), (v), (vi).</td>
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<td>Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)</td>
<td>Organization: Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages, Address: Po. Box-13247 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Tel: 251-0115535051 Fax: 251-011510705 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ARCCH@ethionet.et">ARCCH@ethionet.et</a></td>
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Acknowledgement

Many institutions and individuals have taken part in the preparation of this Nomination Dossier for the Konso Cultural landscape. The initial support for the preparation if the File was obtained from the WHC in the end of 1990’s through its preparatory assistance.

In 2007 the Association for Research and Conservation of Cultures, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscape (ARCCIKCL), a local association based in Awassa Ethiopia, has conducted field research, thanks to the financial support it obtained from the Christensen Fund (TCF), a USA based organization supporting research on cultures and indigenous knowledge.

Drs. Kenneth B. Wilson and Tadesse Wolde and the Members of the Board of TCF are acknowledged for their advise and encouragement. H.E. Mr. Jara Haile Mariam Director of the ARCCCH and H.E. Mr. Temesgen Tilahun Head of the Bureau of Information of Culture of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional Government have provided the much needed administrative support both in office and in the field. Mr. Geremew Ayano, Mr. Ereke Geyeto and the staff members of the Konso administration have facilitated the work; and together with the Konso community and elders participated in the fieldwork and the formulation of the management plan.

Dr. Yonas Beyene has prepared the Nomination File and directed the field research conducted with Mr. Awoke Amzaye, Dr. Metasebia Bekele and Mr. Slehab Melak. Stephanie Melillo has provided technical support.

Drs. Lazar Eloundou, Nada Al Hassan, Fumiko Ohinata and Galia Saouma-Forero have provided reference documents and encouragements. Dr. A. Balsamo of the WHC, UNESCO has provided the much needed comments up on the voluntary submission of the dossier to the WHC.
**Forward**

Ethiopia occupies a key position in the world as home of some of the planet’s invaluable heritage sites. This is made possible through the support and recognition of the UNESCO. So far, the World Heritage properties recognized in Ethiopia were historical, archaeological, paleontological and natural sites. Ethiopia is now proposing a Cultural Landscape, a new heritage category to the country, for inscription by the WHC.

The presently proposed Konso Cultural Landscape has been recognized by various foreign and local scholars as an example of man-nature inter-relationship and was made subject of various research topics.

The Konso cultural landscape was first noted as possible candidate for inscription since the 1996 Second Global Strategic Meeting on the African Cultural Heritage and the World Heritage Convention that took place in Addis Ababa.

Based on the tentative list presented to it, the WHC had provided preparatory assistance for the preparation of a Nomination File and the Dossier was submitted to WHC in July 2001. This Nomination File was returned to the ARCCH in July 2002 for it lacked some of the basic requirements needed for its evaluation. These requirements are now met, and the time has finally arrived to complete the needed documentation and to once again propose the Konso Cultural Landscape for recognition by the WHC and there by to help insure its conservation.

The Konso communities living within the proposed area for nomination, the local administration and the Regional Government together with the various stakeholders have agreed to continue to insure the preservation and the integrity of the Konso Cultural Landscape. The Ethiopian Government as the State Party, through its Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism insures the protection of the Konso Cultural Landscape and all
heritage properties within the country. Special attention is given to sites recognized by the WHC, UNESCO. This is attested through our continuous and exemplary collaborative efforts in the Axum and Lalibela World Heritage sites. We will continue our efforts in the protection and conservation our heritages and to bring more sites for recognition and inscription on the World Heritage List.

His Excellency, Mr. Jara Haile-Mariam,
Director of the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH),
Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ethiopia.
1. Identification of property

1. a. Country (and State Party if different)
   Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

1. b. State, Province or Region
   Ethiopia, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), the Konso administrative district (Special Woreda).

1. c. Name of Property
   The Konso Cultural Landscape.

1. d. Geographical coordinates to the nearest second
   The Core area proposed lies between 5°16’16” and 5°21’20” North and 37°20’5” and 37°26’49” East. The coordinates show the farthest extents of the boundary. The actual boundary lies within the indicated coordinates.

1. e. Maps and plans if available, showing boundary of area proposed for inscription and of any buffer zone
   List of Annexed Maps (the maps are used in the text in reduced format):
   - Map 1- topographic map 1:50000 showing the boundary of area proposed for inscription,
   - Map 2- map of terrace intensity and other properties within the boundary,
   - Map 3- map of nominated properties within the boundary (without terraces),
Specially prepared maps- showing individual features within the nominated area. A series of individual maps indicating twelve walled towns and three traditionally protected forests are prepared. These are made to provide additional information on the multiple dry stone walled towns and their principal gates, major cultural spaces (Mora), major foot paths, wards (Kanta) organization, burials, new structures outside the traditional towns. Maps of a traditionally protected forests are also presented.

**Statement on Buffer zone:** A buffer zone is not required for the Konso cultural landscape proposed for nomination. This is because, among the major features found within the area proposed for nomination, dry stone terraces are present and are used in to the adjacent areas beyond the core area. The owners of the adjacent areas continue to keep-up their terraces following the traditional conservation techniques like the farmers within the nominated area.

The sacred forests and the ponds within the nominated area are bordered by terrace farms and some times by foot paths.

The actual boundaries of the traditional walled towns (Paletas) and the forests are clearly demarcated on specially prepared maps. Foot paths circle the outer walls of the walled towns leading to farms, water points, other villages, markets, and to ritual occasions. The outer area is sometimes used for planting Dina grooves for use as fire extinguisher and as latrine, and occasionally as burial ground. This actual traditional town boundaries may change in the future as the konso people continue to follow their traditional ways of extending their walled towns by making terraces in the adjacent slopes to make more space for the newer generation members and thus more retention walls are in the making.

A legislation text to be issued, now at draft stage(attached), by the Regional Government and agreed upon by the community shall enforce the future
protection of the properties within the proposed boundary, specifically the traditional towns which may need defined regulation in the future.

Fig. 1- Location of Ethiopia in Africa.

Fig. 2- Location of Konso district within Ethiopia and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS).
Fig. 3- Map of the Konso Special district and boundaries of the Peasant Associations (Paletas). The Nominated properties are within Gamole, Gocha, Mechelo, Mecheke, Fasha (for Burjo), Gaho, Busso, Western and Southern Dokatu, Western Dera, and Olanta Paletas. This area is the higher elevated part of the Konso land bordered in all sides by the low laying lands of the Chamo basin (to the North, NE and NW), Segen Basin (to the East, South and SW).
Fig. 4- Boundary of the nominated area (1: 50,000 topographic map of Konso area).
Fig. 5 - Map showing the terrace intensity presented in percentage, and other cultural properties within the proposed boundary.
Fig. 6 - Walled towns, ritual forests and ponds within the proposed boundary.

1. f. **Area of nominated property (ha.) and proposed buffer zone (ha.)**

   The nominated area is approximately 140 Sq. Kms. or 14,000 ha.
2. Description

The Konso People live in Ethiopia about 600 kms. south of Addis Ababa. They speak Afan Konso, one of the Eastern Cushitic languages of Ethiopia and occupy a rugged country formed as a result of early Miocene volcanism which created the basaltic hills. The main Ethiopian Rift of the Great East African Rift system ends here at Konso. The Konso hills overlook to the North/NE, towards the low-lying Chamo Basin; to the East, the volcanic plugs and the Segen Valley; to the South, the Segen valley and Lake Stephanie (Chew-Bahir); and to the West and North West, the Woito Basin and the Gidole highlands.

The Konso country as whole covers 2354 Km. square area and the population is estimated to be 280,000. 44500 people live with in the nominated 140 square Km. area. The country and the people are referred to by the same name, Konso. The Konso country is generally dry and precipitation is between around 500 and 1500 mm. There are two rain seasons: one is between February and March and the other between September and December.

2 a. Description of Property

A- The terraces

The Konso are agricultural people growing mainly finger millet and corn. They also cultivate coffee, cotton and soja bean. The Konso have adopted a terrace agricultural system and the core Konso area is characterized by extensive dry stone terraces. The intensively terraced slopes are located between an altitude of 1500 and 2000 meters. These terraces retain the soil from erosion and create terrace saddles that are used for agriculture. The terraces are the main features of the Konso landscape and the hills are contoured by the dry stone terraces that could reach at some places up to 5 meter high. The terrace retention walls are built with heavier blocks at the base. The saddles that are
prepared for agriculture are between four and eight meters wide at most places.

The whole of the Konso country, including Kolme, Gewada and the Segen valley, which are adjacent to the core area have extensive terrace systems.

The visitor to Konso is captivated by the view of the landscape witnessing hundreds of years of persistent human struggle to harness the hard, dry and rocky environment, and which at last has resulted in the beautifully outlined rows of dry stone terraces that could attain a length of several thousands of Kilometers. As Hallpike puts it, “Perhaps nowhere else in traditional Ethiopia has the hand of man so impressed itself on the landscape as in Konso” (Hallpike, C.R. 1972, p 21).

![Photo 1- Terrace between Dokatu and Mechelo. (March 2008).](image)
Herman Ambrone (Ambrone, H. 1989) had clearly described the Konso terraces as follows:

...Terrace walls less than a meter high are constructed almost perpendicularly. Where higher, the walls are often sloped at an angle of 80 degrees. Stepping stones may be tailed in...For stability, wall foundations are sunk in to the ground about 10-25 cm. ...Usually, terrace walls will exceed the level of the fields they retain by 20 to 40 cm in order to avoid fast run-off damaging the wall.

Along the sides of natural gullies special constructions are necessary because of the greater danger of destruction by torrential waters. All together the terrace walls combine into balanced network. Bends in the wall-lines are sometimes reinforced by means of turrets. Such turrets seldom rise more than 2 m above the field level; they serve as platforms from which the fields can be guarded from birds and animals. For further stability where required flanking walls are built to cross the terraces perpendicularly some 50 m apart. These are about 1 1/2 m high and again serve as pathways for both humans and cattle.

Since the humus layer tends to be light and thin (sometimes less than 10cm), terracing is employed on any slopes inclined more than 1:25...

Heights of terrace-walls and the width of the fields which they retain are determined essentially by the angle of slope. With wall heights of 1/2m to 11/2m preferred, most fields vary in width between 2 and 8 m, but both wider and narrower examples exist. Walls of 6m height occur, while those surrounding towns, built by the same techniques, are in some instances more than 10m high.

Fields are carefully leveled so that moisture may be held as long as possible... Generally, terrace-walls contain small gaps (about 30 cm wide) somewhat above the field level to allow water to seep downhill from one
fielding to the other... These drains require careful construction using specially selected stones in order to resist pressure of water during and after heavy storms. The ideal field system is laid out in such a way that the greatest number of fields are soaked at the same time, but not to the extent that excess water cannot find a way in to drain and gullies.

By planting Morinaga stenopetala on the fields, a meter or so from the terrace wall, the stability of the slopes... can be increased. The roots of these trees scarify the soil and prevent the slips of earth.

It is not known as to when the terraces were built. No living memory could place it in time except the common agreement by the Konso that these great terraces are the works of their long gone ancestors.

No new terraces are constructed today. But, it is not unusual to see, today, the Parka work group organized by the Kanta (ward system) of the individual traditional walled town conserving the terraces.

**B- The Walled Towns (Paleta)**

The Konso live in dry stone walled towns (Paleta) located on high hills selected for their strategic and defensive advantage. These towns are circled by, between one and six rounds of dry stone defensive walls. As described by Hallpike (1974) “... they crown the summit of a hill, or are built on a spur, so that the terrain falls away steeply on three sides, leaving only the level ground of the fourth to be especially heavily defended”. The three steep sides are usually bordered by terrace farms. Access to the town is possible only through one side. It is only at this fourth side, outside of the walls, that current development pressures as they are presented in the form of schools, clinics, flour mills, churches and modern burials could be observed. There is some times a groove of dense trees of euphorbia and finger-cactus between the walls and the terraces. This groove is known as Dina, and every town has Dina that is used as a source for fire wood and as a latrine for the community.
The euphorbia is used as fire extinguisher when there is fire accident in the town- local environmental adaptation. The Dina also serves as burial ground for the town’s artisans who do not posses their own farm land.

The walls surrounding the towns are built using locally available basalt. Large and small size basalt blocks are interlocked reaching to a height of 3.9 meters and between 2.5 and 0.5 meters wide (in the case of Gamole town).

The towns that are located in the Eastern part of the core Konso land, close to the Segen valley and Borena country, and to the North adjacent to the Chamo basin (e.g., Doketu, Gamole, Derra and Olanta, Gamole) are fortified with multiple rings of heavily built stone walls. The towns that are located further to the West of here (e.g., Mecheke, Burjo, and Gaho) have relatively relaxed defense system with only one stone wall. As one goes further west, out side the core Konso area the settlement pattern changes; individual and isolated homesteads are used instead of walled towns.

The walled towns (Paleta) have evolved through time with population increase. The general picture of the multiple walled towns is as follows: Located around the top of the slope, the living space with in the very central high wall is where the settlement first begun. The wall here is usually very high. With the increase of the number of the community members, according to tradition, the elder son of each household would retain ownership of the original homestead and the cadets (Kusia) have to move out to build their own homesteads out side of the central wall. Thus, they dig and level the slope making flat space for their houses, defined by new walls. Through time the new walls make a complete circle around the original central wall. Thus, again after a number of generations, when the population outgrow the space within the second wall, the process of clearing and leveling new living space and building of new walls continue.

The walls have two or more major exits (gates) that bear the name of the ward (Kanta). The gates lead to locations that are essential to the daily life of the
town. Some gates lead to common water points while others lead to farms and/or to markets. Few of these exits are used for ritual purposes and/or lead to burial grounds.

The dimension of area the walls encircle is variable from town to town. Bigger Paletas with more population such as Doketu cover 158,293 sq. meter of area; whereas smaller walled towns such as Burjo cover 28,614 sq m. area.

Each town has a “ward” (Kanta) system which enables the smooth functioning of the traditional political and socio-economic system. Each individual community member belongs to a certain Kanta. The Kanta system is not bounded by the walls as members of a certain Kanta can be residents of all the walls. Residents of a certain town belong to all the nine Konso clans and as such residents of a certain Kanta are members of all the sub clans living in the walled town. Membership to a certain Kanta is purely a practical socio-economic classification.

Within their walled towns, the Konso live in a compound fenced with wood and dry stones. The individual compound covers around 400 meter square area planted mainly with morinaga and coffee trees. This area is divided into two halves of higher and lower levels. Humans occupy the higher ground and the lower one, which is located towards the compound gate is reserved for cattle and storage. Typical Konso homestead has 5 to 6 thatched structures made of wood and mud. The homestead is composed of bedding house, storage house, granary, cattle kraal, and one or more of the above. The residential tukuls are rounded and have low entrance. The lower part of the granary is used as grinding space for millet, corn and sorghum, and thus a stone mortar is permanently present.
Fig. 7 - Sketch plan and section of typical Konso individual homestead (Gamole town).

- **Mora**

Cultural spaces called **Mora** are located at the center of the main central enclosure and at different locations within the walls, and some times, outside the walls. Paths from the all gates lead to these **Moras**. The individual walled town (**Paleta**) has up to 17 **Moras** which are connected to one another by foot paths.

The **Moras** retain an important and central role in the life of the Konso. They have, in most cases specially designed one story grass thatched houses, called **Pafta**. The **Pafta** are constructed on stone platform that attain ~80cm high. They are built on thick poles (number between 8 and 12) of hard wood. The niche is located in the higher section between 100 cm. and 150 cm above the ground and lined with timber from one end to the other. A small opening is left in the middle just near the central pole which also serve as a ladder to access high into the niche.
Fig. 8- Plan and section of Pafta within Mora (Gamole town).

Depending on the size of the village and the Kantas, one or two central Moras occupy the highest position by the town community. These Moras have high stone walls, bigger Paftas, larger and grouped (some times up to 5) generation trees (Ulahitas), up to 5 and 6 stelae (Daga-Hela) erected periodically representing the success of the generations that were in power, oath taking ritual stones (big rounded boulders) and ritual spear sharpening stones. The major ceremonies common to the community as a whole take place here. Among these rituals, a ceremony known as the Kara marking the transfer of power and responsibility from the older age group to the younger age group takes place in the Mora. It is performed through a long ritual process which lasts up to two months. This ritual starts in a certain defined Mora. As the ceremony reaches a certain stage, other the Moras are also used in various stages of the ritual. At the end of the two months period, the ritual is terminated at a Mora designated for that specific performance—the culmination of the Kara. This however is currently practiced only in Doketu and its sister towns of Burkuda and Humie. The practice is being abandoned in the other areas. (for the kara performances see film Annexd).
As described by Hallpike (1974), the Moras are

“... often floored with grass, and encircled with low stone platforms on which the numerous trees have been planted for shade. Here the men sit gossiping and spinning their cotton; the whole effect is strikingly beautiful. They are used for assemblies as well as dances, and lawsuits and religious ceremonies, as well as more practical purposes like drying blankets and hides, or laying out the parts of a new house. Adjoining them are large men’s houses (magana or pafta) with phallic roof-pots, where the men, both married and unmarried sleep at night. House and dancing floor are
collectively referred to as mora. The sense of antiquity is heightened by the great monoliths, ‘stones of manhood’, which sometimes stand there, testifying to the bravery of long-dead warriors in victorious battles.”[In addition to the stones of manhood (Daga-Diruma) the Konso also erect, in the main Mora, a tall columnar basalt, up to 3 meters tall, for a highly successful generation. This erected stone (stela) is called Daga-Hela. Less successful generations have their stones erected else where in the town or outside the walls]. “In the most sacred moras are tall dead juniper trees (ulahitas), striped of their branches by the weather of years and soaring in to the air sometimes to a height of forty feet or more.” [Ulahitas are ceremoniously cut from the sacred forests by the Chief Priest (“priest” or “sacrificator”) to mark the transition between the older and younger generations. They are planted ceremoniously every 18 years in the Mora]. “Most striking of all are their memorial statues to the dead, Wagas [or Wakas]. They represent a dead man who has killed one or more enemies in battle and perhaps a lion or leopard. The Hero stands in the center flanked by his wives and victims; they are carved of wood in a bleak and rigid style, and often line a great mora or the most important paths into town, standing in small, severe groups “. 
Description of characteristics and physical attributes of the individual walled towns within the nominated area:

- **Gamole** walled town (Paleta) has three dry stone walls covering a total of 86,174 m. square area. The total length of the outer wall is 1298 meters. Main access is from the South.

![Gamole walled town (Paleta)](image)

The first wall is the innermost/oldest wall and covers an area of 8109 meters square area and has a length of 363 meters. The second wall, which is between the external and the innermost walls has a length of 774 meters.

The inner wall is the earliest settlement in Gamole and has a very high wall. At **Mora** Shilale, this innermost wall is 2.2m wide, and has 2.7m and 5.7m external and internal heights respectively.
Gamole walled town, is spatially organized into six ward divisions called Kanta: Kanta Shilale, Kanta Lehayte, Kanta Porgela, Kanta Otaya, Kanta Galgalaya, and Kanta Ayana. Gamole has eight Moras.

A small strip of Dina stands between the external wall and the agricultural terraces. This Dina serves as toilet place for the community. Most of the vegetation that constitute the Dina is Euphorbia, used to control fire which sometimes arise in the town.

The Dina surrounding Gamole is mostly destroyed due to population increase and development pressures.

Currently there are five standing and many fallen and broken Daga - dirumas outside the wall located to the south of the town.

- Gocha walled town (Paleta) has one dry stone wall covering a total of 88,715 m. square area. The total length of the wall is 1745 meters and has five main gates. Main access to the town is from the SW.

Fig. 10- Gocha walled town (Paleta).
The walls of Gocha are mostly destroyed and very few families live in the town. Though Gocha is a big town, it has only two Kantas (wards) named Kanta Lehayte and Kanta Kartohayta.

There are six Moras, five within and one out side, at the western vicinity of the town.

All major rituals including generation initiation ritual are performed at Mora Gurbita. Three generation trees were erected recently, on the 21st January 2008. These three trees were erected for the three generations who were unable to erect their generation trees on time because the ritual was prohibited by the Military regime. This Mora is also used for oath making. The spacious dancing floor is surrounded by Daga-diruma, Daga-hela, and wooden statues (Waka) witnessing that there was a practice of burying heroes in the Mora.

There is a small Dina (groove) on the western side of this Mora. There are many erected stones and decaying Wakas in the Dina. Formerly the whole Gocha community used to take care of this burial site but the communal conservation was weakened in the recent times.

- Mechelo is one of the oldest walled towns in Konso. Like Gamole and Gocha, its establishment is related to the coming to the region of the local ritual chief, the Kala family.

Mechelo has three walls. The external wall has a length of 1746.5 meters and covers an area of 116,893 meters square area. The middle wall has a length of 432 meters and the inner wall, which is the smallest, has a length of 187 meters and covers an area of 13,015 meter square.

The inner most wall is the highest compared to the middle and the external walls. Though at one point the height of this same wall reaches to 4.15 meter (measured from outside), its average height is 1.94 meters. From with
in, the wall reaches to 3 meters high. The average thickness of the main wall is 1.37 meters and varies between 34 cm and 3.54 meters.

Fig. 11- Mechelo walled town (Paleta).

The external wall has four main gates.

Mechelo Paleta is divided into four **Kanta** (wards) divisions and has seventeen **Moras**. Some these **Moras** have **Paftas** and some do not. The **Moras** of Mechelo have **Daga-dirumas** and **Olayta** trees.

The organization and function of these **Moras** are more or less similar with the other **Moras** of Konso.

In spite of their social and cultural functions, the **Dinas** (grooves) have been deforested in many of the Konso Paletas. Currently only few walled towns still preserve their **Dina**, of which Mechelo is the one.
Local informants say that formerly a dense Dina had surrounded the Mechelo walled town. Currently only 2500 square meter area of Dina with Wakas and Daga-dirumas (erected stones) in it used as grave markers. Here, a total of thirteen Wakas, of which twelve were erected to commemorate heroes and one erected to commemorate a clan leader, and thirty-eight erected stones are observed.

At the entrance of the Karkara gate, an ancient burial site with thirteen Daga-dirumas and five decaying wakas, belonging to ancient heroes are located.

- **Dokatu walled town clusters**

Dokatu is a collective name for the three sister walled towns named lower Dokatu, Burquda and Hulme. These walled towns were amongst the first walled towns in Konso.
Lower Dokatu walled town is located a few hundred meters west of Karat town, the administrative center of Konso district (Special Woreda), and north of Konso-Jinka road. Both Burquda and Hulme walled towns are located to the southwest of lower Dokatu. The Konso-Jinka road passes between Burquda and Hulme. There is market place called Omboko between the last two.

Fig.13- Burkuda walled town is one of the sister towns of Dokatu. (Taken from the previous Nomination file).
Fig. 14- Hulmie walled town is the second sister town of Dokatu. (taken from the previous Nomination File)

Generally the towns of the Dokatu cluster collaborate during rituals and fire accidents. They also have common swearing and ritual performance spaces called **Mora**. The three sister towns have the same ritual leader, **Poquola** called Bamalle.

Lower Dokatu has six rings of dry stone walls showing that it is among the most fortified towns in Konso. The outer wall has a length of 1667 meters and covers an area of 158,293 meter square. Its walls are high. The walls’ external and internal height and thickness vary at different points according to the position of the wall. The external height of the innermost wall reaches up to 3 meters, while the outermost/external wall’s maximum height is 3.6 meters. The maximum thickness of the external wall is 3.8 meters while the maximum thickness of innermost wall is 2 meters. Generally, the outermost wall is higher and thicker than the inner walls.

Lower Dokatu has 6 main gates and nineteen **Moras**. Its two sister towns have their own **Moras** too. Nevertheless, some of the **Moras** in the three
towns provide services to all three communities during common rituals such as the Kara ceremony.

- **Dara and Olanta walled towns:** These are amongst the oldest Konso walled towns in Karate region together with lower Dokatu, Burquda, Gandima and Hulme, according to Kimura (2004:87).

Dara covers 68,587 meters square area and its outer most wall has a length of 1048 meters. It has six rings of walls that reach a height of 4.5 meters at some places. As Dara is located in the eastern edge of Karate region, it is believed that these walls were made to deter attacks from their neighbors.

Dara has four main gates and 9 Moras; 8 Moras within and one ritual Mora outside the walls.

![Fig.15- Dara walled town (Paleta).](image)
Olanta has 4 rings of walls. The maximum external height and thickness of walls is 320 and 200 cm. respectively. The length of the outer most wall is 1176 meters and surrounds 85,556 meter square area. Olanta town has 3 main gates in its outermost external wall. Olanta has 15 Moras. Nine of these have Paftas, men’s sleeping houses and the other six are open Moras (without Pafta).

- **Mechke walled town:** The time of its establishment is not clear. Mecheke has only one east-northwest oriented wall which has a length of 1322 meters delineating an area of 68,841 meters square. The western part of Mecheke is flat and the wall is high, whereas on the eastern side it is hilly and the wall is shorter. Mecheke has five main gates and eleven Moras.
- **Burjo and Gaho walled towns** are small towns with a single wall each. Burjo’s wall measures 872.5 meters long and covers an area of 28,614 meters square. On the other side Gaho’s wall measures 799.5 meters and the town covers 40,145 meter square area.

![Fig. 17- Burjo walled town (Paleta).](image)

Compared to the walls of the other Konso towns, Burjo’s and Gaho’s walls are shorter. This may be because there was minimal enemy threat as they are located in the center of the Konso core land. The maximum external wall height of Burjo is 2.55 meters.

Burjo has two wards, four **Moras** and four gates. Located outside the wall, **Mora Gugna** is the main public **Mora** of Burjo. There are 3 **Daga-helas** at the center and a generation tree near a big ritual tree located at the northern corner of the **Mora**.

**Gaho** has nine **Moras** with **Paftas** and six main gates.

There is a tradition of constructing houses on a single log of tree in these towns. These houses are called **Lokutatokide**. They often serve to store
precious items such as butter, honey, and important cultural and ritual objects.

- **Busso walled town** is not fully encircled by a wall. Busso is located around a conical hill called Pola. Pola hill is steep on its southern and northern sides and has an altitude of 1520 meters asl. There are no walls in most parts of the town as it is protected by the natural vertical terrain.

The circumference of the town including the walls is 1859 meters long and the town has an area of 116,398 meter square.

The walls of Busso were constructed at areas where the ground has relative flatness. At the northwestern side of the town, a 45.8 meters long wall was constructed. Currently only 27.8 meters of this wall is preserved. This wall is 1.90 meters high and 3.50m. thick. Other walls were constructed blocking the gap between gullies. A 34.80 meters long wall which has 3.0 meters height and 1.20 meter thickness was constructed at one gully.

![Fig. 18- Busso walled town (Paleta).](image)
Busso has three main sections with five Kantas (wards). It also has six main gates and sixteen Moras.

The main gate, Morguto gate, is 1.60 meter wide and 2.40 meter high. There are 31 erected stones outside this gate. Formerly there were wakas but they are all decayed or have been stolen.

C- Daga-hela (generation transfer marking stones/stele)

The Konso people have an age grading system through which every generation takes responsibility to protect the well being of its community. This system is linked with a tradition of erecting a generation marking stone called Daga-hela. Daga-hela is a freshly quarried columnar basalt reaching three meters tall, transported and erected through a ritual process. Generations who have well served the community (for example, protecting their town from fire and enemies, conserving the walls and the Moras), based on the evaluation of the elders could have the honor of having their generation marker stone Daga-Hela erected for them near the most prestigious Mora, as witness for their good did and inspiration for younger generations. Less successful generations have their stones erected elsewhere in the town or outside the walls. The latter are usually smaller in size. The erection of the Daga-hela is done following a two months ritual ceremony called the Kara.
The **Kara** involves a long process of rituals which begin with the blessing of the elders, initiation of the young and the **Haima** ritual dances; then the hunt expedition, the ritual dances after the hunt, the elders meetings to evaluate the performances of the generation, the selection, quarrying and transport of the stela and its erection. All generation groups (the out going, the in-coming and the older generations) gather at last at a large **Mora** and perform the special **Haima** ritual dances in front of the community members. The next week, after another ritual gathering and dances, by the out going generation members (at the end their wives join them in the dance), the Kara ceremony officially termite and they can go to their home, with their wives after two months.
D- Sacred forests

The Konso traditional forests are located mainly near the residences of the ritual priests known as Poquola. There are three main Poquola forests in the Konso core land. These are, the Kala, Bamale and Kufa.

The Poquolas are buried, at death, at the center of the forests after a lengthy ritual. The various rituals that take place in the Konso culture are centered around these forests. The generation trees, Ulahitas of every walled town (Paleta) are cut ceremoniously from these forests by the Chief Priests (Poqola).

- Kala is the best preserved and very actively used sacred forest. It covers an area of 196,430 meter square area.

The graves of the least 20 Poqolas are located here. The most beautifully sculpted Wakas of the last two Poqolas are still to be seen under their original shelters made of wood and thatched grass. The older Wakas are weathered as they are left to decay naturally. In addition to the Wakas, specially carved batons are placed on the graves depicting the number of bygone generations. Rituals take place in the Kala forest and the adjacent area. These ritual locations are presented (below) in detail as they are mapped with and described by the Kala Gezahagn (the current Poqola) himself.

There are two burial areas in the Kala forest, one for the Poqola and another for the Poqoltita (wife of the Poqola). Another burial area is reserved, outside of the forest for other members of the Poqola family.

There is a pond dug within the forest used for cattle. The map below shows in detail the characteristics of the Kala forest.
Fig.19 - The Kala traditional forest is the best preserved and very actively used sacred forest. It covers an area of 196,430 m. square area. It is located within the Gamole Paleta.

- **Bamale** sacred forest covers an area of 105,338 m. square area. It is located within the Dokatu Paleta. The ritual leader holds the same name, **Bamale** and lives near the forest with his family. The graves of the earlier **Bamales** are located at the center of the forest. Unlike the **Kala**, there are no **Wakas** placed in the forest. They are placed in **Bamale**’s compound for fear of theft. Formerly, the trees in the forests were mainly junipers. About 30 years ago during the socialist government in Ethiopia, the old indigenous trees were cut for timber and eucalyptus was planted in the Bamale and **Kufa** forests. With change of government in 1991 we see regeneration of the indigenous trees and return to the old environment, although the eucalyptus is still present.
Fig. 20- The Bamale sacred forest covers an area of 105,338 m. square area. It is located within the Dokatu Paleta.

- **Kufa** is a traditionally protected ritual forest located within the Mecheke Paleta. The Kufa sacred forest covers an area of 45,066 m. square area.

Like the Bamale and **Kala, Kufa** is the name of the ritual leader and the forest. The **Poqola** (ritual leader) live near the forest. There are ancient graves of ancestors of the present **Poqola** at the center of the forest. The grave marker **Wakas** are decayed due to age. The dirt road leading to Mecheke cuts through the forest. There are two **Hardas** (ponds) located in the forest.
Fig. 21- The Kufa sacred forest covers an area of 45,066 m. square area. It is located within the Mecheke Paleta.

**E- Waka (wooden statue) and Daga-diruma (erected stone)**

Most of the burial grounds for respected members of the community who have performed heroic deeds are located near the gates- visible to all, so as to inspire the generation. A wooden anthropomorphic statue called Waka, carved out of a hard wood, preferably juniper, mimicking the deceased is erected as a grave marker. Waka has well marked head, eyes, ears, mouth, genital organs, upper and lower members (some times with bracelets), at times it carry a shield and a spear (when it represent male). Women also have Waka carved for them. Waka is erected by the family members of the deceased.

The locations of the stated burial markers have changed through time. Formerly, they were placed near the Mora (cultural space) and at the main entrance of the walled towns (Paletas). Latter, they were moved out of the walled towns and were located on both sides of the major paths. These burials are grouped together and in addition to the Wakas, a columnar basalt
/stele (Daga-diruma) are erected on them. Some times, smaller blocks are erected next to the Waka and Daga-diruma to show the number of plots of land the deceased had acquired during his life time. Occasionally, wild animals, such as leopards are carved and placed along with the Wakas testifying that he was a hunter.

The common community members are buried in their farms and Wakas are erected for them by members of their family. One can observe old Wakas in state of decay in the farms around the walled towns.

In one instance it is observed that a Waka is carved and erected for a still living chief priest called the Bamale and his living wife. (Bamale is the ritual chief of Dokatu area). The Bamale Waka is placed in his compound together with a carved leopard.

![Photo 4- Waka depicting the ritual chief called the Bamale and his wife. The leopard is meant to show his bravery (Dec. 2007).](image-url)
The best carved Waka erected for the late chief priest (Kalla) Wolde Dawit is described as follows.


This Waka was erected in 2002. It has a head and eyes inlayed with ostrich egg shell and with defined facial features. Both hands show bracelets representing his position as chief. The umbel is in place and the male genital is well pronounced. The statue has a phallic metallic emblem, the mark of leadership on its forehead. It bears in its left hand the traditional shield, spear and sword. The statue (Waka) is in a good condition along with
that of his father the former great chief priest (Poquola) Kalla Kayote who died 15 years earlier.

The intangible meets the tangible heritage

The intangible aspect of the Konso culture is imbedded in their every day life. The Kara ceremony clearly shows the importance of the generation grading system and the social bondage needed to maintain the tradition of harmony with nature and commitment to harness the difficult environment. In addition to the Kara, the Konso do also observe other ritual (in certain areas) related to harvest. The Tuta is a ritual in which mother earth is prayed for and grain sacrifices are offered to. It takes place among other places, in the Kala traditional forest performed by the ritual chief, the Kala.

Disputes between clans and among individuals are settled by the ritual chief aided by his council of elders.

Transfers of social responsibility between successive generations is done using the traditional lunar calendar, every nine and eleven years and a full generation cycle is ritually performed every 18 years. These rituals are marked by various successive events such as initiation period, purification, ritual hunt, sacrifices, selection of stone to be erected, its transport and erection and the ritual dances that accompany the rituals at each stage.

The Konso also maintain the tradition of venerating the spirits of their ancestors. They maintain mummification tradition in which the ritual chief, up on his death is treated by local elders for a number of years. In former times this process used to take longer period (up to nine years) depending on the good harvest. The late ritual chief Kala Wolde Dawit’s body was maintained for nine months where as his father’s, Kala Kayote’s body was treated for 9 years in the 1980s and 1990s.
Photo 6- **Kala** Kayote’s mummified body presented to mourners just before his burial (eight years after his death) in the **Kala** forest (Photo is taken from an old photo in the possession of his grand son, the current **Kala** Gezahegne).

The burial process is associated with various stages of rituals where by, when the dead ritual leader is followed to his grave, the new is initiated.

The Konso **Wakas** are among the last of traditional grave markers still in use. Their uniqueness has led, in recent years, for their demand in the world art markets as ‘Art premier’. The alarming illicit traffic is currently being addressed through legal measures and by creating a specialized museum for their conservation and presentation.
F- Harda (pond)

The oldest traditionally maintained water reservoirs (Harda) are located within or near the forests. Hardas are also located in the landscape where the rain water could easily be trapped, at locations where the water can not easily sink. These Hardas are made by the community to contain the rain water for cattle. These Hardas have walls that reach as high as 13m and attain a length of 60 meters length. There are also smaller Hardas. They are constructed using carefully selected stones and lined with expert builders. Harda construction and conservation is done collectively by all members of the community (Paleta) and some times by the active age group (Hela). The galleys that are leading to the Harda are carefully cleaned and sometimes lined with stones to reduce the silt form getting in to the reservoir.

Photo 7- Community conservation of Harda in Busso Paleta.
2. b History and Development

The history of the Konso can be reconstructed from oral traditions and linguistic studies and could be dated through the generation counts and archaeological data.

Unfortunately, archaeological work done is limited to few Konso settlements and towns and they are not conclusive as there may be other older settlements.

Bender, based on linguistic studies attribute the Konso language as belonging to the Eastern Cushitic linguistic group and thus apparent them with the Oromo.

Based on the oral traditions, the Konso attest their arrival in to the present day Konso area from the East and Northern directions.

As depicted by the number of incised rings on the generation batons erected on the tombs of the ritual chief (Poquola) of the Kala, the earliest ritual chief, the first Kala lived 21 generations ago.

There is no living memory as to when the stone terraces of the Konso were constructed. The Konso people agree that their great, great grandfathers have constructed them and the latter generations just kept on using and conserving them.

Hallpike (1972:192) based on the generation counts suggested that the Konso had started moving stones in the area by 1604 AD. This is close to the current Konso elders calculation of their arrival time in to the area. If we estimate a generation’s average lifespan to be about 20 years, this may be in accordance with the rings marked on the baton erected on the burial of the last Kala showing that he was the 21st. Poquola of the same line.

Based on her excavations in Konso, Brigitta Kimura (2004) had indicated that the pre 1897 record of the Konso clearly show trading relations with the eastern people perhaps the Borena as glass beads and shell from the Indian
ocean were used in Konso area. These commodities must have been introduced by Somali traders who were actively engaged in the area. Although the charcoal samples that Kimura had collected did not give reliable dates, she suggests, based on the population increase, the Konso must have been there at least since the 16\textsuperscript{th} Century. The 20\textsuperscript{th} Century Konso history is viewed as part of the central Ethiopian history as coins and fire arms are found from Kimura’s excavations.

The Konso say that their towns were fenced for fear of wild beasts and as protection from neighboring Konso villages and from the others, neighboring Oromo Guji groups living to the East of Konso.

The defensive importance of the stone walls is evident and the Konso must have taken that very seriously as the periodic skirmish between the two is still prevalent.

Before the integration wars of Emperor Menilik II around the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, the Konso have enjoyed a history of local leadership, and limited confrontations which they have easily managed through their traditional systems. Emperor Menilik’s war has burnet the walled town of Gocha because of the Konso resistance. At the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century, a new administrative system was introduced with a new taxation system and Christianity. Despite these facts the traditional way of the Konso life remained unchanged until in 1974 when the socialist regime took over the modest Haile-Sellasie I government in Ethiopia.

During the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, between 1936 and 1941, some of the Konso walled towns were shelled by heavy artillery for resisting the Italian occupation. There is no other record of destruction due to aggression.

Through all these times the Konso lively-hood was and still is based on the terrace agriculture. The Konso have maintained their traditions of age grading system that they share with their Oromo neighbors in the East.
A thorough research on the origin of the Konso and their cultures is needed to understand these exceptionally industrious people. So far, the ethno-historical research conducted there shy from touching the history and development of the Konso cultural landscape.
3. **Justification for inscription**

3. a- **Criteria under which inscription is proposed (and justification for inscription under these criteria)**

The Konso cultural landscape is presented for inscription in the World Heritage List under the following criterion:

**Criteria (iii)**

The Konso people have repeatedly been referred to by various scholars as megalithic for their intensive and systematic use of stone. The Konso cultural landscape include evidences of a living tradition of stele erection. The Konso erect stones/stele (**Daga-Hela**) to commemorate and mark the transfer of responsibility from members of the older generation to the younger generation. This transfer of responsibility takes place every 11 and 7 years. They also erect generation trees to commemorate a full cycle generation transfer every 18 years. In addition to the erection of **Daga-Hela**, they also erect man-hood stones called **Daga-Diruma** on tombs. The Konso are perhaps among the last stele erecting people in the world: and thus they “*bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or a civilization which is living or which has disappeared*”.

The Konso funerary system involves the tradition of mummification of their ritual leaders (**Poqolas**). This and the carving and erection of anthropomorphic wooden statuette (**Waka**) representing the dead is an exceptional living testimony to traditions which are on the verge of disappearance.

Members of the Konso communities respect the traditional code of respect to the culture and adherence to the age group (**Hela**) and the ward (**Kanta**) who are responsible for the protection and conservation of the walls, the ponds, **Mora**, the terraces, and protection of the town against fire and planting the local grooves.
The Konso cultural landscape is also proposed under **Criteria (v)**:

As “... an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change”. This is justified by the Konso settlement pattern, harness of hostile environment and their highly organized towns which have multiple rings of high wall defense system. The Konso cultural landscape is forged by a strong tradition which is based on common values that have resulted in the creation of the Konso cultural and socio-economic fabrics.

The dry stone terraces which are the dominant feature of the Konso countryside show the adaptive strategy that the Konso followed in dry environment.

The labor needed to construct terraces must have necessitated a strong cohesion and unified bond among all the clans. The social organization that enabled the work force to execute the terrace construction and the indigenous engineering knowledge applied must have necessitated certain work divisions which still exist in today’s Konso traditional system.

Although there are no new terrace construction works undertaken, the Konso consistently perform maintenance and conservation works.

The Konso still maintain their strong traditions of harnessing their environment following an effective indigenous knowledge of water and soil conservation techniques. This has served as a lesson to people of similar environments in Ethiopia; and visits to Konso by farmers and students of agriculture from all corners of the country are common.

**Criteria (vi):**

The Konso cultural landscape fits this criteria as it is “... directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic... works of outstanding universal significance”.
The respect for their traditionally conserved forests, the community obligation codes in the various rituals and communal works, the ideals of the Kara and transfer of power from generation to generations are all tangibly associated with properties that constitute the cultural landscape.

The traditionally protected forests and the ritual spots within them, as were mapped with the help and guidance of the Kala himself, shows that the associations of places with events are clearly maintained. The conflict resolution sacred block of stone, the sacrificial points for the good harvest and good health, the ritual benediction location of the ritual chief, the defined foot paths taken by the community members when they come to visit the ritual chief, the defined sacrificial points of the various communities mourning for departed (dead) ritual chief are all in active use.

The burial grounds of the ritual leaders are maintained and in use. Anthropomorphic wooden statues (Wakas) are still erected at the graves of the ritual chiefs, following rituals within the traditionally protected forests. These Wakas are equally erected for the common community members by members of the family.

The generation transfer rituals are still maintained and the rituals are performed in the defined Moras based on the lunar calendar following its age old process. The transfer marking stones (Daga-hela) are quarried from the traditionally defined places, transported and erected.

The Konso tradition of belief system, social organization, rituals, and art (Waka) is testimony to traditions of megalithic societies of the world as they are tangibly associated with the material evidences such as the megaliths (stele), wooden statuettes, sacred spaces and the system of space management with in their walled towns.
3.b Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The Konso cultural landscape shows at least five hundred years old history of human struggle to harness difficult environment. This is demonstrated by the thousands of kilometers long dry stone terraces that are engineered to manage rain water and control soil erosion. The Konso are acknowledged and rewarded internationally and nationally for their extraordinary accomplishments in man-nature interrelation ship. These terraces are in a very good condition and are used for mixed cultivation, mainly to grow sorghum which is the staple food of the Konso.

In addition to these, the Konso constructed their traditional towns fortified with multiple rings of high rising walls at locations selected for defensive strategy. The multiple stone walled towns of the Konso are unique in their conception and execution. They could be refereed as an African example of long gone city states that had flourished else where. Each of these Konso towns are organized to accommodate all members of the nine Konso clans within them and provide special attention to common spaces where all major cultural activity revolve around.

The traditional forests are protected by the ritual chiefs and the community to serve as burial ground of the ritual leaders, ritual sacrificial spots, and reserve for juniper trees used for the commemoration of generation transfer. They also maintain the ecological balance and preserve the floral diversity for use as medicinal plants.

Columnar stones /stele are still erected as grave markers of important personalities; and following the old traditions to mark and commemorate the values of active generations and set standard for future generations. The generation stones are erected in common cultural spaces and protected by community members. The Konso age grading/generation transfer system revolves around a unique ideal of the duty of the young towards the community as a whole. This practice of erecting stones/stele could help to
better understand the long gone megalithic traditions in many parts of the world.

The Konso maintain their environment and landscape because of the basic reason that led to its creation - the dry environment. The strong and cohesive social bondage needed to respond to that common need is still maintained. They use the **Parka**, work groups based on the **Kanta** (ward) system to maintain and conserve their terraces, town walls, common houses and ponds.

The communities within the nominated area together with the local administration, the stake holders and the Regional and the Federal governments have agreed to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the Konso cultural landscape. A Management Plan (attached) has addressed the management issues and the Regional government has drafted a legal document necessary to protect the Konso cultural landscape. The inscription of the Konso cultural landscape on UNESCO’s World Heritage list will undoubtedly make the preservation of the integrity and authenticity of the Konso cultural landscape a reality.

**3. c Comparative analysis (including state of conservation of similar properties)**

The Konso cultural landscape is dotted with cultural properties exhibiting characters that are known in various sites world wide. The terraces in Konso are reminiscent of those known in Kenya, the Nyanga in Mozambique and in Zimbabwe. Although there is no clear evidence as for the time of their construction, they are all made as a response for the harsh environment. The active use of the Konso terraces for agriculture can best respond to mysteries associated to some of the above terraces. Konso terraces are also comparable with the Sukur agricultural terraces in Nigeria. It has been suggested that strong social organization and an extended period of time was necessitated for the construction of the Sukur terraces. This must be true as the labor needed to construct the terraces that occupy the vast area in Konso must
have necessitated a strong cohesion and unified bond among all the clans. The social organization that enabled the work force to execute the terrace construction and the indigenous engineering knowledge applied must have necessitated certain work divisions which still exist in today’s Konso traditional system. This could also serve to clarify the mystery behind the Nyanga terraces.

The Konso terraces are analogues of that of the high rice fields of the rice-terraces of the Philippines. Like the Philippines Cordilleras, the Konso agricultural terraces cover the hills from bottom to the top and dotted with traditionally protected forests. The communities in both sites follow indigenous knowledge in preserving nature. Like the Philippines rice-terraces, the Konso terraces are constructed using locally available irregular dry stone walls making cultivable land space on the sloppy terrains. The indigenous engineering techniques of both sites permit efficient water management/irrigation in semi-vertical and rolling landscapes. Although the two sites are separated by several thousands of kilometers and historical and cultural contact is virtually impossible, human adaptation to local environment is evidenced across oceans and continents.

Stone walls are known in Ziea in Zimbabwe, Lobi in Burkina faso and from Sukur in Nigeria. Unlike Konso, mud mortar is used in Lobi but the concept of thick and dependable defensive system was in place. The “Great Enclosure” of the Great Zimbabwe could as well be compared to the Konso walled towns. The external wall is built around the individual homesteads (in Konso) or group of daga (in the Great Enclosure), for defensive purpose. They all are result of indigenous African fortification techniques. The Konso walled towns differ from the above mentioned historical African towns in that, the multiple rings of stone walls of Konso show hundreds of years old tradition of local fortification techniques continuing in still operational and dynamic social organization based on age-grade and ward systems bringing together all clan members around common values in their cultural spaces, Mora. The multiple
stone walled towns of the Konso are thus unique in their conception and execution.

The use of the term “daga” to signify stone or granite gravel in the Great Zimbabwe has a parallel in Konso. The term daga in Konso is used to mean stone and used to call erect stones as Daga-diruma (manhood stone) and Daga-hela (generation stone). Socio-economic and settlement pattern differences between Konso, the Great Zimbabwe and Sukur must have contributed to some of the differences observed. Unlike the Hidi in Sukur, there are no palaces in Konso; but the residences of the traditional leaders, the Kala and the Bamale are located higher above the surrounding towns. Like in Sukur, graves of the ancestors are revered and positioned in an important space. The Konso walled towns do not have paved ways like Sukur but the well marked narrow paths in Konso towns are defined by stone walls of the individual home-stead and some times lined using local volcanic rocks. Further in-depth research could better decipher the parallels between the by-gone African civilizations who left us the archaeological records and the Konso living cultural landscape.

Megalithic traditions are known in many parts of Africa and other parts of the world. Most of these megalithic sites are associated with burials. Records of megalithic sites are abundant throughout Ethiopia and represent varied cultures and time from Axum to Tiya World heritage sites. The Konso have a tradition of erecting non-carved stones/stele as grave markers and to commemorate the transfer of responsibility from elders to younger generations. The Sene Gambian Megalithic Complexes are among the best examples of comparison to make a case for the Konso erected stones. As in Sene Gambian complex where the stone circles are associated with necropolises, the Konso Daga-diruma stones are associated with grouped burials of important individuals. The circular placement of erect stones as observed in Sene Gambian and European complexes is absent in Konso. The generation marker stones (Daga-hela) of Konso are erected in common central
cultural space, usually lined up and according to chronology. The stones in Konso are not dressed or carved as observed in Sene Gambian complexes; rather tall columnar basalts freshly extracted from a defined quarry site are used without any modification.

The Konso cultural landscape could also be compared to that of the Mijikenda ethnic group in Kenya. Like the Mijikenda, the Konso also have nine clans who live together and owe their success to their belief system and culture. Despite their environmental adaptation (costal area Vs. dry mountain) which separated them, they both share elements that are related to their attachment to their forests, and the protection of the biodiversity within them.

Like the Kayas the Konso traditional forests are regarded as sacred places from which cutting of trees is prohibited. Trees are cut only for ceremonial purposes, and only by the ritual leader. The Konso traditional forests also serve as sacred burial ground of the ritual leaders like in the Kayas; and the ancestral spirits are prayed for by the ritual leader in office. In addition to cultural elements, these two people perhaps share a common history. The period that their respective oral traditions attribute to their migrations are more or less the same; and their movement to their present respective territories could be attributed to the great peoples movement that took place in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya around the 16th. Century. Future research work on the origins of the Mijikenda and Konso peoples could shed better light to possible affinities between them.

Comparisons with some of the Ethiopian sites is provided below to show the local context of Konso.

It is known that stone terrace farms similar to Konso exist in the Kolme and Gewada sub-regions in Konso (outside the core area proposed for inscription), and Burji and Amaro regions further to the east of Konso and in the Derashe area north of Konso. An important cultural landscape with an indigenous terrace system and related authentic cultural values is known further north
of the Konso, among the Zala in the Gamo country in Ethiopia. The Gamo country has a tradition of both dry stone and soil terraces based on the local availability of terracing materials. Again, further north, in the Dawro country (north Omo valley), medieval stone walls that were built using dry stone techniques are believed to have been used for defensive purposes. These stone walls are built in multiple rows and are reported to attain a length of >176 Km.

The why of the making of the multiple dry stone walls and the strongly maintained age group system may be answered in relation to the history of the region.

The above areas are visited and observations were logged to plan for further detailed research. The Konso Cultural landscape is distinguished from the above mentioned by the fact that it provides a complete picture and posses more features. The walled towns and their organization, the elaborated terrace agriculture, culturally regulated organized work groups, the funerary statues and erected stones associated with hero burials and/or with generation transfer rituals make the Konso cultural landscape unique.

It is to be noted that southern Ethiopia has one of the highest concentration of stelae dated to between 12th. and 15th. Centuries. In addition to the World Heritage site of Tiya further north, the Tuto-fela and Tutiti megalithic sites situated at about 150 Kms. north of Konso show the strong interrelated megalithic culture history of the region. All the above megalithic sites were identified as burials; except in Konso where the tradition include use of stele as generation markers. Thus the Konso megalithic living tradition could shed more light in the understanding of long gone cultures.

3. d. Integrity and/or Authenticity

The Konso cultural landscape still largely retain its original form and design; and the cultural properties continue their original use and function. The terrace agriculture is still the most sure way of the Konso lively hood as it
insures proper soil and water conservation. The walled towns are inhabited by the communities and organized following the traditional system. The traditionally protected forests are still protected and used for ritual and burial. The ponds are still in use and periodically conserved.

The materials used for the original construction of the terraces and the town wall are local and the conservation of these is done by the community members using the same locally available material.

The tradition of conservation of the terraces, the walled towns, the forests and the ponds is still maintained through the Parka work group organized through the traditional Kanta (ward) system.

The tradition of the ritual erection of generation and man-hood stones and generation trees following the generations old “age-grading system” is actively practiced. The active age group still sleep in the collective cultural houses (Moras). Wooden funerary statues are still erected on the graves.

The traditional code of management of the cultural landscape is practiced side by side with the modern administrative system. The local communities elect their leaders from within the community members and these together with elders ensure the protection and management of the properties within their Paletas.

The Konso are repeatedly rewarded at national and international levels for their exemplary water and soil conservation techniques. Their national award includes “GREEN AWARD -2007 in CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS CATEGORY OUTSTANDING WINNER-KONSO COMMUNITY” -signed by Girma Wolde-Giorgis, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
Photo. 8- National Green Award Certificate signed by the president of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The Konso international award include the F.U.N. (Friends of the United Nations) (1995) - *We the peoples : 50 Communities Program.*

Photo 9 and 10- Award received from F.U.N. (Friends of the United Nations) (1995) - *We the peoples : 50 Communities Program.*
Photos (11, 12, 13 and 14 above) are stamps made by the Ethiopian Postal Agency (2003) to commemorate the Konso Cultural Landscape.

Although the general picture is as indicated above, the Konso could not escape modernization impacts.

Construction of roads have since the 1970’s affected the cultural landscape as the roads had to cut through terraces. The most recent activity to upgrade the major road is underway since 2007. The community leaders, the local administration and the constructors have tried to limit the damage. This has to a limited extent affected the landscape.

The apparent expansion of the Konso administrative center, the town of Karat, is threatening the nearby walled towns of Dokatu, Dara and Olanta. This threat can only be prevented through the enforcement of the protection
legislation which is currently at a draft stage. The legislation proposes an area to be delineated as a buffer to protect the properties.

A new market that is created in the vicinity of Gamole has impacted a portion of the Gamole terrace. Joint action by the community and the Konso district heritage management committee is expected to limit this threat.
4. **State of Conservation and factors affecting the Property**

4.a **Present state of conservation**

All cultural properties constituting the Konso cultural landscape are generally in a very good state of conservation. Occasional damage to terraces and dry stone built structures such as ponds and walls is caused by tectonics, torrential rains or age. These are conserved as the need arise. Conservation work is mainly done by the Parka work group of members of a certain ward from the same town. The labor force is working in turns on the farms of the same ward members. The ponds (Harda) are conserved following the traditional way by all community members.

It is to be noted that development pressure caused by road constructions and town expansions is claiming some portions of terrace farms. These terraces are stabilized by the owner and his ward members.

The stone walls of the traditional towns are also in good condition. When ever the walls are damaged, the community elders assign members of the generation in power to do the maintenance and conservation work. The common houses (Paftas) that serve as a “men’s house” and guest house are also maintained by the age group in power. Pafta conservation require new grass for the roofs. This is currently becoming difficult as the price of grass is rising considerably.

The Konso do not restore their wooden funerary statues (Waka). These funerary objects are carved, form the start, to decay on the graveyard of the deceased. Even the shelters of the Wakas of the ritual chiefs (Poqolas) are not to be restored, according to the tradition. Nevertheless, recently it has become a custom to construct a small corrugated sheet shade on the Wakas by members of the family of the deceased. The need to conserve the Wakas on the graves and in a museum is now accepted by all; and a museum is under construction to support the conservation needs of these movable properties.
To sum-up, conservation in Konso is done by the community on regular basis regulated by the traditional laws and customs. The cultural properties are generally in good state of conservation and continue to be used by the community.

4.b Factors affecting the property

The current multi-dimensional global change is reaching areas that previously were thought to be remote. National development schemes and changes that are brought through contact with other cultures and market and service driven economy are impacting the traditional ways of lives and the integrity of the cultural landscape.

(i) Development pressures (e.g., encroachment, adaptation, agriculture, mining)

The Konso country is located at the junction that connects the central part of the country with the Southern Omo administrative zone and the South Eastern region of Borena and its surroundings. Thus the road connecting these areas passes through Konso. When the mentioned road was constructed, it had transformed the traditional road net work systems within Konso. In due course, terraces were lost to the roads and quarries were exploited at areas that had old terraces. The recent road up-grading activity had not affected the cultural landscape less. In addition to terraces, ritual spots that were formerly protected were impacted. The damage was controlled through intervention from various informed stake holders including the regional government.

Due to change in economic life ways and the need for market places, new commercial centers are mushrooming in some peasant associations, close to the walled towns. Such pressures are being monitored currently by the community and the Konso Special Woreda (administrative district). The draft legislation text relative to the Konso cultural landscape has
provisions defining the distance of such future structures from the external walls of the towns.

The expansion plan of existing town of Bekawle (the Konso administrative center), is threatening the terraces that lie in Dokatu, Hulmie, Olanta, and Dara territories. It is to be noted that the expansion of Bekawle is an accepted fact; but it has to be regulated following consultations with the various management committees at all levels. This is an agreed up-on issue; nonetheless, needs a follow-up.

Changing life styles in the traditional walled town are demonstrated, among others, by the beginning of the appearance of houses with corrugated iron sheet roofs. Piped water is brought to the center of the walled towns. Need for healthy and appropriate latrine system is growing. These are issues that are to be monitored by the management committees.

(ii) Environmental pressures (e.g., pollution, climate change, desertification)

There is no major environmental pressure in view to be addressed at this stage.

(iii) Natural disasters and risk preparedness (earthquakes, floods, fires, etc.)

The Konso country is located at the terminus of the Main Ethiopian Rift and it is susceptible to earthquakes. Although there is no any official record of impacts of earthquakes in the area, terraces, ponds and dry stone walls are observed crumbling at certain places. It some times rains very heavily during the short rainy season and this results in destruction of terraces.

There is no modern system of Natural disasters and risk preparedness system at Konso. Nevertheless, the Konso traditional system has its way of dealing with natural disasters. The terraces, ponds, walls and communally owned properties are conserved by the community Parka work groups.
The community members of the generation in power are alert and sleep together, at night, in the Pafta within the Mora space to putout fire. Every walled town plants euphorbia and finger cactus in the Dina that they use as fire extinguisher.

The traditional system is responding appropriately so far to natural disasters.

(iv) Visitor/tourism pressure

Visitors to Konso are usually passers-by who stop for a few hours on their way to the Southern Omo region. It is expected that, in the future this will change and more visitors may stay longer; as the landscape is open and the properties are diverse. There has not been any problem accommodating tourists. Nevertheless, tourists visiting the traditional walled towns put a certain amount of psychological pressure on the elderly community members.

From the current experience, the walled towns can accommodate up to four groups of 10 to 15 guided visitors at a time. This number could be accommodated without adverse effects provided that the tourist experience is aided by trained local guides.

(v) Number of inhabitants within property, buffer zone

Estimated population located with in
Area of nominated property = 44,500.

Buffer zone_____
Total_____
Year 2007.
5. **Protection and Management of the property**

5. a. **Ownership**

*Land* in Ethiopia is owned by the state as stipulated by government decree of 1975 (annexed). Thus by definition all Konso land is owned by the government. The terraces on the land are owned by individual members of the community. Terrace ownership is transferred from father to son and it can also be bought and sold by members of the same community. Thus the government law and the traditional ownership system are practiced at the same time.

This Ownership confusion “dilemma” is clearly expressed by Elizabeth E. Watson (Watson E.E., 1998, pp 22, 23) as follows. “...Some said the traditional form of land tenure was still the case; others said that the traditions had “been left”, that the traditional leaders and landowners were no longer important, and since land reform (1975) all the land was in the hands of the tiller. Which account was true? The answer, which seems obvious retrospectively, was that they were both true: Both kinds of land tenure system exist in practice, and are legitimized by different discourses”.

The water ponds (*Harda*) are owned collectively by the residents of on same peasant association members living in a walled town (*Paleta*). And thus their conservation is assured through them.

The traditionally protected forests serve as residence and burial for the ritual chiefs (*Poqola*). Traditionally they are owned by the *Poqola*. After the land reform proclamation indicated above, technically they belong to the government to be administered by the Peasant Associations. But in practice, now, they are “owned” and managed by the *Poqola* and members of their family. Their ownership status seems to be defined by the traditional law. The customary law and the traditional ownership rights are practiced at the same time and without conflict.
The walled towns are collectively owned by the community members. The walls are the responsibility of the whole community as organized under the local Peasant Association. The individual homestead is owned by the individual family. The common cultural spaces (Mora) are owned by the community members who live in a given ward (Kanta). The ritually important Mora and the cultural objects and manifestations therein are owned by the whole town community.

The Waka's and the burial marker stone (Daga- diruma) are owned privately by the family members of the deceased, who have carved the statuettes or erected the stone. The grooves (Dina) are owned by the individual Kanta and yet they are open for use by all members of the town when ever there is a need.

It is to be noted that the federal and the regional governments are tolerant of the practice of the traditional laws as far as they do not create inconveniences and they are followed as agreed by the communities.

5. b. protective designation

The Konso Special Woreda (district) is divided in to various (44) Peasant Associations called Kebeles, organized with in its territory. The boundaries of these Peasant Associations are defined following the traditional and original settlement patterns. The associations are the legal bodies responsible for the administration at the community level. Jurisdiction is based on these boundaries that are established between the individual Paletas. These boundaries are accepted at the district (Woreda) level and approved by the Regional Government.

The Individual terrace owner has the right to use his land as stipulated by the land proclamation. He also has the right to maintain his terrace and plant it with crops which he deems correct based on the traditionally acquired knowledge.
People who pay their dues to the government are entitled to use of their land and are the legal owners of their individual farms.

The individual **Paletas** that are proposed for the inscription have management committees formed through election and assignments. The elders, women and youth representatives are nominated through election, whereas the other members of the management committee are assigned through selection from members of the Peasant Association administration. Thus, both the traditional and municipal administration viewpoints work in the protection and conservation of the cultural properties. These management committees are responsible for the day-to-day follow up of the property and are accountable to the Management Committee that is formed at the district (Special Woreda) level.

The following paragraphs clearly show the general legal trends.

**A. The Constitution (annexed):**

The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 1/1995, issued on 21\textsuperscript{st} August 1995 in Article 39-2 declares that “Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history.” And further on Article 91-2 it is stated that “Government and all Ethiopian citizens shall have the duty to protect the country’s natural endowment, historical sites and objects.” In view of the importance of the views of the people with regard to development impact and environment protection, the Constitution, on Article 92 No. 2 and 3 further states that “The design and implication of programs and projects of development shall not damage or destroy the environment”; and “People have the right to full consultation and to the expression of views in the planning and implementation of environmental policies and projects that affect them directly”. The above
declarations clearly show the commitment of the government to protect the cultures and cultural properties of the country.

B. The Cultural Policy (annexed):

Based on the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), a Cultural Policy was prepared by the Ministry of Information and Culture (this is latter re-organized and named as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism) and adopted by the House of Representatives (Parliament) of the FDRE in October 1997. This Cultural Policy has clearly indicated the policy lines that the country has to follow with regard to culture and cultural properties. In its contents and strategies for its implementation, it is stated that “Creating awareness that the conservation and preservation of cultural, historical and natural heritage are the duties and responsibilities of governmental and non-governmental organizations, religious institutions and all Ethiopian nationals” (p.27) in addition to “Facilitating the necessary conditions to conserve and preserve the heritage of the country; to protect these from illicit trafficking and extortion…” (p.27).

The policy further indicates that “ensuring” the cultures of the country “receive equal recognition, respect and chance to development”. And “favorable situation” will be created “…to carry out scientific research and inventory…” on the cultural heritages. Further again the Policy stipulates that, “An appropriate precondition shall be arranged to protect sites of heritage from damages caused by construction works and other development activities” (p.33). With regard to culture in Education, the Policy further states that “Cultural themes shall be included in to the educational curricula with the aim of integrating education with culture and thereby to shape the youth with a sense of cultural identity;” (p.36).
C. The Proclamation issued to provide for research and conservation of cultural heritage (annexed):

Based on the Cultural policy, the Proclamation No. 209/2000 “To provide for Research and Conservation of cultural Heritage” was issued by the FDRE. In its definition, it’s clearly indicated that, heritage properties that are protected by law are, “... any thing tangible or intangible which is the product of creativity and labor of man in the pre-history and history times, that describes and witnesses to the evolution of nature and which has a major value in its scientific, historical, cultural, artistic and handicraft content.” (Part 1 Article 3 No. 4). This same proclamation in its Preamble accept and declare that cultural heritage “...plays a major role...and hence the protection and preservation of cultural heritage has been made the responsibility of each citizen, the society and the state”.

D. Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No.53/2003, (annexed):

This proclamation is issued by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, SNNPRS on March 1st 2003. Its relevance to the Konso cultural landscape is obvious from its contents. On ownership and use rights of the communities, it states that “The right of getting land for communal use of both peasant and pastoralist, that is for grazing, social and cultural affairs and religion is reserved” (Article 6 no. 4); and the use right equally include the right of “Protecting wild animals, plants, birds, and other natural and artificial resources and heritages, which are harbored under his possession” (Article 6 no. 7).

The customary laws that are practiced by the community are accepted by this same proclamation. it is stated in Article 16 no. 3 and no.4 that, “...local laws issued by the society, and customary practices...” are to be respected and communal users “...shall be responsible for protecting wild animals, plants, birds, and other natural and artificial resources and
heritages found on the communally possessed land.”. Further, Article 19
no. 1 insures the sustainable preservation and use of “lands demarcated
for forest, wild life, soil conservation…and historical use…”; and the “Right
of the local community to share from the benefits gained from protected
and preserved areas are reserved” (Article 19 no. 3).

As shown above the proclamation has laid the necessary ground for a
further legislation that insures the protection of the Konso cultural
landscape. This legislation is currently at a draft stage (Annexed) to be
ratified by the House of Representatives of the SNNPRS, the Regional
Government under which Konso is administered.

5.c. Means of implementing protecting measures.

How?

According to the current Management Plan( annexed) the following has been
proposed.

As the community management committee members are members of the
community living in the individual Paletas, monitoring at the community level
is a continuous process. Thus no damage can happen to heritage property
unobserved observed. Any irregularity is reported to the district Management
Committee.

Based on the above, the Konso district Office of Culture and Information and
the Management Committee with support of the Konso Administrative
Council conduct physical inspection of the areas that need inspection, on
quarterly basis following the Ethiopian budget year calendar. This is done at
the end of September, December, March and June. (It is to be noted that the
Konso Chief Administrator is the chairman of the Management Committee
where as the Head of the Culture and Information Office is its Secretary.) In
the case of any development that affects the properties, the Office and the
Committee enforce legal measures to mitigate the problems. In the case of
any natural disaster affecting the properties, action is taken by involving the community and promptly reported to the regional government Bureau of Information and Culture.

The regional government Bureau of Information and Culture conduct two monitoring visits to Konso, one at the end of December and another one at the end of May. Based on this physical inspection, direct contact between the local communities and review of the reports filed, the Bureau presents its report including its recommendations to the Regional Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (S.N.N.P.R.S.). A copy of the annual report and recommendations are sent to the ARCCH for further assistance as needed.

NGOs working to support, protect and conserve the cultural heritage are obliged to report to the district (Woreda) Management Committee of any issue that they may encounter affecting the property. The latter conduct prompt physical inspection at the area affected or threatened.

Other stakeholders such as tour operators, agricultural or development agents, law enforcement organs, etc... report to the District Management Committee and the Konso District Administration of any harm suspected or materialized that may endanger the cultural property. It is to be noted that, in addition to the management links at various levels, the traditional heritage, protection and conservation practice continue as agreed by the community members.

5. d. Existing plans related to municipality and region in which the proposed property is located (e.g., regional or local plan, conservation plan, tourism development plan)

The country is pursuing a policy directed at using its resources for poverty alleviation. The Konso cultural properties are by definition subject to development plans.
• With regard to infrastructural development plan, there is a construction of a new paved road that crosses the Konso ‘core area” proposed for nomination. This development is meant, among other things, to facilitate visitor access to heritage sites in the region.

• There is an agreed plan with the UNWTO and a document relative to the use of the cultural properties has been developed (December 2006) and is under implementation by the Regional Tourism Bureau, the Konso Tourism Office and the individual communities. This Tourism Plan directly influence the way the cultural landscape is protected, conserved and used. (annexed)

• A local Non-Government Office (NGO) named Parka has developed a plan to conserve the resources of the landscape based on community based participatory approaches with support from the Christensen Fund, a USA based foundation with interest in natural and landscape protection. This has begun to bear fruit.

• With support from the Embassy of the French Republic in Ethiopia and the Quai-Branly Museum, Paris, the Konso Special Woreda administration is undertaking a construction of a Konso Museum where all heritage objects, including the Waka could be conserved and presented for tourists. In addition, this museum will provide services to researchers and students.

• An Italian NGO (CISS), with support from the Italian government is currently based in Konso and has begun a two years project planned at promoting and training the Konso artisans to produce cultural objects for the tourist market.

• A local development Association named Konso Development Association with support from the local administration is working at community level in development programs that directly influence the conservation and use of the cultural landscape.
5.e. Property management plan or other management system

Management plan annexed.

The management plan focus on maximizing the effectiveness of the existing institutions and traditional conservation techniques and approaches. The individual Paleta communities have vowed to insure the continuous and traditionally performed practices of conservation of their cultural properties within their territories. This however has its own set backs. Finance is lacking and materials for conservation do not come cheap as the old days. The Regional government has decided to share the tourism revenues with the communities to help support their traditional conservation efforts.

The communities have agreed to preserve the integrity and authenticity of their vernacular architectural techniques within the individual walled towns and should the need for modern corrugated sheet houses arise, it is agreed that this should be done in a new area out side of the walls of the traditional towns. Facility construction such as latrines, water pipes and electricity within the walled towns will be conducted with consultation and prior approval of the management committees.

Based on the conservation action plans of the PARKA, an indigenous community led natural and environmental protection and conservation is being enhanced. Thus the protection of the grooves (Dina) is insured and the maintenance and conservation of the terraces is partly supported.

With regard to the tourism plans, the UNWTO action plan and its implementation program through the SNV (Netherland’s NGO) and the direct involvement of the community through the Konso Tourism Office is bearing fruit.

The key issues identified by the management committees and the stakeholders are taken in to consideration to integrate and harmonize modernization pressures with the protection of the heritage properties.
Should the Konso cultural landscape be registered as World Heritage, UNESCO’s support at various fronts is expected to fill in the gaps and for its leadership.

5. f. Sources and levels of finance

The various agencies, both governmental and NGO working in Konso are trying to provide support in the form of funds, skills and training. But the support acquired so-far is far from enough.

The Regional government is providing funds for salaries of culture and tourism experts working in Konso. The government have recently raised a sum of about 100,000 USD from the UNWTO to create an office, hire and train the staff and organize the community to make the heritage properties ready for tourism. Nevertheless, the current capacity is not sufficient vis-à-vis the vast heritage properties in the Konso country.

The various supporting organizations indicated above provide the opportunity for funds to be used in training. It is evident that the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture, the Authority of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism have direct stake in the cultural landscape and are sources for funds.

A joint program between an Italian NGO on one part, and the Konso Administration and the Konso Development Association on the other, have put in place a program in artisan training to produce cultural products for sale.

The skills in the traditional conservation techniques will have to be supported with modern knowledge. PARKA, the local NGO mentioned above is trying to answer to this call by creating a notion of environmental friendly approach based on respect for indigenous skills through the traditional system.
5. g. **Sources of expertise and training in conservation and management techniques**

It is to be noted that there are young Konso scholars who graduated from universities and who are aware of, and ready to take part in conservation and management of their heritage. Although the will to support the documentation, protection and conservation of the Konso heritage property is evident at various levels, it remains that the necessary coordination and follow up has to be done. Recently, two European (French and Spanish) experts are based in Konso to train the local identified culture workers on conservation of cultural objects including the **Waka**. The National Museum of Ethiopia is also engaged in the training.

The Regional Government and its Bureau of Culture and the Federal Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) are also obliged to support the training and conservation efforts.

Capacity building in the various management areas is needed for the local community members and the "Scientific Committee" which is recently established purely from Konso scholars. Resources for the training will be available from both the Regional and the Federal concerned institutions; and international institutions such as the UNESCO will be approached.

5. h. **Visitor facilities and statistics**

The number of visitors to Konso has shown a tendency of increase in the last five years. The tourists coming to Konso are visitors who are included in the package that visits the Southern Omo indigenous people.

According to the information from the Konso Tourism Office, the total number of tourists who visited the Konso traditional towns and the **Kala** burial site in the last five years is 9105. (In 2002/3, 1163 visitors; in 2003/4, 1635 visitors; in 2004/05, 2510 visitors; in 2005/06, 1833 visitors and in 2006/2007, 1956 visitors have visited konso). Thus 229,677 Birr was
collected from tickets (1 USD= 9.7 Birr). More than 90% of the visitors are foreigners. According to the year 2007 statistics, Spanish (174), French (27), American (33), British (27), German (22), Australian (25), Italian (61), Belgian (20) and Japanese (20) tourists are among the tourists who visited Konso.

There are five hotels in Konso whose bed rooms need to be upgraded. Restaurant service is below modest for an European Visitor. However, the Konso administration is striving to better the situation and up-grade the services.

Recently there are two modest loges that are under construction by a tour operator and a foreign investor. It is expected that these loges start work by February 2009. Based on the UN WTO Tourism Plan, training programs are underway to people in the service sector.

So far there is no any interpretative center in Konso. Since two years ago, with support from the French Embassy in Ethiopia and the Quai-Branly Museum, Paris, and the direct involvement and collaboration of the Konso communities and administration, a Konso Museum destined to conserve, preserve and present the Konso Waka is under construction. This Museum is planned to be inaugurated in march 2009.

Based on the Tourism Plan prepared by the UN WTO for Konso, it is planned to build an Information Center to introduce the Konso culture to visitors.

Discussions with the community members have permitted to look in to the issues of the direct involvement of community members in insuring better tourist experience. Thus, traditional houses (Pafta) are to be constructed and there is a plan to create the necessary conditions to make tourists stay longer and experience more of the Konso culture.

The Italian NGO stationed in Konso with an objective of training the community members on the traditional artisan craft for market, and the already existing Protestant Church supported craft development program will
serve as source of souvenirs for visitors and generate income for the community members.

Roads leading to major tourist attractions are available. The main road leading to Konso is now paved and the Arba-Minch Air Port is only 80 Kms. (an hour and half drive) away.

The visits in konso are guided by tour guides from the various tour operators mostly based in Addis Ababa. Learned Konso community members are taking the lead whenever tourists with interest in knowing deeply about the culture appear.

5.i. Policies and programs related to the presentation and promotion of the property

As indicated in 5.b above, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Cultural Policy, the Proclamation no. 209/2000, the Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No.53/2003 are all in agreement about the use and promotion of cultural properties in general.

There is a new Tourism Policy at a draft stage which has provisions with regard to presentation and promotion. In addition to that, the Management Objectives that were developed by the community and the Konso administrative council have indicated the need for, and their commitment to work towards the presentation and promotion of the property. The need for and action plan for presentation and promotion are clearly elaborated in the Management Plan (annexed).

5. j.  Staffing levels (professional, technical, maintenance)

The Konso cultural landscape is being used, protected and conserved by the community. Knowledgeable community members skilled in the various techniques are the main players in the conservation of the cultural properties. The Konso District Bureau of Information and Culture and the Tourism Desk are directly mandated for the follow up of the cultural landscape and its use.
Both offices have few employees who could provide professional support. Currently there are six employees in the Information and Culture Office, whereas only four in the Tourism Desk Office. The Regional Bureau of Information and Culture and the ARCCH are engaged in the capacity building of the existing staff.
6. **Monitoring**

Monitoring is done at various levels. The local community management committees of the individual *Paletas* (peasant associations) perform a periodic monitoring of changes within their own territory and report, monthly, to the Special Woreda (Konso district) Chief Administrator who call a quarterly meeting of the district Management Committee and present the report. The latter, based on the community management committees (and stakeholders reports), conduct a quarterly verification and monitoring visit of all activities on the landscape and present its report and recommendations to the Konso district administration. The Konso district administration then reports, bi-annually, to the regional government Bureau of Culture and Information, who in turn presents its annual report to the Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. The Bureau equally sends a copy of its report and requests for additional support from the Federal Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the tourism plan, the UN WTO prepared and approved document is being implemented. The Konso Tourism Desk, SNV, Regional Bureau of Tourism and the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism are responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the tourism aspects.
### Key indicators for measuring state of conservation

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<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Periodicity</th>
<th>Location of records</th>
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<tr>
<td>Terraces that need maintenance</td>
<td>annually</td>
<td>Each Paleta Peasant Association Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stone walls that need maintenance</td>
<td>annually</td>
<td>Each Paleta Peasant Association Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degradation of Wakas</td>
<td>Bi-annually</td>
<td>Each Paleta Peasant Association Office and Konso Culture and Information Office</td>
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<td>Rate of theft of Wakas</td>
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<td>Number of common houses (Pafta) and Mora that need conservation</td>
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<td>Number of Ponds that need maintenance</td>
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<td>Encroachment of markets and new settlements</td>
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<td>Population increase and walled town expansion</td>
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<td>Continuity of ritual practices</td>
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6. b. Administrative arrangements for monitoring property

Monitoring is done at various levels. The local community management committee of the individual Paleta (peasant associations) is to perform a periodic monitoring of changes with in its own territory and report, monthly, to the Special Woreda (Konso district) Chief Administrator who call a
quarterly meeting of the district Management Committee and present the report. The latter, based on the community management committees (and stakeholders reports), conduct a quarterly verification and monitoring visit of all activities on the landscape and present its report and recommendations to the Konso district administration. The Konso district administration then reports, bi-annually, to the regional government Bureau of Culture and Information, who in turn presents its annual report to the Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples Regional State. The Bureau equally sends a copy of its report and requests for additional support to the Federal Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the tourism plan, the UNWTO prepared document is being applied. The Konso Tourism Desk, SNV, Regional Bureau of Tourism and the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism are responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the tourism aspects (see annexed UN WTO document).

As the community management committee members are members of the community and live in the individual Paletas, monitoring at the community level is a continuous process. Thus no change can happen unobserved and this is reported to the Special Woreda Management Committee.

Based on the above, the Konso Special Woreda (district) Office of Culture and Information and the Management Committee with support of the Konso Administrative Council conduct physical inspection of the areas that need inspection, on quarterly basis following the Ethiopian budget year calendar. This is done at the end of September, December, March and June. (It is to be noted that the Konso Chief Administrator is the chairman of the Management Committee where as the Head of the Culture and Information Office is its Secretary.) In the case of any development that affects the properties, the Office and the Committee enforce legal measures to mitigate the problems. In the case of any natural hazard affecting the properties, action is taken by
involving the community and promptly reported to the regional government bureau of Information and Culture. The regional government Bureau of Information and Culture conduct two monitoring visits to Konso, one at the end of December and another one at the end of May. Based on this physical inspection, direct contact between the local communities and review of the reports filed, the Bureau presents its report including its recommendations to the Regional Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (S.N.N.P.R.S.). A copy of the annual report and recommendations are sent to the ARCCH for further assistance as needed.

**Contact agencies**

At the Special Woreda (District level):

a.-Office of Chief Administrator of Konso Special Woreda, Karat, Konso, SNNPRS, Ethiopia, Tel.: (251)467730041.

b.- Office of Information and Culture, Konso Special Woreda, Karat, Konso, SNNPRS, Ethiopia. Tel.: (251) 064-773 0343.

At community level:

a-The Peasant Association of the Gamole Paleta, Konso.

b-The Peasant Association of the Gocha Paleta, Konso.

c-The Peasant Association of the Mechelo Paleta, Konso.

d-The Peasant Association of the Doketu Paleta, Konso.

e-The Peasant Association of the Olanta Paleta, Konso.

f-The Peasant Association of the Dara Paleta, Konso.

g-The Peasant Association of the Gaho Paleta, Konso.

h-The Peasant Association of the Mecheke Paleta, Konso.

i-The Peasant Association of the Fasha Paleta for Burjo, Konso.
At regional level:

- Bureau of Culture and Information of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), Awassa, Ethiopia. Telephone (251) 01462201. Fax – (251)462206139.

At National level:

- The Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Po Box 13247 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Telephone No. (251)01115152741. e-mail= crcch@ethionet.et

6. c. Results of previous reporting exercises

There has not been previous formal reporting activities.
7. **Documentation**

7.a. **Photographs, slides, image inventory and authorization table and other audiovisual materials** (photos including those used in the text are on CD Rom).

**IMAGE INVENTORY AND PHOTOGRAPH AND AUDIOVISUAL AUTHORIZATION FORM**

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7.b. **Texts relating to protective designation, Copies of property management plans or documented management systems and extracts of other plans relevant to the property**

(i)- Management Plan is attached.

(ii)- extracts of The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,

(iii)- The Cultural Policy of the FDRE,

(iii)- The Proclamation issued to provide for research and conservation of cultural heritage,

(iv)- Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No. 53/2003,

(v)- The draft legal document to protect the Konso Cultural Landscape,

(vi)- Extracts of UN WTO Tourism Plan for Konso are attached.

7. c. **Form and date of most recent records of property**

The most recent records of the cultural properties were made between October 2007 and January 2008.

These records include:

For the walled towns-

- Relevant quantitative and qualitative data relative to the stone walls of traditional towns: height, thickness, rock type, rock dimensions at certain intervals; gates and their cultural purpose; state of condition of the walls are documented using GPS and data sheet prepared for these purpose.

- The cultural spaces (Mora) and cultural objects within the walls such as the Pafta (common houses), the generation trees (ulahita), and other objects of cultural significance are equally documented.

- All the paths that connect the cultural spaces within the towns are tracked.
- Burial spaces, location of heritage properties outside the walls, Dina grooves, and structures brought by development pressure are plotted.

Most of the above data are used to map the individual walled towns.

For the terraces:
- Car and foot transects were made to document the coverage of the terraces. This data is used in the map as indicated by percentage.
- One terrace section was selected and qualitative and quantitative data are gathered.

Ponds:
- Major ponds are located using GPS and data is collected.

Traditionally protected forests:
- Qualitative and quantitative data are collected. At one instance the ritual chief, Kala guided survey has identified all the major ritual spots within and adjacent to the forest.

Rituals:
- A ritual ceremony called the Kara that took 3 months was followed and documented through direct participatory approach when ever possible.

All the above were documented using digital photos; some using slide films and using video tapes.

**7. d. Address where inventory, records and archives are held**

The above records are held at the ARCCIKCL (Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscape), an indigenous Association based in Awassa, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.
7. e. Bibliography


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At National level:

- The Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural heritage (ARCCH),
  Po Box 13247 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Telephone No. (251)01115152741.
  e-mail= crcch@ethionet.et

8. c. Other Local Institutions

At Local level:

Chairpersons of the respective Paleta management committees who are by definition the Chairman of the local Peasant Association. Their addresses are through the Konso Special Woreda (administrative district)

8. d. Official web address

There is no official web address for the moment.
9. **Signature on behalf of the State Party**

________________________

H.E. Ato Jara Haile-Mariam,

General Director of the Authority for Research
and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH),

Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ethiopia.
The Konso Cultural Landscape
ETHIOPIA

Management Plan
2008-2012

Prepared by the Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscapes (ARCCIKCL)
AWASSA, ETHIOPIA

With administrative support of:
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And The Financial Support of:
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- With the participation of Selehak Melak.
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Forward

Ethiopia occupies a key position in the world as home of some of the planet’s invaluable heritage sites. This is made possible through the support and recognition of the UNESCO. So far, the World Heritage properties recognized in Ethiopia were historical, archaeological, paleontological and natural sites. Ethiopia is now proposing a Cultural Landscape, a new heritage category to the country, for inscription by the WHC.

The Konso Cultural Landscape has been recognized by various foreign and local scholars as an example of man-nature inter-relationship and was made subject of various research topics.

The Konso communities living within the proposed area for nomination, the local administration and the Regional Government together with the various stake holders have agreed to continue to insure the preservation and the integrity of the Konso Cultural Landscape. This Management Plan is prepared with the participation of all concerned bodies. We thank all those who have taken part in its preparation.

The Ethiopian Government as the State Party, through its Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism insures the continuous protection of the Konso Cultural Landscape.

We will continue working together with the Regional Government’s Bureau of Culture and the Konso Culture Office and related institutions. We would like to seize this opportunity to underline that we are planning to prepare management plans for our major sites. Special attention will be given to sites recognized by the WHC, UNESCO. We thank the UNESCO for its support in our joint and continuous collaborative undertakings in the Axum and Lalibela World Heritage sites. We will continue our efforts to bring more sites for recognition and inscription on the World Heritage List.

H.E. Mr. Jara Haile-Mariam,
Director of the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ethiopia.
Addis Ababa, January 15, 2009
Introduction

The Konso culture has been subject of scholarly research since the beginning of the 20th Century. Various researchers have produced documents which introduced the Konso culture to the world. A significant number of these research works have resulted as Ph. D thesis and detailed publications.

However, the heritage values of the Konso cultural landscape was recognized much latter and was subject of discussion during the UNESCO’s Second Global Strategic Meeting held in Addis Ababa in 1996. Accordingly, in 1997, the ARCCCH (Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, Ethiopian Ministry of Culture and Tourism) in collaboration with the CFEE (French Center for Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa) and support from WHC undertook the initial work. As a result, successive field works were conducted, jointly by ARCCCH and CFEE, in Konso and reports of these field works were sent to UNESCO.

Subsequently, a paper focusing on Konso cultural landscape was presented at the Tiwi (Kenya) Thematic Experts Meeting Organized by WHC in 1999. Following this, the Ethiopian Government request to have Konso cultural landscape on the tentative list was accepted, and WHC has supported the preparation of a Nomination File through its participatory fund and field work was conducted the same year.
The field work resulted in the production of a document entitled ‘The Study of Konso Cultural Properties’ and a Nomination File which were filed with WHC in July 2001.

The WHC in its letter of 25 July 2002 had notified the ARCCH that there have been ‘...omissions as indicated in the Technical Evaluation Check list’ specifically;
- “All documents are submitted only in one copy.
- There are no slides, no signed Photo authorization form, no Legislation text, and no Management plan.
- The boundaries of the properties are not clearly delineated on appropriate scale map.
- The nomination file is not signed by the designated official of the state party.”

WHC has equally requested for the revision of the submitted documents and “preparation of a more complete and detailed documentation for prompt submission.”

The above requests were finally met with the collaboration of interested institutions. The Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscape (ARCCIKCL), an indigenous NGO based in Awassa, (Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State) has acquired a grant from the Christensen Fund (TCF), a U.S.A. based foundation supporting research and conservation of indigenous knowledge and natural environments. The ARCCH and the Information and Cultural Bureau of the SNNPRS (Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State) have provided
their full support for the project. The Konso Administration and communities have fully participated in the process of the documentation of the properties and preparation of the management plan.

Thus, filed work in Konso commenced in October 2007 with a strict work plan to produce this document. This document is prepared in accordance to the UNESCO’s Guidelines. The Management Plan is prepared for a period of 5 years, covering the intermediate period pending the nomination of the Konso Cultural Landscape and the following years. The Management Plan will need to be revised periodically as the Konso people are undergoing a rapid social and economic change.
PART I

THE KONSO CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Generation count representation on the grave of the ritual leader, Kala.
CHAPTER I
Konso: Land, People and Heritage

I.1. General Introduction of the Konso

I.1.1 Konso Location

Konso is located 600 Kms. south of Addis Ababa. The nominated core area proposed lies between 5°16′15″ and 5°21′20″N and 37°20′15″ and 37° 26′49″ E. The Konso people inhabit in the Konso Special Woreda within South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State. Konso Special Woreda (administrative district) covers an area of 2354.3 km². It is bordered by Darashe, Amaro and Burji Special Woredas and Oromia Regional State and Debub Omo Zones, in the north, northeast, east, south and west respectively.

Map 1- Location of Konso in Ethiopia and SNNPRS.
I.1.2. Population and Language

According to a population estimate by the Office of Statistics and Population of South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State (SNNPRS), the population of Konso was 212,272 in 2004 (Awoke, 2007: 50). As Hallpike (2000: 59) quotes Bender, the Konso “... speak a lowland East Cushitic language, and share 44% of cognates with the Borana” Oromo (Bender 1972:174).

I.1.3. Settlement and Terraces

The Konso are agricultural people growing mainly finger millet and maize. They also cultivate coffee, cotton, soya beans, cassava, sheleqda (Moringa sp ?) and chat (Chat edulis?). Konso land is arid and rocky with a very thin fertile top soil. The Konso have adopted a terrace agricultural system and the core Konso area is characterized by dry
stone terrace agricultural system. The intensively terraced slopes are located between an altitude of 1500 and 2000 meters.

The terraced agriculture covers an area of “approximately 225 km\(^2\) in extent” (Kimura, 2004: 29).

Formerly Konso was divided into three regions, “Garati in the east, Takati in the west and Turo in the north” (Hallpike 2000: 77). Currently, however, Konso is divided into six sub-zones/regions: Karate, Fasha/Keena, Duro/Turo, Kolme, Gewada and Gumaide.

Map 3. Boundary of the Core Konso area with major cultural properties
In the core Konso area the Konso people live in stone walled towns\(^1\). As Ambron (1989:73) puts it, “... the main area of settlement, which is at the same time the zone of the most intensive productivity, lies between 1,500 and 1,800m. The stone-walled terraced fields begin, however, at a low point of about 700m in the Sagan valley stretching to an altitude of about 2,000m where the steep slopes of the highest mountains begin.” According to a survey made by Kimura in 2001-2002, a “...total of 54 settlements have been located. ... The distribution of stone walled settlements show that they are more closely spaced in the northeast, in the present day town of Karat... In this region there are 12 settlements in a 4x4 km area... In other parts of Konso the densities of settlements vary between 2 and 7 per 16 km\(^2\). There are, fore example, only 5 settlements per 16 km\(^2\) in the far southeastern part of Fasha zone, with an average of 1.2 walls per settlement. It is likely that the northeastern area of Konso was the first to be settled, and that people subsequently moved south and southeast” (Kimura, 2004:83).

I.1.4. Short History of the Konso

According to oral traditions, the Konso originally came from two directions, i.e., from the east and the west. The eastern group constitutes those migrated mainly from Liben (Borena) and also those from the Burji areas. People in the western group, reportedly came from the highlands of Dirashe, Mashile, Gewada, and from the Tsemay area etc. (Kolcha Koldomo & Korgale Gola, pers. comm.)

Almost all of the local informants agree that migrants from the east were the first settlers of the Konso land. They also confirm that people from the west reached the area, shortly after the former, at almost the same time (Lemita Bite, Kachullo Mago & Kolcha, pers. comm.). This did

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\(^1\) Town, instead of village is used for Konso settlements after Hallpike (2000: 1 foot note) who says, “I use the word ‘town’ in preference to the more usual ‘village’ since their large and dense populations, their defensive walls, and the fact that in pre-Amhara times they were sovereign units, distinguish them from most other African settlement patterns. In English usage one of the distinctive criteria of towns has always been their self-governing status, as opposed to that of village.”
not result in a conflict because of the careful handling of the case by elders of both parties, who had arranged a meeting that was attended by representatives from both sides. This meeting is said to have resulted in creating a common understanding; both have accepted that they belong to common ancestors in the distant past. Although the eastern group was originally pastoralists as opposed to the western group who practiced farming, they all together started a settled life and became agriculturalists. To mark their unity, both scarified a bull. The meat was shared between their members. They made a drum (timba) from the hide of the same bull and later decided that the timba should serve as a symbol of unity, order, administrative and of the Konso social life. According to the same sources, most elements governing the surviving cultural system and the traditional political administration emanated from agreements reached during this meeting (Metasebia, 1998). It is important to note how the cults of ancestors govern almost all the diverse cultural aspects of the society.

Shako Otto (1994), a Konso himself, has given a similar explanation: “These peoples, with similar clans, have oral traditions which are traced back to a common ancestry. Hence, the nine clans of Konso society do not belong to the Konso alone but also to the Borana, Dirasse, Ala, and Tsemay...” The different linguistic studies support these oral traditions. For instance, a linguistic study by Black (1974), states a considerable intelligibility between the languages of Gato, Mashile, Konso, Gidole (Dirashe) and Bussa. Black (1973) concludes the results of his study as follows: “Linguistic evidence ... support ... that the Konso, and other Konsoind peoples, as well are of mixed ancestry.” In his part, Hansemo Hamela (1993 E.C.), a Dirashe man himself, attests that both the Konso and the Dirashe claim their origin from Liben (Borana) and the other surrounding regions. He further explains that all the three societies (Konso, Dirashe and Borana) have nine clans and each clan from a group has a clan that corresponds to its own in each of the other societies. In Gewada also there are nine clans. According to oral
informants, each of the Gewada clan corresponds to each of the Konso clans. In case of displacement to either side, a person from either of the societies can claim to be integrated in the clan that corresponds to its own.

Although the Konso have common ancestors with these neighboring societies, their expansion to all directions was restricted by these peoples. Relations between Konso and their neighbors was characterized by occasional hostilities and clashes. This aspect of relationship with their neighbors occupies a determining place in their history.

Those clans who claim to have migrated from the northwest have a custom of burring dead members of their clan with the head positioned to the west; while those clans who claim to have come from the east bury their clan members with the head positioned towards the east.

Hallpike (2000: 61-62) says that, there were three waves of migrations of the Konso people and its ritual chiefs/clan leaders, the poqollas. The first and the second migrations were from Aylota. Some migrants, the family of Bamale, ritual head of Dokatu, came from Borana. The third wave of migration of the Konso was the invasion of the Konso by the Borana at the end of the sixteen century.

Hallpike (2000:76) continues,

“Bahrey also records (in Chapter 9 of his History of the Galla) that in the period 1554-62 some of the Borana had taken to riding horses and mules ... The invasion of the siplongara was dated for me as about 360 years before 1966, and at about the same time that the first of the stones was erected in the Bakasha wood. These mark the beginning of the newest version of the gada system of Garati ... 360 years before 1966 is about 1600 and an exact calculation based on the stones is 373 years before 1966, which gives a date of 1593. It therefore seems reasonable to suppose that the concentration of the Konso into their present large walled towns begun at about the same time”.
In any case, somewhere at the beginning of the 16th century, the emigrants started dispersed settlements and eventually started to construct walled towns that are intact and functional until today.

Until the incorporation of Konso land into the Ethiopian empire towards the end of the nineteenth century, each Konso traditional town enjoyed an autonomous status and used to be administered by traditional institutions. Councils of elders were placed on top of these institutions. The incorporation was effected by Dejazmach Leulseged, one of Emperor Menilk’s generals. The incorporation was concluded without grand resistance in the part of Konso. Some resistances is reported in Jarso, Guyle and Dokatu. With the destruction of Dokatu town, the resistance came to an end.

Until the 1970s, Konso was administrated within the Gamo-Gofa Region, with simple district (Woreda) status under Gardula Awraja (Zone?). Just before the end of the 1980s, Konso enjoyed an Awraja (Zonal) status under Semen (Northern) Omo Administrative Region. Currently, following the country’s federal structure, it has become one of the Special Woredas (districts) under the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State (SNNPRS). Its capital, Karat (formerly Bekawile), is situated 590 and 365Km south of Addis Ababa and the regional capital Awassa, respectively.

I.1.5. Social Stratification

The Konso people are divided into two social stratums. These stratums are known as etenta and hawuda. Etenta refers to the agriculturalists where as the hawuda constitutes the various artisans. Besides its importance as economic basis, agriculture is an honored occupation in the Konso culture. Because of this perception, the tradition allows the etenta a superior place, whereas the hawuda is an inferior stratum in the society (Kusse Guyita, Sagoya Robiya, Denote Kussiya, pers. comm.).
As indicated earlier, the following artisans are grouped in the hawuda: *hawuda ayata* (weavers), *hawuda tuma* or *hawuda bosa* (blacksmiths), *hawuda kolata* (tanners), *hawuda okotawa* (potters), and *hawuda kolata* or *hawuda gerba* (butchers) (Kusse, pers. comm.).

There are some traditional laws which oblige the two groups to operate on the basis of these differences. These include: marriage to either of the sexes in the hawuda is prohibited for the etenta. Therefore, the hawuda are obliged, by customary law, to practice marriage only among them. By this customary law, a hawuda does not own agricultural land or allowed to work in agricultural fields. Disobedience to this and other related customs is considered a taboo and the concerned person could be excommunication by the society (Kusse, Dinote and Sagoya, pers. comm.). However, since the military take over in 1974, some people have begun to break these customary laws. Currently, some men from the *etenta* are married to hauwda women, although their practices are largely unaccepted. Traditionally, the hawudas were not allowed to participate in the meetings of the council of elders. In addition, still today, the hawudas never assume the office of Aba Timba and are prohibited from touching the Timba it self. As they do not possess agricultural fields, their burials take place in the *dina*, multi purpose forests around the walled towns. Despite these discriminations, the hawudas live in the same town alongside the etenta. In spite of their inferior status, however, the hawuda have been engaged in commercial activities and became economically successful and also play a significant role as master of ceremonies in most important rituals, particularly in funeral rites related to the death and mourning ceremony of clan chiefs and their respective family members, as they are considered to have mystical powers.

**I.1.6. Konso Social Organization**

In general, three types of social organizations could be taken as major social organizations of Konso. These are:
1. Kafa (clan/lineage) organization,
2. Kanta, neighborhood organization, and
3. Helta, age group organization.

1.1.6.1. Clan (kafa) Division and Organization

There are nine exogamous and patriarchal clans, *kafa* in Konso. These *kafa* are namely; Kertita, Tikisayta, Eshalayta, Elayta, Argamayta, Togumaleta, Sawdata, Mahaleta, and Pasanta. All or most *kafas* inhabit in each of the Konso villages; or, in other words, in most Konso villages members of all or most of the *kafas* live together. Each kafa has its own clan chief known as a *poqola* (Woldedawit Gayote, Lemita, Kolcha & others, pers. comm.).

As the Konso are exogamous, marriage within the same clan is strictly forbidden. A thorough study of clan origin is one of the basic prerequisites to decide marriage arrangements. Due to this sense of either brotherhood or sisterhood between members the same clan is very strong. Consequently, when something good or bad happens to a certain member of a clan, it would be felt by the clan members as a common affair. If some thing wrong happens to a clan member, members of the same clan stand together to help their kafa member or to defend the interests of their member. Moreover, when they tell relations with clan members, they prefer to express as “*she is my clan sister*” or “*he is my clan brother*” (Woldedawit, Kusse & sagoya, pers. comm.). Generally, clan members of a certain clan address each other not by their proper names; rather they call each other using the term kafa.

All the nine Konso clans enjoy equal status. For this reason, marriage between parties from different clans is possible. However, there are some exceptions. The following clans do not intermarry within themselves: Eshalyata to Pasanta, Argamayta to Tikisayta, Keritita to Pasanta and Elayta to Togumaleta. This is due to an established tradition which says (and also accepted by the pioneer settlers) if certain
groups descended from a common ancestor, or if they lived at the same place in the ancient times, they are relatives (Lemita, pers. comm.).

As the Konso are patriarchal, it is the eldest son who inherits the properties of his father. If a father passes away without bearing a son, a person most close in the lineage, kafa, inherits his properties. The residential system is patrilocal and so an eldest son lives with his parents even after his marriage. Younger sons live in their parents’ compounds until they marry and are forced to leave and settle somewhere allotted to them.

1.1.6.2. *Kanta Organization*

The Konso term Kanta refers to a social organization based on neighborhood. This type of organization plays a considerable role in the day to day life of the society. Each traditional town is divided into wards, *kantas*. Each kanta has its own public office, *mora*, around which the religious, political and social lives of its residents operate. Kanta members are obliged to help their fellow members in various aspects of every day life. They share the joy and misfortunes of their respective members. Organizing and participating in burials of their members are their duty. As underlined by Hallpike (1972), this is the most important task that is very appreciated by the Konso. As Hallpike (1972) says, “The ward neighbors are ... seen as performing certain essential functions, of which their assistance at burials is the paradigm case, which cannot be performed by a man’s kin.” The social organization of a kanta is also manifested due to presence of institutions like council of elders, who are responsible to manage the proper function of social life of their respective *kantas*.

1.1.6.3. *Helta Organization*

The term helta corresponds to an age group organization of Konso. This organization, which is very complex and difficult to understand well, plays an important role in unifying the residents of all kanta and in
forming a single society of its respective paleta. The initiation and the passage from one age grade to another concerns all the men in the paleta. Generally, based on experiences of the Dokatu paleta, men are grouped in four classes.

a. *Tinayela (Fereyda)* represents all children and very young ones who literally have no social responsibilities. Members of this group are forbidden to get married until they mount to the next superior grade, i.e. *helita*.

b. *Helita* signifies a class of men who achieve the right to get married. They are very important in the society in that their class is in charge of many responsibilities and duties such as defending the security of the land and the society, protecting the walled towns and the diverse properties of the community, etc. This is a class of warriors. Passing through this class is obligatory to all men.

c. *Kimaya or Orshada* is a class of elders. It consists of community elders who are grouped in the class that is above the helita. This means, this group consist of retired persons who had already served in the helita. This is a class of senior elders that play a very important role in directing and managing community affairs. Its members have the right to bless the helita. Thus, the Kimaya consist of persons who largely perform the activities of the council of elders.

d. *Gurula* represents a class of very old men. Because its grand age, its members do not almost have any social role.

I.1.7. Konso Traditional Authorities

There are a number of institutions in charge of the traditional administration. Only, some of the important authorities have been described below.
I.1.7.1. Council of Elders (Kimaya)

The Konso term Kimaya refers to wise men that are identified because of their relatively high knowledge of konso traditions, by their oratory quality, by their capability to make sound arguments, because of their intelligence, decency, capacity to make good judgment courage, honesty etc. In this context, it implies to the council of elders. Elders play a vital role in the Konso tradition administration. Two kinds of councils exist in each of the konso town. These include ward (kanta) and town (paleta) councils. Ward councils are responsible for the administration of their respective kanta members who on the basis of neighborhood share the same mora that belongs to a certain kanta. A town or paleta council is a congregation of elderly people from the various wards in the same town and responsible for the administration of the whole of the town. These councils of elders generally run the routine affairs of their respective towns (Urmelle and Kusse, pers. comm.).

Despite the fact that different institutions operate in the administration, they function under the guidance and instruction of elders. It is by their selection or decision that people assume authority in the various political offices. The duration in authority of some of the officials is decided by them. They facilitate the transfer of responsibilities between those who served their term and the candidates who are nominated for the next term. It is also the responsibility of elders to ensure the promotion of each age group, hela to the next higher grade and the handing over of authority from retiring to succeeding age groups takes place according to tradition. The management and operation of the traditional justice system is largely done by community elders.

Moreover elders conduct a close follow-up on the day to day activities of the various offices. Particularly, they inspect the performances of the administering hela. When it is felt that something against tradition is done, they consult among themselves and then issue
corrective directives. They evaluate the achievements of each hela that served its term. On this basis, they decide and allot a place for the erection of a stone monument, dega hela (Kusse & Mulu, pers. comm. see also Metasebia, 1997) in memory of the retiring hela. In general, elders who are sources of power and wisdom, regulate the traditional political life of konso.

I.1.7.2. The Hela

A hela is a Konso term literally meaning an age group. Traditionally, the political organization of the Konso is based on an age group system. Although there are some regional differences in the classification of age groups (for example, in the region known as kena the system functions between hirba kalkusa & melkusa). In the case of Dokatu (where the system continues to function more or less according to tradition), men, major actors in this system are divided into two major age groups known as hela, which are generally called hirba and kalkusa. Each hela is divided into two sub-hela and addressed as hela. Men are initiated to this distinct groups following a special ceremony known as kara, which takes place twice in eighteen years (every seven and eleven years) and marks the transfer of responsibilities from the retiring major hela to the other (Metasebia Bekele, 1997).

The term for each major hela (either Hirba or kalkusa), is eighteen years. This is shared between the two sub-hela. A senior sub-hela stays in power for the first seven years and the junior sub-hela would be responsible for the last eleven years. The other major hela would assume responsibility for the next eighteen years. Each sub-hela has its own name that is given always after a successful ritual hunting of either a lion or a leopard.

A sub-hela in a political office would be responsible for various community affairs. The major ones are:

- It is like a police force and responsible to ensure the security peace of the society and the towns. The hela is a link between community
elders and the public. It receives guidance from the council of elders and executes their instructions. Instructed by elders the hela forces wrong doers or criminals to appear before the council of elders to be judged.

- In case of attack from either neighboring villages or from other non konso people, it is the obligation of its respective members to defend their people or to take part in every armed conflict during its term of office. Thus, it is a warrior group.
- Protecting the towns walls or their restoration (in case of damage) is largely its responsibility.
- Equally important is to look after the well being of the mora (public places). When necessary, building mora and pafta (men’s sleeping house on mora) at places previously allotted for this purpose, would be its duty.
- The hela mobilizes its members in almost all community affairs. When need arises, cleaning or building of harda (Water ponds), controlling fire accidents and performing almost all the various community works are tasks of the responsible hela. After serving its term the hela would retire and so its members will not be obliged to take part in community labor.

I.1.7.3. Senkeleta

Each sub-hela has its own elect leader called senkeleta (or helita in some konso parts). Although a senkeleta appears to be elected by hela members, his actual recruitment and election is decided by the council of elders. The basic criterions for election are good behavior and ones capability to assume responsibility. Elders should believe that the person in question never lies and never engaged in an extra-marital affair. Investigations should also prove that he is from a descent family and has the ability to win the friendship of the society in general and the respect of members in his hela in particular (Gelgelo Denebo & Tefera Gebabo, pers. comm.). A good knowledge of Konso tradition is also a requirement.
The most important institutional role of a senkeleta is that he is a chief coordinator of the responsible hela. He represents the hela almost in all community affairs. It is the responsibility of a senkeleta to announce and organize hela meetings. Such meetings take place under his chairmanship. He is in charge of coordinating the various tasks set by tradition so as to let the hela fulfils its duties. In spite of his accountability to the hela, a senkeleta serves as a messenger of elders; those play a pivotal role in the traditional administration. He receives instructions and directives either from elders or from Aba Timba who at the same time act as his advisors on matter related to administration and hela duties (Urmelle, Kusse & Dinote, pers. comm.). Such instructions and directives reach hela members through the senkeleta. Therefore, a senkeleta is a link between the hela and community elders, (those above the administrating hela). A final speech by a senkeleta (always citing tradition) at the end of each hela meeting is considered as being the hela decision. And hela members are supposed to obey it. Towards the end of the kara ritual, that is the senkeleta who demands his juniors to transport a stone that is going to be erected in memory of his hela. He organizes and leads the transportation and erection of the dega hela. The authority of each senkeleta ends together with the retirement of his respective sub-hela (Lemita & Kusse, pers. comm.).

I.1.7.4. Aba Timba

In konso language, Aba Timba literally means “father of the drum” (aba is equivalent to the term father, while timba represents the drum). The timba is a sacred drum and is an emblem of the Konso traditional administration. A person who keeps the timba becomes in charge of the Aba timba office for a certain period of time. Each of the konso towns are administered by their respective aba Timba.
The concept of aba timba and the timba as a symbol of authority originated after the decisions reached by elders who initially settled on Konso land. The system continued to function on the basis of these established traditional rules. Aba Timba has no clan basis. People from different clans used to serve and still serve as Aba Timba. However, the authority of Aba Timba rotates only between certain households with the background of such services since the beginning of the system. People who belong to such families never assume Aba Timba’s office. Since the start, the selection of Aba timba takes on the basis of good conduct, acceptance by the community, an ability to handle community affairs and a good knowledge of konso tradition. It is also said that such men should always by a relatively wealthier ones (Dinote, Sagoya & Kusse, pers. comm.).

Based on experiences of the three Dokatu towns (Burkuda, Hulme & Dokatu), the term of office for each Aba Timba is only one year (Sagoya, kolcha and kusse, pers. comm.). However, due to certain circumstances (such as drought, Famine, war, etc.), elders used to let certain Aba Timba serve for the next one or more terms (Kusse & chare, pers. comm.). Due to this, each Aba Timba stays in office to a period that corresponds to his predecessors in the family. His authority terminates at a ceremony marking the handover of the Timba to another person that is nominated by elders to succeed him. Retired Aba Timba may have the chance to serve the same office again for other one or more terms during their life times.

As indicate above, for Aba Timba is placed on top the town administrative structure (in line with the council of elders), each Aba Timba acts as a representative of each town. By tradition, the following are some of the major responsibilities of Aba Timba (Kolcha, sagoya, Kusse Dinote, pers. comm.):

- Aba Timba is in charge of his town’s administration and takes care of the timba during his term of service.
- He is considered as guardian of the traditional laws.
- He is responsible for the realization of directivities given to him by elders. He issues instructions to the administrating Hela through the respective senkeleta. Therefore, he is a chain between town elders and the senkeleta (or the hela).
- He controls the performances of the administrative hela.
- He is responsible to solve conflicts those arise between his people (when such cases are resented to him).
- He represents the town people in efforts to solve conflict (which may include armed ones) between Konso towns or neighboring peoples.
- He is responsibility to ensure that justice is going according to tradition.
- Because of his responsibility for the well being of his people, he performs certain occasional rituals. These include: thanks & prayers to God wishing strength, prosperity, health, fertility etc. to his land, people and animals. He also sacrifices animals and gives blessings to the people and generally presides over the town’s religious practices.

I.1.7.5. Dawra

The term *dawra* is generally understood to indicate a conciliatory or a mediation role. In this case dawra refers to one of the active units in Konso traditional administration and to elderly men who serve as dawra. By tradition, dawra play mainly a priestly role. Although there are dawra performing rituals in each of the Konso towns, traditionally elder men from the small village of Lehaite serve as dawra to most Konso parts, since the beginning of their settlement.

Dawra are believed to be honest, pure and have a spiritual power. Due to this, they are highly respected and have the acceptance of the people as ritual leaders. Some important functions of the dawra are described below (Lemita, Kolcha, Kachullo, Dinote, Sagoya, pers. comm.)
• Dawra are responsible to perform prayers at times of drought, famine, etc. wishing the well being of their people.
• They give blessings to people who appear to them. It is believed that sterile women who get their blessing would give birth.
• People appear before the dawra asking for their blessings. So it is believed that this will bring a boost to their agricultural and honey productions.
• One of the most important functions of the dawra is their conciliatory role. Their mediation of the conflicting parties is, almost always, successful. As they have the respect of the community, they are obeyed.
• They are considered guardians of peace. The long sticks they usually carry have been understood as symbol of peace. During every clash or any armed conflict, dawra appear in the middle of the fight and install the sticks and so the conflicting parties are obliged to stop the fight that will later be concluded by a subsequent conciliation.
• They are particularly responsible for the protection of the sacred forests, i.e. mura dawra. If something against tradition is practiced, (e.g. if trees cut), dawra together would go to the forest and condemn the act. They perform prayers begging God to save their people from a catastrophe that is believed to follow.
• They are also responsible to take care of the Aba Timba so as to keep him pure. One instance of this is, if the Aba Timba gets bleeding due to some accident, it is their responsibility to pure him. They slaughter a goat and wash the affected part of his body by the blood.

I.1.7.6. Clan Chief, Poqolla

A poqolla is a clan chief. Two kinds of poqolla are known: poqolla tuma and poqolla mulga.
**Poqolla Tuma:** On top of each *Kafa*, there is a poqolla Tuma with different hereditary titles like Aferta, Bamalle, Kalla Qufa, etc. A tuma is a silver bracelet worn by such poqolla as a symbol of authority and as founders of their respective Kafa. It passes from father to an elder son who succeeds the former as Poqolla *Tuma*. They lead a secluded life “out of the traditional Konso walled towns on top of hills in the midst of juniper and cacti forests” (Tadesse 1992:13). Among others these three hereditary ritual leaders occupy a particular place as regional priests. For example, *kalla* lives close to Gamole town and his authority includes the major parts of Konso, Garati and Duro regions. *Bamalle* lives near Burkuda town and is responsible for the three *Dokatu* towns: Dokatu, Burkuda and Hulme. *Qufa's* authority covers the various areas in the region known as *Kena*.

At present, The *Kalla tuma* has been worn by Gezahegn Woldedawit Gayote, the 20th *Kalla*. They are respected even by *poqolla mulga* of the same *kafa*, who consider the as senior father and refer as “my *poqolla tuma*. Wood for pillars of *pafta* (men’s sleeping houses) on the *mora* of the different towns would be donated by and from the sacred forests of their respective *poqolla tuma*. Each of the *poqolla tuma* has their own sacred forests which are named after their traditional titles as *mura Kalla*, *mura Bamale* and *mura Qufa*. *Poqolla Tuma* provides juniper tree for the towns in his authority for the purpose of erecting as generation tree, *Olayta* on a *mora* in each eighteen years. They each have also big *mora* that serves both sacred & secular practices.

*Poqolla tuma* act as head of all the ritual practices in their different towns. They practice various rituals to their people. They offer “...blessings for these towns at the sacrifice for the health and strength of the warrior grade, known as *Hrela [Helaj]*” (Tadesse, 1992:13). During the *kara* ritual, *helita* members appear to the court of the Bamale who bless them before they depart for a ritual hunting (Kusse, Elaya, Geletu, pers. comm.). They also offer blessings to all their people wishing prosperity, health, and peace, the fertility of humans, animals and the land and also
success in all aspects of life. It is their responsibility to bring peace at disputes between their citizens. They consider “...case of murder, border conflicts and other disputes. Their decision ...after deliberations with elders representing the conflicting parties are considered final and are rarely taken to court or other government institution” (Tadesse, 1992:13)

Besides the respect and obedience, the people cultivate their farm lands, build their houses participate in necessary works associated to the live of both types of the poqolla.

**Poqolla Mulga:** There are a number of *poqolla mulga* living in each of the Konso town who represent each of the Konso clans. The term *mulga* refers to bracelets worn by the *poqolla*. Each such poqolla wears five mulga in his wrist. The *mulga* serves as a symbol of this authority. In addition an *Olayta* (a “sacred” dead juniper tree) is erected in the compound of a *poqolla mulga*, where as its patron, he practices various rituals to his clan members. Out of the town, there are several sacred forests those serve as burial places for *poqolla* and their respective family members (Woldedawit & Kusse, pers. comm.).

As a clan chief, a *poqolla* performs various tasks pertaining to his clan (Korgale, Kusse & Dinote, Pers. comm.). Some of these are:

- During the beginning of each agricultural season, he conducts prayers wishing his people to get enough rain and prosperity.
- Once in a year and (sometimes when it is felt necessary) he “sacrifices” for the well being of his people. (Actually, as a poqolla never practices slaughtering, an elder performs the sacrifice in his name).
- He settles disputes arising between his clan members, when there are cases unsolved by clan elders and presented to him. As a clan chief, he also plays a conciliatory role.

I.1.8. Konso Funeral Rites

In Konso, the perception of death, the weight of mourning and the funeral rites depend on the age, sex, the social status and the
circumstance of the death of the individual concerned. A person can be considered as human some three months after his birth. After giving birth, a mother stays in her home isolated from almost all social activities. She will be back to the social life after about three months performing a ritual known as *Sogada*. This is a ritual to purify the mother and gives her the right to appear in public marking the end of her isolated live. It is therefore, like an official announcement of her integration in the social life. In addition to the mother's purification, the sogada ritual is an initiation rite for the child to be acknowledged as a human being. Since then, the child has the right to be buried at a family tomb like other members of the society, the funeral rites and the mourning ceremony being similar. In contrast, if a child passes away before *sogada* takes place, he never assumes the honor to get buried in the same site and the funeral rites and the mourning ceremonies will never take place for he is not considered as a human. In case of death before sogada, the child will be buried at the foot of the wall of the house. No mourning ceremony will take place except a visit to the mother by old women.

The death of a person is always announced by a loud cry of parents and neighbors. Later, kanta members wash the corps and assure its purification. According to tradition, the corps must be covered with animal skin. With the aid of a wooden stretcher Kanta members transport the corps directly to the tomb and effect the burial. In most cases, personal belongings such as clothes, shoes, etc. accompany the corps in the graves. It is believed that the dead needs them in its “life after death”. Various rituals take place during burials.
Fig 1. Plan and section of Kala’s residencial compound.
I.1.9. The Death and Funeral Rites of Ritual Chiefs, *poqolla*

Funeral rites related to ritual chiefs occupy an exceptional place because these rites are realized more or less according to typical traditional ways. They also occupy an exceptional place in that they involve different rituals and steps since the moment of death until the end of the mourning ceremony.

According to tradition, in most parts of Konso, the corps of a poqolla must be preserved for a period of nine years. Accompanied by a sacrifice, the dead would be taken to a funeral house where specialist embalmers mummify the corps during this period. The first step is to take out the sensitive parts of the body like the intestine and put them in a new pot that they place in a whole in the same house where the body stays. Since then, the embalmers wash the body three times a day with water brought before sun rise. In order to create good odor they burn various types of incenses and olive wood. They treat the body mainly with honey, butter and plant products. During all this period of time the family and the public at large nourishes the guardians. Although the public knows that the poqolla is dead, he is considered as if he is sick until his death is officially announced to the public that marks the beginning of the mourning ceremony several months or a year after his death. The date is always announced after decisions reached by respective council of elders. They decide the date depending on several factors and circumstances. For instance the burial of Aferta (chief of the clan Eshalayta) took place a year after his death; whereas the funeral of Kalla Wolde Dawit had been realized nine months and nine days after he passed away.

At this particular day, the guardians handover the corps to the public and the latter, transfers to another house where it is kept until its burial. The death of a poqolla and the beginning of the mourning ceremony is always announced by the batting of a sacred drum that serves this particular purpose. This task belongs to a certain person who
plays the role of master of the ceremony. At the sound of the drum the public begins to cry becomes in tears. This is followed by a traditional dance known as *mana*. *Mana* is a dance practiced only at occasions related to the death of ritual chiefs. Both men and women perform dances on a mora of the respective poqolla.

During this time, men from certain *paleta* prepare the tomb turn by turn in the order set by tradition. For example, during the burial of *kalla*, digging and preparing the tomb is the responsibility of men from Mechelo, Gocha and Gamole. At the same time, sculptors nominated for their relatively high quality of wood sculpting, fabricate wooden statues from a wood coming from the sacred forest of the respective *poqolla*.

Transporting the corpse to tomb is also limited to men from particular paleta or villages. Each group carries the corps to a particular point and handovers to the other group. The last group transports to its final destination, i.e. the tomb. The corps is arranged in a sitting position, the two hands being tied to his knees. They envelope the corps with a cow skin sacrificed for this purpose its horns being placed at the front on its head, where as the phallic object, *helecha* being on the forehead. They wind the corps with a rope made of grass. When transporting to the tomb, members of the same clan put hands on part of the rope attached to the body all through the way up to the tomb. When burying, part of this rope winds the statue (*waka*) erected on the tomb in his memory. The tomb of a *poqolla* is a cylindrical hole. At one side, at the foot of the hole, they open a small gate where they place the corps and also the pot that contains the intestines. They close this gate with a stone wall and finally close the hole with pieces of stone and of soil. Later on, they erect the wooden statues on the grave. First they erect the statue (*waka*) that represents the *poqolla* himself and next the install those representing his arms (spear, shield, sword, etc.), a statue engraved with a number of gears (*leda*). By counting the incisions one can easily understand that how many *poqolla* of the same family have passed away. The last object to be erected is a stick of authority, a stick.
on which nine incisions are curved. The nine gears correspond to the nine clans of konso. They construct a small house to shelter the statues.

Upon her death, a wife of a poqolla (poqoltata) would be buried in the midst of the sacred forest. In this case, it takes place at a separate site set for females. They erect a single statue in her memory. They bury their off springs in the sacred forest at a separate place; however, they never erect monuments on their graves.
CHAPTER II

Methods and Procedure

The Konso Cultural Landscape is constituted by cultural properties that are directly related with the socio-economic life of the people. Cultural properties constituting the Konso Cultural Landscape are:

a) The traditional stone walled towns (Paleta) and their organization /and associated cultural properties i.e. The Kanta (ward system); Mora (cultural space) with its men house (Pafta), generation marker tree (Olayta), erected stones (Daga-hela and Daga-diruma) etc...

b) The dry stone terraces (Kabata), which are built as a response to the harsh environment and the techniques used in their construction.

c) The traditionally maintained grooves (forest) which play an important role in the Konso culture and serve as refuge for endemic plants.

d) The burial marker statuettes (Waka), made of wood and unique to the Konso.

e) The ponds (Harda), those are made with generations old knowledge and serve as response to the dry environment.

f) The active tradition that make the Konso perhaps the only surviving stelae erecting people in the world.

In order to better understand the cultural properties and to prepare the Nomination File and the Management Plan, the field team has used the following methods.

The field team has taken advantage of the already compiled bibliography on Konso and further completed it by adding recent publications that came out since year 2000. The literatures are reviewed. The field work in Konso is preceded by a meeting with the Head of the Bureau of Culture and Information of the Southern Nations, Nationalities
and Peoples Regional State and the Konso Administrative District (Special Woreda) Management Council members comprising all the governmental offices. It has been unanimously agreed up on the necessity of having the Konso heritage properties documented, protected, managed and used; and the preparation of the Nomination File was indorsed.

Based on this agreement, to update itself about the situations on the ground and for planning purpose, the team visited the heart land of the Konso country considered as the “Core of Traditional Konso”. The condition, cultural significance and integrity of the identified individual Konso towns (Paletas) and their associated properties were noted and priorities were set.

Following this, a meeting was held (on October 15, 2007) with the Konso Administrative Council to:

a) determine the traditional towns (Paletas) and heritage properties to be considered for nomination,
b) identify the stake holders,
c) form management committees at the Woreda level,
d) define the composition of the community management committees,
e) set a meeting date for the Woreda stake-holder committee and community representatives.

II.1. Definition of the core area for nomination

A. After the report of the team on its visits to the various communities (Paletas) and its proposal for consideration, the Administrative Council have carefully deliberated on the selection criteria and representation issues. It was noted that it is not practical at this stage to document and propose the whole Konso country and its 50 and plus Paletas and properties there in. It was agreed that the “Core Konso cultural area” comprising of 11 communities (paletas/peasant associations) be given priority based on their integrity so as to meet UNESCO’s guidelines and criteria for nomination.
- The first cluster of Paletas included Gamole, Mechelo and Gocha.

The **Gamole** Paleta including its dry walls, cultural spaces, burial sites and its associated features such as the erected stones (Daga-Hela and Daga-Diruma), its terraced farms were approved to be included.

The second and third important traditional towns proposed for the file were the **Mechelo** and **Gocha** Paletas with their associated cultural properties and the traditionally protected ritual forest (**kala forest**) which they share with the Gamole Paleta and which is the residence and traditional burial place of their common ritual leaders (Kala). Gamole, Mechelo and Gocha have dry stone terraces farms around them.

- The other cluster of walled towns (Paletas) and associated properties selected are **Mechke** and **Gaho**. These towns have important and high defensive walls, grave marking statuettes (Wakas) and an extensive dry stone terrace farm and share the same values as the other traditional Konso villages.

- The **Burjo** Paleta in Keena region considered for its specially constructed basement type stone houses and grass thatched tukuls standing on a single pole.

- The other cluster of Paletas considered for the file are **Dokatu**, **Hulme** and **Burkuda**. Hulme and Burkada were founded as extension of Dokatu because of population expansion. The Dokatu cluster is included because of its stronger living cultural tradition. The Konso “Generation-grading system” or “Age-grading system” and the ceremonies related to it (the ritual hunt and the erection of stele) are still practiced here. Dokatu alone is practicing this ritual to this date. Although Dokatu is located close to the Bekawle town (the Konso administrative center) and its urban influence, it strongly retain the Konso cultural values.
- A fourth cluster of Paletas was proposed to complete the representation of the Konso traditional towns. This refers to the Lehaite and Dera. These Paletas are reputed for their well made terraces and houses. Lehayte is residence of an elderly ritual chief called dhawuras who has the traditional power of settling disputes between the various Konso paletas; whereas Dera has high multiple rings of defensive dry stone walls.

Taking in to account the recommendation of the participants at the meeting, an agreement was reached to include Olanta Paleta to represent the Durayte region.

B. The Konso-Gardula paleoanthropological site discovered in 1991 and recognized as the world’s oldest Acheulean culture with abundant mammalian fossils including hominids is located in Konso district. The core research localities which were mapped and decided up on earlier, together with the administration and the researchers working on the site were proposed to be part of the nomination file.

C. It was noted that the suggested areas cover a vast territory and effort be made to try to focus on more important aspects of the cultural landscape. It was further agreed that, in the future, more areas that merit nomination be included as extension, should this file be accepted by UNESCO.

II.2- Stakeholder identification and meeting

Governmental and private institutions that are closely linked with the Konso cultural properties were identified.

Thus, at district level:
1. The chief Administrator,
2. Agricultural Office Head,
3. Culture and Information Office Head,
4. Tourism Office Head,
5. Konso Health Office,
6. Konso Finance Office Head,
7. Konso Capacity Building Office Head,
8. Four representatives of the Konso Hotel owners,
9. Tourism investors (Major investment in Konso),
10. Konso Education Office Head,
11. NGOs – including “PARKA” (Association for rehabilitation of Konso biodiversity and culture) and Konso Development Association (KDA),
12. Konso Justice Office Head,
13. Representative of Konso Women,
14. Konso Council of Peoples Representative,
15. Three representatives of businessmen and shop owners,
16. Tour operators – Hess Travel,
17. The Office of Konso Police,
18. Youth and Sports Office representative,
19. Mayor of Karat town, were noted.

In addition to the above, from the twelve selected communities Peasant Associations (Paletas):

1- The Paleta Administrator,
2- The Information and Culture Head,
3- The Justice and Security Head,
4- Chair-man of the Council,
6- Two representatives from the Elders,
7- Women’s representative,
8- Youth representative

were selected and subsequently the stake holder meeting took place on October 23, 2007.

II.3. The Management committee

The importance of having management committees at both the district (Woreda) level (for all Konso communities) and community
(Paleta) level was discussed and unanimously approved. The members include concerned governmental administrative offices, community members including traditional leaders, youth and women representatives.

At the District level the following are identified and approved to be members of the Management Committee

1. The Konso chief administrator Chairman person
2. Culture and Information Office Head Secretary
3. Agriculture Office Head Member
4. Tourism Office Head Member
5. The Speaker of the Council Member
6. Justice Office Head Member
7. The Police Head Member
8. Konso Development Association Member
9. PARKA Member

Thus the management committee with 9 members was officially formed at the district (Woreda) level.

Equally, management committees were formed at the community (Peasant Association /Paleta) level. These individual management committees were composed of the following nine members.

1. The community chief administrator-------------------Chair person
2. The community Cultural and Information Head---Secretary
3. The community (Paleta) Agriculture Head---------Member
4. The community (Paleta) Justice Head-------------Member
5. Three elders elected by the community-------------Members
6. Representative of the community Youth Association--Member
7. Representative of the community Women Association -Member.

II.4. Field data collection

Data was collected in the eleven Paleta (community Administrative units), namely: Gamole, Gocha, Mechelo, Mecheke, Burjo, Gaho, Dokatu,
Dera, Hulmie, Busso and Olanta. The Cultural properties that constitute the Konso Cultural Landscape:

- The walled towns and the cultural properties within them: the Mora (cultural spaces), Holayta (generation trees), Daga-Diruma and Daga Hella (Hero burial marker stones and Manhood-generation stones/stela?), Waka (wooden burial statues) and kanta (ward system);
- the stone terraces (Kabata);
- the traditionally protected forests: namely Kala, Kufa and Bamale and ritual points within them;
- major Hardas (ponds);
- the Kara ritual ceremony which took place during the transfer of power and responsibility (the intangible aspect); and
- the Konso paleoanthropological sites were addressed. (Note: this site is not included for the moment, for reasons related to conservation issues (it is being farmed). Future protection measures by the communities and the district management may improve and the site could be included as extension of the cultural landscape-naturally evolved landscape.

Five different data collection formats were developed in order to collect relevant qualitative and quantitative data on the above.

- Community members of each Paleta (community) identified for their knowledge have participated in the data collection; and have led the mapping process within their respective territory.
- The stone walls are measured.
- The Mora are measured; their use and related data recorded; sketch drawings are prepared for two representative Moras.
- Sample home-stead are documented; sketch drawings representing them have been made.
- Data on the extent of terraces within the core area is collected through car and foot transects; and a sample terrace area is measured systematically.
- Three major traditionally protected forests and associated cultural manifestations are documented; and at one instance, this was done through the direct guidance of the traditional ritual Chief.
- Traditional terrace and pond conservation activities are documented.
- One major ritual ceremony which involved the transfer of power and responsibility from one generation to another (that has lasted for two months), has been thoroughly documented through participatory observation.
- All the cultural properties are plotted on a 1:50000 topographic maps.
- Global Positioning Units (GPS) were used to plot and map the cultural properties.
- All cultural properties relevant to the above activities are documented through photography and videotapes.

### II.5. Stakeholders and Management Committees meetings

Stakeholders and Management Committees meetings were organized by the Konso Special Woreda Administrative Council for the identification of Key Issues.

- Key issues were again addressed at each kebele/Paleta at community level.
- SWOT analysis, guiding principles, management objectives and strategies, and an action plan were proposed by the team and elaborated together with the Management Committees at the end of the three month field work.

Field work ended on January 2, 2008 and the Management Committees at the Special Woreda level and from the various communities met together on January 3, 2008 to discuss on and to further develop the
SWOT analysis, guiding principles, management objectives and strategies and tentative action plan.

**II.6. Approval and endorsement**

The Draft Management Plan and Nomination File are presented to the Bureau of Information and Culture of the SNNPRS for comments and/or approval in mid June 2008. It was subsequently approved and endorsed by the government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples Regional State (SNNPRS) in August 2009.
CHAPTER III.

Identification and Description of Physical Resources

III.1 Significance

The Konso cultural landscape is a result of at least 500 years of unparalleled human struggle to harness the difficult environment and witness there of his success. The man-nature interrelationship and the culture that has been forged from it and the role of this same culture which in turn has sustained the balance is witnessed at the Konso cultural landscape.

The dry stone terrace farms that strongly mark the hills and catchments of the Konso country are result of hundreds of years of hard labor in the struggle to harness the difficult environment and unique in this part of the world.

The dry stone terrace agricultural system is practiced in the whole of Konso country, including the area out side of the core area proposed for inscription. But the core area has, in addition to the terraces, a social organization system centered on the multiple walled towns that are organized following age group classes and a strict ward system and their cultural spaces.

Although the traditionally protected forests are not very big, their traditional protection, and environment friendly and culturally monitored use through the chief priests have helped the Konso to maintain the ecological balance and preserve their floral diversity for use as medicinal plants.

As Hallpike (2000) puts it “Konso towns make an overwhelming impression of antiquity and mystery upon the stranger; their russet walls, crude and massive, seem to have been forced out of the soil on which they stand, and the encircling woods, and the thin expanse of delicate foliage that hangs over them like a green mist blend them even
more intimately with the surrounding fields. As one passes through their
gates one is at once conscious of a genius for corporate life, for these
towns are undoubtedly works of art”.

The living cultural tradition is the dynamic force at the very
foundation of the Konso. It has enabled them to live in the great walled
towns with a very particular social organization around their ward
systems and their cultural spaces (Moras) which are practical centers of
their day to day life and link to the past. The “Man-hood” (Daga-diruma)
and “Generation” stones (Daga-hela) or “stele” are witness of the
continuous Konso values and help decipher the secrets of long gone
megalithic cultures in the world, as the Konso may be the last stele
erecting people on our planet.

The wooden funerary statues, the Waka, are representatives of the
rare “Art Premier” in the verge of disappearance that our world protects
and attach important artistic values.

The elite funerary system is unique and the rituals associated with
it could help elucidate early mummification systems.
The maintenance of the cultural properties is done following the
culturally defined “age group” and the Parka labour group systems; and
thus conservation is assured at community level.

The Konso have been repeatedly acknowledged and rewarded
internationally and nationally for their extraordinary accomplishments in
soil and water conservation.

The sum total of the above show the outstanding living cultural
landscape “which may bear witness to a vanished culture, way of life or
ecosystem”.
III.2. Existing legal regulations

A. The Constitution:

The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 1/1995, issued on 21st August 1995 in Article 39-2 states as follows. “Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history.” And further on Article 91-2 it is stated that “Government and all Ethiopian citizens shall have the duty to protect the country’s natural endowment, historical sites and objects.” In view of the importance of the views of the people with regard to development impact and environment protection, the Constitution, on Article 92 No.2 and 3 further states that “The design and implication of programs and projects of development shall not damage or destroy the environment”; and “People have the right to full consultation and to the expression of views in the planning and implementation of environmental policies and projects that affect them directly”. The above declarations clearly show the direction the country is following with regard to the protection of cultures and cultural properties.

B. The Cultural Policy:

Based on the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia FDRE), a Cultural Policy was prepared by the Ministry of Information and Culture (this is latter re-organized and named as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism) and adopted by the House of Representatives (Parliament) of the FDRE in October 1997. This Cultural Policy has clearly indicated the policy lines that the country has to follow with regard to culture and cultural properties. In its contents and strategies for its implementation, it has stated that “Creating awareness that the conservation and preservation of cultural, historical and natural
heritage are the duties and responsibilities of governmental and non-governmental organizations, religious institutions and all Ethiopian nationals” (p.27) in addition to “Facilitating the necessary conditions to conserve and preserve the heritage of the country; to protect these from illicit trafficking and extortion…” (p. 27).

The Policy further indicates that the cultures of the country “receive equal recognition, respect and chance to development”. And “favorable situation” will be created “...to carry out scientific research and inventory...”on the cultural heritages. Further again the Policy stipulates that, “An appropriate precondition shall be arranged to protect sites of heritage from damages caused by construction works and other development activities” (p.33). With regard to culture in Education, the Policy further states that “Cultural themes shall be includes in to the educational curricula with the aim of integrating education with culture and thereby to shape the youth with a sense of cultural identity;”(p36).

C. The Proclamation to Provide for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage:

Based on the Cultural Policy, the Proclamation No. 209/2000 “To provide for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage” was issued by the FDRE. This proclamation, in its definition clearly indicated that, heritage properties that are protected by law are, “‘Cultural Heritage’ means any thing tangible or intangible which is the product of creativity and labour of man in the pre-history and history times, that describes and witnesses to the evolution of nature and which has a major value in its scientific, historical, cultural, artistic and handicraft content.” (Part 1 Article 3 No. 4). This same proclamation in its Preamble states about the importance and recognition of cultural heritage for it “...plays a major role...and hence the protection and preservation of cultural heritage has been made the responsibility of each citizen, the society and the state”.

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Based on this Proclamation, the SNNPRS Bureau of Information and Culture has produced a draft Proclamation (2000) but not yet ratified.

D. Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No.53/2003:

This proclamation is issued by the SNNPRS on March 1st. 2003. Its relevance to the Konso cultural landscape is obvious from its contents. On ownership and use rights of the communities, it states that “The right of getting land for communal use of both peasant and pastoralist, that is for grazing, social and cultural affairs and religion is reserved” (Article 6 no. 4); and the use right equally includes the right of “Protecting wild animals, plants, birds, and other natural and artificial resources and heritages, which are harboured under his possession” (Article 6 no. 7).

The customary laws that are practiced by the community are accepted by this same proclamation. Article 16 no. 3 and no.4 states that, “…local laws issued by the society, and customary practices…” are to be respected and communal users “…shall be responsible for protecting wild animals, plants, birds, and other natural and artificial resources and heritages found on the communally possessed land.”. Further, Article 19 no. 1 insures the sustainable preservation and use of “lands demarcated for forest, wild life, soil conservation…and historical use...”; and the “Right of the local community to share from the benefits gained from protected and preserved areas are reserved” (Article 19 no. 3).

As shown above the proclamation has laid the necessary ground for a further legislation that insures the protection of the Konso Cultural Landscape. This legislation is currently at a draft stage (Annexed) to be ratified by the House of Representatives of the SNNPRS.
E. The coherent relation between the convention and the various legislations:

There is harmony between the WHC convention and the various legal provisions providing for the protection and use of cultural properties in Ethiopia and specifically the Konso Cultural Landscape. The Ethiopian government Environmental Policy- relating to the need of impact assessment both at national and regional levels prior to development undertakings could also support the protection of the cultural properties. This will necessitate an awareness creation programs to developers.

The draft proclamation delimiting and protecting the Konso Cultural Landscape shall be enforced to ensure the empowerment and lasting conservation schisms by the community.

Although the Tourism Policy of Ethiopia is in its draft stage both at National and Regional levels, the government has endorsed an “Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project...” prepared by the UN World Tourism Organization-ST-EP Programme in 2006. This action plan is being implemented and focus on the community based preservation and sustainable use of the heritage resources in Konso. The Action Plan is annexed.

III.3. Buffer zone:

A buffer zone is not required for the Konso cultural landscape proposed for nomination. This is because, among the major features found within the area proposed for nomination, dry stone terraces are present and are used in the adjacent areas beyond the core area. The owners of the adjacent areas continue to keep-up their terraces following the traditional conservation techniques like the farmers within the nominated area.

The sacred forests and the ponds within the nominated area are bordered by terrace farms and some times by foot paths.
The actual boundaries of the traditional walled towns (Paletas) and the forests are clearly demarcated on specially prepared maps. Foot paths circle the outer walls of the walled towns leading to farms, water points, other villages, markets, and to ritual occasions. The outer area is sometimes used for planting Dina grooves for use as fire extinguisher and as latrine, and occasionally as burial ground. This actual traditional town boundaries may change in the future as the konso people continue to follow their traditional ways of extending their walled towns by making terraces in the adjacent slopes to make more space for the newer generation members and thus more retention walls are in the making.

A legislation text to be issued, now at draft stage(attached), by the Regional Government and agreed upon by the community shall enforce the future protection of the properties within the proposed boundary, specifically the traditional towns which may need defined regulation in the future.
III.4. The Cultural Properties

Map 4. Major properties and their locations within the nominated area.
III.4.1. Traditional terraces

The Konso use blocks of locally abundant basalt interlocked with smaller blocks stabilized by soil. These terraces retain the soil from erosion and create terrace saddles that are used for agriculture. The terraces are the main features of the Konso Landscape and the hills are contoured by the dry stone terraces that could reach at some places up to 8 m high and 12 meters wide. The terrace retention walls are built with heavier blocks at the base. The saddles that are prepared for agriculture are between four and eight meters wide at most places.

The whole of the Konso country, including the area that is adjacent to the core area proposed for nomination, i.e., the Kolme, Gewada and the Segen valley, have terrace system comparable to the core area proposed.
The visitor to Konso is captivated by the view of the landscape witnessing hundreds of years of persistent human struggle to harness the hard environment, and which at last has resulted in the beautifully outlined rows of dry stone terraces that could attain a length of several thousands of Kilometers. “Perhaps nowhere else in traditional Ethiopia has the hand of man so impressed itself on the landscape as in Konso” (Hallpike, C.R. 1972, p 21). As Castelli puts it (in Korra 2006: xiv-xvi), the Konso “… found an interesting equilibrium in the arid ecology of the southern fringes of the Ethiopian plateau, by developing a peculiar intensive agriculture on the terracing carved on the sides of the rocky hills”. Castelli continues “…the terracing in Konso is extraordinary; the perfection of the geometric surface, obtained with stones sometimes of less than 10 cm in diameter, the regularity of the visual rhythm that give order to the landscape contribute in granting it a unique anthropic mark. Konso terracing is built with extreme attention to collect the maximum of rain … Only a constant attention and skilled labour allow this dry masonry to survive and function at the needed time.”

Herman Ambrone’s (Ambrone, H. 1989) description and observations provides the reader with a more clear picture of the Konso terrace.

“…Terrace walls less than a mete high are constructed almost perpendicularly. Where higher, the walls are often sloped at an angle of 80 degrees. Stepping stones may be tailed in...For stability, wall foundations are sunk in to the ground about 10-25 cm. …Usually, terrace walls will exceed the level of the fields they retain by 20 to 40 cm in order to avoid fast run-off damaging the wall.

Along the sides of natural gullies special constructions are necessary because of the greater danger of destruction by torrential waters. All together the terrace walls combine into
balanced network. Bends in the wall-lines are sometimes reinforced by means of turrets. Such turrets seldom rise more than 2 m above the field level; they serve as platforms from which the fields can be guarded from birds and animals. For further stability where required flanking walls are built to cross the terraces perpendicularly some 50 m apart. These are about 1 1/2 m high and again serve as pathways for both humans and cattle.

Since the humus layer tends to be light and thin (sometimes less than 10cm), terracing is employed on any slopes inclined more than 1:25.....

Heights of terrace-walls and the width of the fields which they retain are determined essentially by the angle of slope. With wall heights of 1/2m to 1 1/2m preferred, most fields vary in width between 2 and 8 m, but both wider and narrower examples exist. Walls of 6m height occur, while those surrounding towns, built by the same techniques, are in some instances more than 10m high.

Fields are carefully leveled so that moisture may be held as long as possible... Generally, terrace- walls contain small gaps (about 30cm wide) somewhat above the field level to allow water to seep downhill from one fielding to the other...These drains require careful construction using specially selected stones in order to resist pressure of water during and after heavy storms. The ideal field system is laid out in such a way that the greatest number of fields are soaked at the same time, but not to the extent that excess water cannot find away in to drain and gullies...
By planting *Morinaga stenopetala* on the fields, a meter or so from the terrace wall, the stability of the slopes... can be increased. The roots of these trees scarify the soil and prevent the slips of earth”.

It is not known as to when the terraces were built. No living memory could place it in time except the common agreement by the Konso that these great terraces are the works of they long gone ancestors.

No new terraces are constructed today. But, it is not unusual to see, today, the young conserving the terraces in groups organized by the Kanta (Ward system) of the individual traditionally Walled town (Paleta).

III.4.2. Walled towns *(Paleta)*

The Konso live in stone walled towns (Paleta) located on high ground locations selected for their strategic and defensive advantage. These towns are circled by, between one and six rounds of dry stone defensive walls. As described by Hallpike, “... they [the towns]crown the summit of a hill, or are built on a spur, so that the terrain falls away steeply on three sides, leaving only the level ground of the fourth to be especially heavily defended”. The three steep sides are usually bordered by terrace farms. The last side which is leveled is through which major access to the town is possible. It is only at this fourth side, outside of the walls, that current development pressures as they are presented in the form of schools, clinics, flower mills, churches and modern burials are observed.
There is some times a groove of dense trees of euphorbia and finger-cactus between the walls and the terraces. This groove is known as **Dina**, and every town has **Dina** that is used for fire wood and as a latrine for the community. When there is fire accident in the town, the euphorbia is used as fire extinguisher, local environmental adaptation. The Dina also serves as burial ground for the town’s artisans who do not posses their own farm land.

The walls surrounding the towns are built using locally available basalt.

The towns that are located to the east of the core Konso land, close to the Segen valley and Borena country in the East, and to the North adjacent to the Chamo basin (Derra, Dokatu, Gamole, Mechelo) are fortified with multiple rings of heavily built stone walls. The towns that are located further away and to the West (Ex. Mecheke, Burjo, and Gaho) have relatively relaxed defense system with only one stone wall. As one goes further West, out side the core Konso area (around Kolme), the settlement pattern changes, individual and isolated homesteads are used instead of walled towns.
The walled towns (Paleta) have evolved through time and with population increase. The general picture of the multiple walled towns is as follows: Located around the top of the hill, the living space with in the very central high wall is where the settlement begun. The wall here is very high. With the increase of the number of the community members, according to tradition, the elders of each household retained the original settlement and the cadets (Kusia) had to move out of there to build their own homesteads outside of the central wall. Thus, they dig and level the slope making flat space for their houses, defined by new walls. Through time the new wall makes a complete circle adjoining the original central wall. Thus, again through time and after a number of generations,
when the population out grow the space with in the second wall, the process of having new living space and walls continue.

There are foot paths in the inner side of the walls. The walls have few major exits that bear names of the immediate neighboring ward, (Kantas). The gates lead to locations that are essential to the daily life of the village. Some gates lead to common water points while others lead to farms, to market; few of these exists are used also for ritual passages and to burial ground.

The area the walls cover is variable from town to town The walls have two or more principal gates. In addition to serving as a normal gate, each gate has a special purpose attached to it during ritual ceremonies (See Chapter IV).

III.4.3. Organization with in the towns

a - Kanta (ward) organization

Each town has a “ward” (Kanta) system which enables the smooth functioning of the traditional political and socio-economic system. Each individual community member belongs to a certain Kanta. The kanta system is not bounded by the walls and members of a certain Kanta can be residents of any of the walls (See maps in Chapter IV). Membership to a certain Kanta is purely a practical socio-economic classification.

Each kanta is divided into kanta-ibita, sub-wards, and each kanta-ibita is constituted by tightly crowded individual household compounds.
Kanta organization is very important in the life of Konso society; and Hallpike (2000:104-106) puts it as follows:

All Konso towns were traditionally divided into wards, which would seem to be an organizational necessity for such large residential groups... Membership of a ward is purely by residence, not related to any hereditary rights apart from those vested in a particular homestead or plot of land. There are few exceptions, as when someone within the boundaries of one ward having quarreled with his fellow ward members announced that he was going to be a member of another ward henceforth... There are no ceremonies required for joining one ward... Sociability and mutual assistance, however, are required of members of one’s ward... Everyone in a ward is supposed to turn out to help look for a neighbor’s animals if they are lost, and fines are imposed on those who refuse, as they are on those who are persistently quarrelsome. Really obnoxious people, especially habitual drunkards,
may eventually be expelled altogether... The mutual obligation of ward members is seen as counterbalancing those of the lineage... [The local people say] ‘... If we had no wards, who would bury us?’ It is the duty of ward members to bury their fellow members, something they regard as too painful for their relatives. The greatest disgrace for a man is for the ward to refuse to bury him, and for his relatives to have to pay a working-party to do the job. This is a revealing about the status of the lineage and other kin in relation to the ward as a whole.” Generally, a ward is a life insurance for its members in all aspects of social life.

b - Homestead organization

Each individual’s homestead has its own dry stonewall and wood fenced compound called ohida. The individual compound is around 400m2 area planted mainly with Morinaga and coffee trees. As Hallpike (1972:33) says, individual homesteads "... are extremely cramped, the roofs of the huts touching and overlapping each other in many cases". Hallpike (2000:50) continues, each individual’s “...compound is surrounded by a high fence of wooden palings... [Besides] the compounds are in most cases adjacent to one another, with their fences acting as a party wall. They are divided into blocks by the lanes that wind between them.”
Individual compounds are called *tiga* and are usually rectangular. The rectangular compound is divided by stonewall into an upper part, called *Arkayta* (a living place for the family) and a lower part, called *Oita* (used for storage and to keep animals or the like). These two divisions have different structures of different function.

Typical Konso homestead has 5 to 6 thatched structures made of wood and mud. These are:

- *Aleta* (kitchen), hut used for cooking, grinding and as sleeping place for children;
- *Mugita*, a hut used as sleeping place for adults;
- *Kosa*, a structure standing on four poles, the upper part of which is used as storage of grain or household utensils and the lower to tie animals. Children also sleep in it;
- *Kotera*, with a similar structure to kosa, it has the same functions. Kosa is a traditional Konso grain storage. Whereas kotera is
introduced later when Konso was incorporated into the Ethiopian Empire.

- **Mana**, a hut covered to the ground by straw in order to keep heat. Mana is a secluded childbirth hut for mothers and is also used for ritual purposes by clan chiefs.
- **Aleta kasa**, a structure constructed on top of branches of a single pole. It is used to keep precious items such as honey, butter and coffee out of the reach of children.
- **Agita**, a hut used by clan heads for ritual purposes.
- **Reqa**, a structure whose upper floor is covered with straw and whose lower part is not covered. The open under floor area is used to keep grain baskets and grinding stones, whereas in the covered upper floor is used to keep coffee, honey, butter and other delicacies of daily usage.
- **Qudha**, a similar structure as the **reqa**. Its upper part used for storage and the open lower part is used to keep animals.

### c - Mora: Organization and functions

Moras are public assembly places with various functions. A mora could be open or with a big hut called pafta. As Ambron (1997: 382) puts it, in moras “... political negotiations are held, the harvest of a victory may be celebrated, rites of passage, sacrifices of the land are carried out, accused persons swear oaths that they have done no harm to the community, and if they have, cleansing ceremonies to maintain the social peace are carried out... A special effect of this multi-functionality is that people have a strong feeling when they are in the public place that they are part of a synchronous network of relationships and thus participating in a greater whole.” According to Hallpike (1972, 19) continues, "women are seen as weakness’ of men, whose vitality is drained by sexual intercourse, and for this reason married men as well
as bachelors often spend the night in special men’s house [pafta] to preserve their virility."

Usually moras consist of, or are associated with various cultural, ritual, public and ceremonial features like pafta (big huts used as men’s sleeping place), dancing field, *pala* (public seating floor made using large stone slabs), *dhaka dhirumas* (manhood stones/steles), olayta trees (tall juniper trees erected for a generation that is initiated and takes power), *waka* (wooden grave statues erected often on graves for heroes, but sometimes for clan leaders (*poqolas*), and wives of clan leaders, *poqoltata*), arumda (often oval stones used to sharpen ritual hunting/battle spears), *dhaga khakha* (swearing or oath taking stones), *khorata* stone (a stone, found in some moras, where wrongdoers and guilty persons are fined), *tomatasha* (pebble and pit playing wooden structure), *shapa* (stretcher to carry sick people to health centers or corpse to burial places), *kawula* (wooden sticks used as musical instruments during ritual dancing) and living trees (usually standing with olayta trees and thus sacred as an olayta tree).
Generally, moras are of three types, common cultural moras for two or more walled towns, town/Paleta Moras and Kanta moras. Some moras belong to more than associated towns; such as Mora Kitole, Mora Alawudla, Mora Kolalta, Mora Chemote and Mora Dhetete. Baleda moras are moras that belong to the whole town. Common moras of two or more towns are sometimes located out side of towns; such as Mora Kitola, Mora Alawudla and Mora Kolalta. Baleda/town moras are often situated outside of town walls, whereas kanta moras, moras that belong to each kanta, are situated inside the walls. Moras are multi-functional public assembly institutions that could have *pafta*, men’s sleeping house or that could be open, i.e., with out *pafta*. As Ambron (1997: 382) puts it, in *moras* “... political negotiations are held, the harvest of a victory may be celebrated, rites of passage, sacrifices of the land are carried out, accused persons swear oaths that they have done no harm to the community, and if they have, cleansing ceremonies to maintain the social
...peace are carried out... A special effect of this multi-functionality is that people have a strong feeling when they are in the public place that they are part of a synchronous network of relationships and thus participating in a greater whole.”

Fig 6. Sketch plan of a Pafta (male common house in the Mora)

Furthermore, moras have additional functions. Young adults are expected not to know, hear or see what their parents do at nights; so after dinner all young males go to moras to pass the night together in the Pafta, men’s sleeping house. The Pafta are constructed within the mora on stone platform that attain ~80cm high (Fig. 6). They are built on thick poles (between 8 and 12) of hard wood. The niche is located in the higher section 100cm-150cm above the ground lined with timber from one to the other end. A small opening serving as a gate in to the niche is left in the middle just above the central pole which also serve as a footing.
step to access high in to the small gate. The roof is made using grass following the traditional vernacular architecture.

If some difficulty like sudden fire arises in the town, or if a sudden enemy attack takes place, adults sleeping in the Pafta do immediately act together to rescue the town and its people.

Moras are also places where the society discuss and solve its problems; they are also places where justice is administered and places for chatting, playing and dancing. Children stay and play at moras in the day times when their families go to farm. Guests who are tired and need a break or travelers who need a safe place to pass a night freely rests or pass nights in moras, inside or outside the towns. As moras are at junction of main avenues of the towns, old people and weavers sit and weave in or around moras. Meantime these old people and weavers control and see the movement of persons in the town when adults go to farms.

According to their function, moras could be characterized:

- Mora Guta (Main or Cultural) town mora: these are the main meeting sites for all the people of the whole town. Each town has usually only one main mora. Important public issues, like generation initiation rites, rituals, preparation for war, victory ceremonies of the whole town, harvest ceremonies, etc., take place in these main moras. Mora Guta is often outside a wall in comparison to kanta moras that are within the walls. Generation victory stones, dhaga khelas, and generation transfer memorial dry juniper trees or olahitas are often erected in main moras of towns. On the other hand, there are some common main cultural moras for two or more walled towns. These are often ritual moras out side of walled towns. Adult women are not allowed to walk across main moras, ritual moras and swearing moras. They are also prohibited entering into men’s sleeping houses, paftas.
• **Mora Dhawura** (Swearing moras): these are *moras* where wrong doers swear oaths to show that they are innocent. These are also special places where bad things, like famine, drought, war, flood, etc., are cursed. There is only one swearing *mora* in each town like mora dhawura. In some cases two or three walled towns could even have only one common swearing *mora*. People are not allowed to sleep in swearing *moras* because, it is believed, some bad spirits come to these *moras* at night and they may inflict some kind of harm on the people, if they found people there.

• **Mora Tooya** (Watching mora): these *moras* are usually situated on high ground of walled towns. Each walled town also has usually one watching *mora*. However, in some towns the number of watching *moras* could be more than one depending on the presumed directions of the enemy threat. From these moras people could watch their surroundings and could pass information about the coming of an enemy. These moras are also places for traditional astrologers to watch the movement of the moon in relation to the position of some constellations and predict the
weather condition. Some walled towns may not have watching moras, in which case high hills were used as watching places.

- **Kanta mora**: these are general-purpose moras of each kanta. Here the kanta people perform cultural ceremonies and rituals, they chat, take rest, pass leisure time and play different games, etc.

- General-purpose public moras at main roads: These are open moras at main roads, which serve as rest places for travelers. Any person, whether he is a Konso or not, has the right to rest in these moras if he is tired, or to pass a night in them if it gets dark and continue his journey.

Paths from the gates lead to these Moras. The individual walled town (Paleta) has up to 17 Moras which are connected to one other by foot paths.

The Moras retain an important and central role in the life of the Konso.

**d - Olayta trees**

A bunch of erected tall trees are also seen in the main moras. These are called olahita and were erected when the generation grades, khelas, were initiated. These trees are/were erected to symbolize the transfer of power from one generation to another. The tallest trees represent the generation grade on power and the shortest trees represent the previous generation grades. This difference has symbolic meaning. Since the generation on power is seen to be above every body its olahita is taller than the others. If there were taller olahita trees when a new generation assumes power, they cut from their bottom to shorten them, so that the new one could stand taller. Olaytas re further described according to the walled towns in Chapter IV below.
III.4.4. The tombs

By tradition, each Konso clan has a burial place set to bury its respective members. Therefore, each person would be buried at a site of its respective clan. In course of time, however, the Konso began to bury their dead in the agricultural fields of their respective families. Persons who do not possess agricultural land be buried in the land of a person very close (intimate) in the clan. If they find bones during the preparation of a tomb, they collect them and put at one end of the hole. Therefore, bones of several persons can be found in the same tomb.

In Konso the perception of death depends also on circumstances. Accidental death is perceived as unnatural and also as alarming message sent by god against the well being of the respective families and to the society in general. Those who died of suicide, flood, assassination, etc. are considered as pollutants and so their burials take place at places relatively far away from those who have naturally died so as to keep the peace and purity of the latter’s.

In order to understand the burial custom in relation to social status, we should note the other aspect in relation to the death of artisans. As the hawuda are landless, and do not engage in agricultural activities, the tradition forbids them the right to be buried in agricultural fields. Formerly, their funeral used to take place in the midst of dina situated around the paleta. However, through time, we have noted certain changes. Among others, there are two principal factors in connection to this change: Political and economic. Since the military take over in the nineteen seventy four revolution, and today, the socialist military government declared the equality of men and so hawuda achieved the privilege to get buried more or less as their fellow etenta. Currently, they practice to bury hawuda at sites in the fields belonging to their proper clans. The economic factor implies to changes in land ownership. In spite of their traditionally inferior status, hawuda became economically successful because of their increasing commercial
engagements in the region. Despite the fact that land is a state property, many hawuda succeeded to buy plots of land from etenta members and own agricultural lands. Although the do not engage in cultivation s, they pay traditional work groups like parka to work over their land. This gave access to their respective family members and relatives the right to be buried in these sites.

In the past, the konso cover the corps with animal skin and later bury it in cylindrical tombs. Moreover, they transport the corps to the tomb by carrying on their shoulders. Currently, (except during to funeral rites related to the death of clan chiefs), due to certain factors: religious, modernity, etc. some changes have been made in the burial customs. Textile replaced the skin, burials take place in rectangular tombs instead of cylindrical ones and they transport the corps with the aide of a wooden stretcher. The stretcher is a communal property and so the kanta keeps it at its respective mora so as to give citizens access to use it whenever necessary.
III.4.5. Wooden statues, *Waka*

The term *waka* refers to wooden statues erected by Konso people in memory of their heroes. By definition *waka* means a portrait of a hero. Hunting is a highly prestigious occupation for Konso males, but only the lion and leopard confer honor on their killers. Hunting is significant to the Konso as the analogue of warfare, requiring bravery and skill...” (Hallpike, 1970:40). Although Hallpike’s statement is limited to the killing of lions and leopards, we have learnt that men who killed buffalos enjoy the same honor as heroes.

In addition to admiration and respect by the community, Konso *hedalitas* (heroes) are major actors during important rituals. One
instance of this is, it is the responsibility of the hedalitas to organize and conduct performances during the celebration known as hoisa; i.e. the eve of Kara ritual. The hoisa takes place a week before the start of kara (a ceremony that facilitates the transfer of responsibility between the different age groups), and therefore, it announces or marks the beginning of the kara ceremony. Some of their major performances during the hoisa include: putting halala leaves on the gates of the villagers and on stone monuments erected in memory of hedalitas as well as on those erected in memory of retired age groups, singing war songs, conducting fight dances and displaying other similar activities in the villages and on public places, mora. Every such activity and the hedalitas themselves achieve much respect and appreciation from the society. Due to this, almost every konso men (particularly the youth) envy for good wishing to become hedalita so as to be honored.

The konso perception of heroism has brought the erection of monuments on the graves of hedalitas an important part of their culture since a long time ago. Although a waka is (by terminology) a portrait and it refers to a wooden statue erected in memory of a hedalita; it does not mean that they erect a single to represent only the person himself. Rather, they erect a number of statues upon the same grave at the same time. For example they erect statues representing enemies those killed by him. In addition, if he used to kill one of the big wilds, the figure of the wild would be curved out of wood and be placed on the same grave in front of the statues. The practice of curving figures to represent his weapons (spears & shields) and erecting along with the waka is also a traditional experience. In general, konso waka could be understood as existing evidences about the story of the lives and heroic deeds of the hedalitas they represent.

It is also to be noted that waka erecting is not limited to heroes. It has been noted that “every married man and every woman who had children” Bertrand Hirsh, 1999: 3).
Making waka

The responsibility of erecting waka largely belongs to families of the hedalitas. To be more specific, it is the responsibility of the hedalita’s eldest son, who according to tradition inherits the property of his father. If the heldalita passes away without a son, he will be succeeded by one of his young brothers on the basis of seniority. In case of the absence of the latter; the dead would be inherited by a closest relative in the lineage. Therefore; the task of organizing waka erection becomes the responsibility of either of these inheritors. (Kalsho, Gilade & kusse pers. comm.)

After completing the necessary arrangements, i.e. preparing the wood, finance, food items, etc; family members of the hedalita together with relatives discuss on matters related to waka making. It is mainly to select and decide the best waka maker. Then, they arrange a meeting with the sculptor for negotiation; and after reaching in an agreement; both parties decide the date for the start of the work. (Kalsho, pers. comm.)

It would be relevant to mention here about waka makers. As opposed to Hawuda (a strata consisting of the various artisans), waka makers are from the Etenta; (A strata of farmers). Due to this they have the respect of the society and considered as men with a special skill. Due to this, a person from the hedalita family would be assigned to help the sculptor and to take care of the latter until he finishes the work. His services include to supply the necessary materials, to provide the sculptor with food, drink and ...etc. it is because the sculptor stays in the house of the heldalayta since the start, and until the end of the work. The time needed for curving depends on the number of statues to be erected on each grave.

According to Kalsho Aylo (a waka maker himself for about the last forty years it takes a four days time to curve each of the waka those represent either the hedalata or his wives. the time needed to curve
wakas those represent men killed by the heldalayta is shorter than the former. This is because of a number of cut marks for the details to describe the heldalayta and his wives, would not be curved in the latter’s case. As indicated earlier, curving wakas takes place after heldalaytas’ families complete their preparations to provide every services and supplies expected of them.

These include:

1. To prepare and proved the necessary type of wood (this part has been described earlier)
2. To arrange a space or bed for the sculptor to say during the time of the work.
3. To prepare a special food. It is their responsibility to supply the waka maker with food and drink all through his stay (Urmelle, Kusse, Kalsho, pers. comm.).

Waka makers are paid both in money and in kind. Although the amount of money is decide by agreement between both parties It is important to not briefly about the part of payment in kind. Waka curving begins by slaughter of a goat. The sculptor will be fed with the meat. Delicious chaka (a kind of local beer and a typical Konso drink) would be brewed for his consumption. In this case it appears a special preparation. They serve him mixing the chaka with honey all the time until he finishes the work. In general, the hadalita’s family has to feed him including supply him with meat in intervals during his stay. After the work is finalized, he takes a full calabash of chaka (mixed with honey) back to his home. He has also a share of meat and the skin of a goat that should be slaughtered during erecting wakas. (Kalsho, Giladæ, Kusse, Pers. comm.)

Symbols

Wakas are not simple statuses. Rather, they bear various meaningful symbols and are manifestations for the relatively high level
wood curving skills of the Konso people. Some of these symbols are described below.

On a waka that represents a hedalita, there are a number of cut marks. A male genital appears at almost the natural place. At the sight of it, one can be sure that this statue represents a hedalita. The same kind of cut mark exists also on the part of the foreheads to represents a helecha. A helecha is a metallic phallic object. It can be possessed only by certain ritual chiefs and also by a hedalita who reached old age. Using some kind of thread they wear it on their forehead, the helecha erected for ward. The tradition doesn’t allow young hedalita to possess and wear helecha until they reach old age.

![An incised wooden club erected with Waka on the grave of Kala Kayote marking the number of past generations](image)

Fig 9. An incised wooden club erected with Waka on the grave of Kala Kayote marking the number of past generations

Incision marks appear around the neck of a waka that represents a hedalita. It represents a necklace known as tela and worn by a hedalita during one’s lifetime evidencing his heroic deeds. It is made of ivory cut
in to pieces in tablet form and tied with the aid of thread. A tela is a present given to an hero by his senior sister in the family during his victorious return with trophies. Only a hedalita is allowed to wear a tela to mark his being a hero. Also there are a number of cut marks on arms and wrists showing bracelets he used to wear. They also cut eyes, noses ears on such wakas. Most of the time they cut tooth out of animals, bones and plant them to assume natural. Generally such wakas display almost a complete picture of the hedalitas to whom they stand for.

Wakas representing wives can be identified mainly by relatively large size breast-like marks. Marks on the head show the hair styles of women. Wearing furota, a necklace made of beads is popular among the Konso women. Most of the time marks symbolizing ears, noses, eyes, etc. appear on such wakas.

Wakas representing victims of a hedalita do not have the above representations, in most cases. These appear without genitals. Except for marks symbolizing ears, nose and eyes, they are devoid of the elaborated decoration.

On figures those represent leopards almost all the physical parts are marked. These include the tail, the legs, the eyes, ears, etc. One special element is that they paint the figure in black and white (using charcoal & a kind of white soil). They paint all the other statues in red. They produce the paint with a kind of red soil called tebela, mixing it with animal blood. However, due to challenges of old ages, the paints of most of the existing wakas have faded away.

Erecting Waka

This part of the paper attempts to briefly describe the process of erecting waka. Ceremonies, rituals and various activities surrounding its erection have been included.

After finalizing the waka fabrication the respective family of a hedalita announces of the date of its erection to neighbors (the kanta), relatives and friends. In a few days before erection, these people come to
see the wakas. They discuss and make comments on the work. The comments include if it was done beautifully and if each of the wakas assume the portraits of those they represent. They also enquire that if the various symbols and decorations appear in their right places. (Kusse & kalsho, pers. comm.)

At the announced date, relatives and friends (who had previously been informed) begin to pour in to the house of the hero. They bring with them pots of *chaka* they prepared for the occasion; as their share of contribution. They stay with the family discussing matters related to the occasions and helping them working. Meanwhile, the *kanta* (a kind of social organization based on neighborhood) goes out to field to arrange and bring a stone back home for *dega-*diruma (*Dega-* Diruma is a stone monument erected in memory of a *hedalita* on same grave. Again, it is also the responsibility of the *kanta* to dig and get ready holes on the grave for both the *daga diruma* and the waka. It is important to know that erecting *dega diruma* and *waka* can take place at the same time. However, erecting *dega diruma* could precede that of *waka*. (Kalsho, kusse, pers. comm.)

After it is known that the *kanta* has done all the necessary arrangements, all the people would congregate to perform the traditional dance and song called *shileta*. According to tradition, performing *shileta* is not limited to *hedalitas*. It is part of the mourning ceremony devoted to those who passed after having a grand son through one’s son. It is because; it is only the male who inherits properties of the dead father. So also, with regard to a *hedalita*, they do not perform *shileta* to those who died without having a grand son. Although it is part of the mourning ceremony, they do not mourn in the real sense of the word. Rather, it is viewed, as a joyous act it is believed that he died a natural death and passed for good with the knowledge that his grand son will succeed his son.

The next step take place after the *shileta* ends. If the erection of both the *dega*–*diruma* and the *waka* take place at the same time, the
*kanta*, that brought the stone for a *dega-diruma* would be given a pot of chaka to drink between its members. *Dega-diruma* is erected at the slaughter of a bull. The mesentery of the bull would be taken and placed in the grave upon which they erect the *dega-diruma*. (the burial of the mesentery has the implication that the bull was slaughtered to the dead and that he has taken his share of the meat to eat in his life after death). After erecting the monuments, the kanta comes back to the hedalita’s house and form nine groups. The meat will be divided between these groups. Each group takes its own share to a house of its fellow clan member and there they eat. The division into nine groups corresponds to the nine mourning days, if the dead is a man. (Kalasho, kusse, pers. comm.)

As indicated earlier, erecting a *dega-diruma* should always takes place either prior to or together with the erection of *waka*. *Waka* erection can take place some weeks, months or even years after the erection of *dega-diruma*. In such a case, it would be accomplished in the following way.

Relatives and friends to the hedalita’s family bring several pots of *chaka* as presents so as to serve the participants. It is called *chaka sahita*. The term *sahita* means to clean and there fore, *chaka sahita* is *chaka* to clean hedalita’s house. The *kanta* goes to the burial place to dig holes.

At the same time, the *waka* sculptor slaughters either a black or red goat that was given by the family; for ‘removing the soil from the grave’. Later on, the *kanta* comes back to the village and play the *shileta*. In the middle of the *shileta*, they take a break and the *kanta* will be given pots of *chaka* for lunch. Again, they continue performing the *shileta* until the right hour for erecting the *waka* arrives. At the end of the *shileta*, the family serves the *kanta* with other pots of *chaka sahita* in order to carry the *waka* to the tomb. After the *kanta* drinks the *chaka sahita*, then becomes the climax of the event in that members of the *kanta* carry each of the statues with a loudly songs, while women ululating, children
shouting, elderly people observing the event with blessings and wishing success to the occasion. This takes place mostly between one two o’clock in the afternoon. The songs, the ululation and the shouts continue all through way until the waka erection takes place. (kalsho, gilade, kusse, germo, pers. comm.)

Before erecting the statue, the waka sculptor pours the blood of the goat down into a hole where a waka representing a hedalita is going to be erected. He also performs prayers saying “let you protect us from evil things, you let us successfully accomplish our duties, let you give us peace...etc” (kalsho, pers. comm.). However, on the basis of experiences at the town of Mecheke, conducting prayers is limited only to elderly people. (Gilade, pers.comm.)

Erecting waka on graves of hedalitas has always been done by kanta members. First, they install the waka that represents the hedalita, then those of the wives, the enemies, the weapons and the animal figures. The statues are so huge and a sizeable part of them gets buried in holes those were dug up to three meters and sometimes more. A waka erected in memory of a hero should be placed in the center. if he had only a wife, the statue representing her will be erected at the right of the former. if he had two wives, the statue representing the senior wife appears at the right and that represents the second wife stands at the left side of the hedalita. Again if he had married four wives, statues representing the first and the second would be placed at the right side and those for the third and the fourth stand at the left side on the order of seniority. Statues those represent enemies killed by a hedalita always stand at the left side next to those erected for the wives. Other figures curved in the form of spears and shields stand behind at the left sides. Animal figurines, most of the time, are placed in front of the raw of the statues. These raw of statues give their backs both to the house and village of the hedalita

While the erection is going on, some people from the kanta undertake preparing and roasting the meat of the goat near the grave.
The leg part of the meat together with the goat’s skin would be given to the waka sculptor. The rest of the meat would also be shared between all the attendants and be eaten there. After completing the work there, the kanta goes back to the hedalita’s house. The family provides them with nine pots of chaka sahita for fulfilling missions. At the same time, a he goat would be slaughtered. They stay drinking the chaka and after having been served with a roasted meat, it will be the end of the ceremony and every member of the kanta will go out of the hedalita’s house. Only family members and relatives stay behind. They slaughter a goat with the perception of cleaning the hedalita’s house. There fore it means to bring peace, an end to mourn and to prevent further death in the hedalita’s family. The process is called teldeda sahita. Teldeda is a konso term equivalent to goat, while sahita means to clean. The final stage of cleaning the hedalita’s house would be done by the performances of a hagita. A hagita is a man who used to be the best man of a hedalita concerned during the latter’s marriage. His practices include: that he collects all the misa (kind of grass and leaf used to cover tops of pots for chaka sahita,) pieces of the goat’s bones and the wastes left out of the same goat. Then he takes out of the compound and throws at a relatively distant place. Then it is said that nothing has been left and so the house becomes clean. In case the hagita is not alive, this could be performed by a man represented by the hagita family. This performance brings an end to processes include in waka erection (kalsho, kusse, pers. comm.)

It would be relevant to mention about sites for the burial of hedalitas, or in other words, about sites for wakas and dega-dirumas. Previously, hedalitas were buried at sites close to the main gates of the walled towns or at sites close to moras (public places).

Due to these, most ancient monuments are found at these places. However, these days, heroes are buried like other people in their farms because of shortage of available open space (Metasebia, 1997:373). Although this is the case, erecting wakas & dega-dirma on their graves is a surviving traditional practice.
Currently, Konso waka are on a precarious condition. Factors endangering its existence include both natural and human.

Traditionally, Konso statues are erected on open spaces and so they are exposed to natural happenings such as like sunlight, rainfall, etc. Due to this and with the passage of time, they begin getting cracking and become wearied off. Konso wakas have been endangered largely by human factors. In this respect the waka theft has been intensified due to the expanding black market activity. The illegal trafficking involves both Ethiopians and foreigners based on Konso, Arbaminch and Addis Ababa. It involves also Konso villagers themselves in that it is not easy for strangers to get in to and out of Konso villages with looted waka. The illegal activity led to the disappearance of several hundreds of waka. Due to this hundreds of such burial places have become devoid of statues.

Placement of the Waka

Most of the burial grounds for respected members of the community who have performed heroic did are located near the gates- Visible to all, so as to inspire the generation. In one instance it is observed that a Waka is carved and erected for the chief priest called the Bamale and his living wife. The Bamale Waka is placed in his compound together with a carved leopard.
The locations of the stated burial markers have changed through time. Formerly, they were placed near the **Mora** and at the main entrance of the **Paletas**. Latter, they were moved out of the walled towns- located on both sides of the major paths. These burials are grouped together and in addition to the **wakas**, a columnar basalt /stele (**Daga-Diruma**) are erected on them. Some times, smaller columnar basalt blocks are erected next to the **Waka** and **Daga-Diruma** to show the number of plots of land the deceased person had acquired during his life time. The common community members are buried in their farms and **wakas** are erected for them by members of their family. One can observe old **Wakas**, in state of decay in the farms around the **Paletas**.

The **Wakas** measure on average between 100 cm and 180cm. The best carved Waka erected for the late chief priest (Kalla) Wolde Dawit can be an example and is described as follows. This Waka was erected in 2002. It has a head with eyes (represented by
ostrich egg shell) and with defined facial features; both hands have representation of the bracelets representing his position as chief. The umbel is in place and the male genital is well pronounced. The statue has a phallic metallic emblem, the mark of leadership on its forehead. It bears in its left hand the traditional shield, spear and sword. The statue (WAKA) is in a very good physical condition along with that of his father the former great chief priest (Poqolla) Kalla Kayote who died 15 years earlier. The burial of the leaders is located in the traditional forest called the Kalla forest.

Women also have Wakas elected for them at their burials but with out the stele (Daga-Diruma). Women and men are buried separately and thus the representations of the burials are clearly distinct. Wakas are let to weather naturally in their own time. They are nevertheless protected by the individual family while taking their natural process.

III.4.6. Daga-Diruma and Daga-Hela

The term dega diruma, (‘dega’, stone; ‘diruma’, heroism) represents in general erected stones in memory of heroic achievements. There are two types of dega diruma: erected stones marking collective heroism and those erected in memory of individual heroes. For reasons of convenience, we refer the first as dega diruma I and the latter as dega diruma II.

Dega diruma I refers to erected stones in memory of particular events or more precisely to mark victories. A battle between different Konso villages used to be concluded by erecting stone monuments to mark the event. Victory over other neighboring communities was also marked by erecting dega diruma. They erect dega diruma at public places. Certain rituals surround its erection of which the sacrifice of a bull (for the success of
the event) precedes the erection. A lot of these types of monuments are found on major mora of the dvarious walled towns.

![Erected stones (stele?) in Mechelo Walled town (Paleta)](image)

**Dega Diruma II** represents stone monuments erected in memory of individual heroes. The Konso honor their heroes by erecting stone monuments on their respective tombs. In order to avoid repetitions, the rituals and all the ceremonies surrounding the erection of *dega diruma* is described under ‘Konso wooden statues’.

Generally, the height of a Daga-hela indicates the fierceness of the battle. The number of *Daga hela* in a particular town could help to estimate the age of a town. However, since some *helas* did not erect steles and sometimes steles were removed from their original places, age estimation by steles could not be reliable. In Karata region the oldest steles have been erected to the left side and when one move from left to right the age of the *diruma* steles gets younger.

III.4.7. Sacred forests, **Mura Dawra**

Konso is divided into three regions namely: *Karate, Kena & Dokatu*, each being under its respective regional ritual chief known by its traditional title as *Kalla, Qufa & Bamalle* respectively. Each *Poqolla* (on top of a particular clan), leads a secluded life away from his people, at a
particular place set aside by tradition. By tradition, there are natural sacred forests which correspond to each *poqolla*. The Konso traditional forests are located mainly near the residences of their ritual chiefs. Three main Poquola forests are documented in the Konso core land. These are, the **Kala** (196,430m² area), **Bamale** (105,338m² area) and **Qufa** (45066m² area).
Map 6. Traditionally protected Kala Forest, cultural/ritual points and Kala's residence.
Map 7. Traditionally protected Bamale forest

Map 8. Traditionally protected Qufa forest
These sacred forests are collectively known as *mura Dawra*. The term *Dawra* refers to elders who have priestly roles and particular responsibilities to look after the well being of their respective *mura* and keep them pure. When referring to individual sacred forest, it is named after the traditional title of its respective *poqolla* to which the latter is guardian and natural patron. Except for certain differences with regard to their size, location, and their current status, all these sacred forests play similar roles in the spiritual and cultural life of their respective communities.

For the Konso people, *Mura Dawra* are highly respected sacred sites in that they are burial places for their ritual chiefs (*poqollas*) & their respective family members. According to tradition, it is in the midst of these sacred forests that the spirit of their ancestors keeps contact with god, *waqa*; contact that assures: the rain to fall, to enjoy peace, the fertility of humans, animals, plants and the well being of the society in general. So they are viewed as places where the link between the world of their dead (ancestors) and those alive have been kept. Moreover, the sacred forests are important ritual centres. In processes following the death of a certain *poqolla*, an eldest son succeeding his father conducts, among others, some important initiation rites in the heart of his *mura*.

The following is an account of rites in *Mura Kalla* to which we were eye witnesses. After 13 years of service in the *Kalla* office, the late poqolla named Woldedawit Kayote (let he rest in peace), had died in February 2003. His corps, being preserved for nine months and nine days, was buried in 2004 and later, succeeded by his eldest son, Gezahegn Woldedawit. After the burial, a year of mourning ceremony took place until February 2005. Although Gezahegn had been initiated to succeed his father at the same day of the burial, he performed some important initiation rites during the events marking the end of the mourning ceremony. Early in the morning of the 15th February 2005, accompanied by his wife and leading a group of elders, the present *Kalla* walked out of
the Kalla’s compound and entered the mura Kalla. After crossing the
tombs of his ancestors, the couples, in an act to chase the spirit of death,
threw (at the same time) a ritual plant called fashaita and run away
leaving back the elders and disappeared out of their sights. While the
elders had been dispersed in search of their poqolla saying: “our poqolla
has disappeared, we must find him...” the couples were making repetitive
shouts. Despite the fact that these shouts are non comprehensible,
elders later interpreted for us as they were to mean “ let the spirit of our
ancestors protect us, let it brings an end to death and mourning ...”.
After a kind of dramatic finding of the couples from where they hide
themselves; the elders expressed their joy by shouting, singing and
dancing as a sign that they were heard and helped by the spirits of their
ancestors to accomplish this particular rite and to hope for a better
future both to their poqolla and to the people as well. Finally, carried on
the elders’ shoulders, the couples were taken and placed on top of a
sacred rock table called Daga saga (Daga= stone & Saga= blessing)
where they have to perform one of the initiation rites. They stood on the
stone facing towards their community attending their blessings. Elders
from the nearby village of Gamole handed over to them a wooden bowl
which contains milk mixed with other ritual items such as millet,
sorghum, honey and teff. The couple were also given each a piece of a
ritual plant that they call hansabeta (A very important ritual plant
particularly around the life of poqollas. Using the hansabeta both
showered the milk with its contents over the publique nine times. This
was made alongside blessings offered by the new Kalla to his people
saying:

Let the spirit of our ancestors protect us. Let their spirit and the waqa
Permit the fertility of humans, animals and plants. Let peace be to our
country and people. Let the size of our population increase, let it protect
our children from epidemics and other Social evils...
This particular initiation rite in the sacred forest is a land mark for the new Kalla in his career as Poaqolla. It is because it is for the first time that he blessed his people and that his capacity to offer blessings has been approved by elders. After having completed the initiation rite here, the Kalla and his wife were again carried upon the shoulders of men to the mora Kalla (sacred public place) situated close to their homestead where the Kalla’s entry to poqolla’s office have publicly been observed by his offering blessings to men, women and children who had been waiting for his arrival. Preceded by the rites in the sacred forest, this is also an important step in that the Kalla had realised this ritual in public for the first time on the mora.

Amongst many important functions of the Kalla, one is that he offers prayers and blessings at the beginning of each agricultural season. Elders as delegates of their respective villages, appear at Kalla’s house. Delegates bring pieces of various types of crops as a gift for the Poqolla in exchange of securing his blessings for the boost of their agricultural productions. The Kalla completes his blessings with an offer to the delegates a piece of ritual object called supa which comes from a fat part of a sheep’s tail and that is always kept in the kalla’s house for this purpose. The sacrifice of this type of ritual ship takes place at a particular place set by ancestors within the sacred Forest. We had the opportunity to observe both the occasion and the sacrifice of a sheep in mura Kalla in February this year.

Upon changes of generations every eighteen years, succeeding generations erect generation trees known as olahita on their respective moras. These juniper trees come from these sacred forests. For these generational trees are considered as sacred, a poqolla offers the tree to the respective moras to which, “...he is a natural patron” (Tadesse: 1992). This explains the interrelation between the sacred forests, the poqollas, the moras as sacred public places and the age grade system. Elders from various villages request, against presents, their respective poqolla and be given wood for pillars when constructing men’s sleeping houses Known
as pafta on their respective mora. (In one similar occasion one of us took part as a member of a delegation sent to the Kalla’s house by elders from the village called Dokatu). As rare existing resources of wood, government and public institutions and also churches, who sometimes act against the traditional management of these sites, never hesitate to ask the generosity of poqollas to benefit supplies of wood from these sacred forests for construction purposes. As Konso land has suffered, since several decades ago, severe environmental degradations, one can easily guess that a wood land he observes should be a sacred site.

Moreover, we have no doubt that these sacred forests are rare precious reservoirs for biodiversity. Although they occupy a relatively small area of land (for example mura Kalla is estimated to cover about seventeen hectares), they consist a relatively large number of verities of plant species. In an effort to document the plant life, to this date, we have enlisted one hundred and twenty plant types in mura Kalla. Experts in the local office of agriculture believe almost all these plants are indigenous ones. In addition to those singled out for their ritual significances, we have learned from the local people that a considerable number of plant types have medicinal values and have been in use. Therefore, we believe, it would be a mistake to over look the significant role of these sacred forests for scientific research and as potential resources for future environmental rehabilitation activities so as to contribute for a smooth continuation of life in the region.

**Traditional management of Konso sacred forests**

The traditional management of Konso sacred forests involves certain interdependent sections of the society. In the traditional popular thinking the well being of Konso sacred forests is viewed as their ancestor’s heritages having the power over the rain to fall and as a source of fertility, prosperity, peace, joy...etc,. Damages to the forests (either natural or human) would mean as sign of bad lack in terms of fertility and a sign of bad health, war, death and famine. Due to these
perceptions, the community give them high respect. They refrain from cutting not only of trees, but also a piece of a leaf that is part of these sacred forests. It is believed that cutting the plants from the sacred forests brings a bad lack not only on the personal and family life of the individual, but also it seriously affects the society in general. Therefore, the community members share responsibilities for their preservation to the extent of forcing those who violated the tradition and acted against the sacred forests be presented before elders to be judged.

As a poqolla together with his family is housed close to his respective mura, the day to day management of the sacred forest is one of the principal occupations of himself and his family members. After receiving demands for wood, he presents the case to be discussed with his advisors, Sara, who after making inquiries on the basis of tradition, approve the demand. Each poqolla and his family members regularly patrol around the mura to see if all is well or none. If they discover any damage caused either by human or natural factors, the poqolla should summon his elderly advisors and send them to concerned Dawras asking to interfere in this affair in order to effect rituals for the purification of the forest.

It is indicated above that Konso sacred forests are collectively known as mura Dawra and that Dawras are particular community elders those play priestly role. They are referred as mura Dawra because of their significant responsibilities over the management of the sacred forests. Dawras who never cut their hair and who always keep long sticks have many functions. They are believed as having spiritual powers, who by performing certain rituals; can bring rain even at times of drought. They are guardians of peace whose interference by erecting their long sticks between conflicting parties or villages, marks the end of the violence leading to a subsequent peaceful negotiation. Above all, Dawras are in the front line to look after the well being of the sacred forests to clean and purify them when damage or when something against tradition happens. These include: both human and natural factors. Taboos laid by
tradition interdict the cutting of wood, leaf and any other damaging human activity unless otherwise authorized by the poqolla concerned. Natural damages to these forests especially caused by thunder storms, is heavily and badly felt as being god’s alarming messages to the people. In the process to counter react against these challenges, Dawras stand major actors. We will try to describe below their role in the management of the sacred forests.

Once the news reach them, Dawras concerned of their respective mura assemble together and perform prayers demanding the waqa and the spirit of their ancestors so as to forgive their people and end the would be coming punishments to follow. And later, on the basis of tradition, they realize rituals to ensure the purity of the sacred forests. Although each village has its own Dawras, with certain other functions in relation to their respective villages, Dawras drawn from specific villages conduct (exercise) rituals over their respective mura. In this regard, the management over Mura Bamalle is the responsibility of Dawras from villages known as Dokatu, Burkuda and Hulme. With regard to Mura Qufa, it is the responsibility of Dawras from villages called Mecheke, Gaho and Gume. Dawras from the villages of Gamole, Mechelo and Gocha take responsibilities over the management of Mura Kalla. In the following paragraphs we will try to show when, how and at what particular situations Dawras conduct rituals to purify & safeguard their respective muras. For this purpose we try to describe some traditional experiences in relation to these Muras.

If a tree from a sacred forest is hit by thunder or accidentally falls down; concerned Dawras, after performing prayers, realize the following rituals. They bring a calabash of fresh milk and mix it with darkened mud with which they wash the tree. They make from a cow dung a kind of a bit hollow plate on which they put milk and place it under the tree. Each of them taste the milk that is left in the calabash, one after another. Finally, preceded by the popular Konso term Nagayta, literally meaning peace; they offer the following prayers:
Let the god in the sky from now on protect us. Let such a phenomenon be far from us. We have cleaned our mura on the basis of traditions that we have inherited from our ancestors. Therefore, it means that nothing had happened to our Mura. Let it be an end to this and similar Incidents.

If a tree is cut or damaged by a human, Dawras, after making prayers, force the wrong doer to present a black cow. After sacrificing the cow, they bring out the waste part out of the intestine of which certain amount is spent to paint trees & the rest spread in all directions within the forest. The purification of the forest ends with prayers as (more or less) similar as those indicated above. We believe the relevance of mentioning some points in relation to the ritual items included in the purification of the sacred forests. We prefer to present the English version of explanations after our discussions with elders came from various regions. They explain:

According to our ancestors’ beliefs God listens us when we Sacrifice black cow. Why a cow? Because it is innocent and symbolizes the Fertility of animals. Why black? It is because it corresponds to the clouds beyond which exists God, waqa. It corresponds again to the clouds from where the rain comes. So our muras exist to ensure us rainfall. We use the waste material of the cow in that it comes from inside the stomach and it indicates that the purification has been effected on grounds of pure and clean sentiments (thoughts). As blood indicates fire, death and catastrophes; we never use it for purifying purposes. In contrast, the waste represents being fresh, moist, fertile and peace.

These accounts show the magnitude of the ancestral cult in governing the various aspects of the traditional life of Konso people and also how it is operational with regard to the protection of the sacred forests in particular. Again, it shows the importance of Dawra as a traditional institution for the continuing preservation of the sacred sites.
Moreover, we appreciate to learn about existing traditional knowledge (in whatever form it is expressed) in the interrelation between culture and nature; as for example, the safe protection of sacred forests means to them a source of rain and a symbol of fertility.

Since a long time ago, Konso sacred forests have faced series of challenges endangering their very existence. These challenges include both natural and human factors. As to our observation, the human factor weighs a lot and it includes institutional and individual actions.

**III.4.8. Dina (grooves around walled towns)**

Konso walled towns are surrounded by thick forests named dhinas. Describing these forests Hallpike (2000:46) says, “… between the fields and the town walls there often intervenes a belt of dark and dense woodland, perhaps a hundred yards or more in depth, which was intended to deter enemies by the advantage of ambush it gave to the defenders. But the euphorbia and other succulent vegetation that were deliberately planted there have the additional function of being used to extinguish fires, by reason of their prolific saps... It is also often used for defecation: ‘I am going to the dhina’ is a common euphemism. Landless people are buried there.”

**III.4.9. Harda (ponds) and the traditional water harvesting techniques:**

As mentioned earlier, Konso land is arid. There are no big rivers or permanent streams in Konso country. The rainy season is short, but when it rains it is sudden and often violent. Due to rain shortage Konso country is hot most of a year and thus there is acute shortage of water both for men and animals.

However, Awoke (2007: 54) says, “… consciousness of their natural environment, diligence, ... and an effective traditional water and moisture harvesting system and indigenous knowledge of managing [their] natural resources have been virtues of these people to live in this kind of harsh
“In order to cope with drought, and to conserve the heavy rain that falls so unevenly, many cisterns and cattle pools have been dug and in a few places huge reservoirs have been constructed, to contain the rain-water for cattle in the dry months. The dams ... must contain many hundreds of thousands of gallons when they are full... They [wells/pond] are invariably situated beside a watercourse, and rely on tapping the subterranean water that saturates the rock, and runs down below the surface from high ground. Even though the stream beds are quite dry, the wells will be constantly replenished by a small trickle. Sometimes the water has dried up unaccountably, and returned equally unexpectedly, and for this reason among others, wells have mysterious quality in their eyes... In their fields, however, they must still take pains to see that the rain water is properly distributed, and the run-off from the paths is carefully channeled, through leats, on to the land. Even in the night, if there is a thunderstorm, the men turn out in the dark, and run naked through the pouring rain to their fields, to see that the water is flowing well over the soil and not running to the waste.”

In addition, maize and millet stalks are uprooted and lined in the fields to retain moisture in the soil besides their use as manure to increase the fertility of the soil.

Hallpike (2000: 41-42) has summarized this effective traditional water and moisture harvesting system as follows:
The oldest and traditionally and regularly maintained water reservoirs (Harda) are located within or near these forests. Hardas are also located in the landscape where the rain water could easily be trapped at locations where the water can not easily sink. These Hardas are made by the community to contain the rain water for cattle. These Hardas can be as high as 13m and they attain a length of 60 m. There are also smaller Hardas. They are constructed using a carefully selected stones and lined with expert builders. Harada construction and conservation is done collectively by all members of the particular Paleta and at times by the active age group (Hela). The galleys that are leading to the harda are carefully cleaned and sometimes lined with stones to reduce the silt form getting in to the reservoir.
CHAPTER IV

Description of Selected Konso Walled Towns
(Paletas) and their Cultural Properties

IV.1. Gamole Walled Town

IV.1.1. Background

The date of establishment of Gamole town is not clearly known. However, according to elders it is related with coming of the Kala family, chiefly ritual family of the three walled towns of Gamole, Mechelo and Gocha. As elders estimate, this has taken place about twenty generations ago.

IV.1.2. The stone walls

Gamole is located one Km. to the north of the Bekawle-Jinka road. The town has three main walls. The outer most wall has a length of 1298 meters and covers a total of 86,174 meters square (8.61 hectares) area. The first wall is the innermost/oldest wall and covers 8109 meters square area and has a length of about 363 meters. The second wall, which is between the external and the innermost walls, starts from Mora Ayana and ends at Mora Ayana. Roughly it has a length of 774 meters.

The most inner wall is the earliest settlement in Gamole. Though this wall circumscribes a small area, its wall is very high. At Mora Shilale the innermost wall is 2.2m wide, and has 2.7m and 5.7m external and internal heights respectively.
The wall extensions served to delineate the new kantas or wards. They also serve as a check/control against sudden fire from other sections of the town or the neighborhood/kanta.

As in other Konso walled towns, the walls are constructed using small and large local volcanic rocks interlocked together to give stability. Trees are planted under the walls to give strength and sustainability.

At some places the walls are ruined either naturally or due to developmental factors. New gates have been opened at some places as exit to newly constructed kusita (juniors) households. A decision has been made by town elders to assign a new kanta for the newly established settlement, which is temporarily named Kanta Kawadha, meaning periphery. This new settlement will have it’s permanent name when a full-fledged mora will be established ceremoniously. This shows
the continuation of Konso society’s traditional cultural practices and the natural expansion of the walled settlements.

IV.1.3. The Gates

Gamole has four main ancient gates (Kara Qulqulayta, Kara Karmale, Kara Ayana and Kara Galgalaya) in its outermost wall. There are also some newly opened minor gates whose services are limited to the Kantas (wards). The main gates have different cultural and ritual functions. For example, Gate Qulqulayta/Kara Qulqulayta (meaning ritually clean), which located at the western side of Gamole is one of the main ritual gates. It has 200cm width, 165cm breadth (thickness of the wall) and 170cm height and serves as exit and entrance for ritual hunting and as exit to farm fields.

The second gate, Kara Karmale/Karmale Gate (5°20′05.9″ latitude and 37°24′23.6″ longitude), is located at the southern edge of Gamole. Whenever there is ritual hunting, hunters gather at Karmale Mora located out side on the southern edge of the town, and perform fighting dance called the Kara dance. The group, blessed by community elders at this mora, enters through Kara Karmale into Gamole, and exit through Kara Qulqulayta/Qulqulayta Gate to go to their hunt.

Besides this, Kara Karmale has three additional ritual functions. Each year all unmarried children of Gamole gather at Mora Karmale for an annual ceremony called Katayta, and enter through Kara Karmale into Gamole for the ceremony. The residents of Gamole use this gate when they go to their Poqola, the Kala, to fetch Olayta tree from the Kala forest. They also congregate once or twice in a year to repair communal ponds and enter into the town through this gate.

The other two main gates (Kara Ayana and Kara Galgalaya) are used to go to water point, the farm, other towns or to the Dina (grooves).

Besides these main gates, there are many other smaller gates, called Phoqosha. These small openings are used to sneak into neighborhoods for various purposes.
Formerly, all the gates were closed in the evenings after the residents and their domestic animals entered into the town, with wooden logs laid horizontally one on the top of another from ground to the top so as to hinder entrance of human foes and dangerous wild animals during the night.

IV.1.4. Kanta and homestead organization

Gamole walled town, is spatially organized into six ward divisions called Kantas: Kanta Shilale, Kanta Lehayte, Kanta Porgela, Kanta Otaya, Kanta Galgalaya, and Kanta Ayana (see map 7). The formations of these Kantas have different histories.

The earliest two Kantas are Kanta Shilale and Kanta Lehayte. Before the establishment of Paleta Gamole, the people who later formed Paleta Gamole lived in separate hamlets. When they lived in separation, each group had a small population and was vulnerable for attack by its neighbors. So their merger and the establishment of Gamole walled town was necessitated by a common defense strategy.

These two kantas are enclosed in innermost wall. The formation of the other four Kantas was related with the increase of the population of Gamole. When the population grew beyond the carrying capacity of a walled enclosure, elders decided for the establishment of new Kantas. Kanta Otaya, the third oldest and Kanta Porgela, the fourth oldest Kanta, as well as the other two Kantas were formed after a similar fashion by decision of Gamole elders.

The new kantas were established by extending the former walls. Kantas are again divided into sub-divisions called Kanta Ibita, meaning division that includes close neighbors that borrow fire from each other. For example, Kanta Porgela has three Kanta Ibitas: Tarate, Otidita and Keltoya.
IV.1.5. The Moras

Gamole has eight moras (Map 8). As anywhere else, these moras are divided into Paleta moras and kanta moras. So the description focuses only on five most important Paleta moras.

a. Mora Sagale: Mora Guta, Main Cultural Mora.

Mora Sagale (5°20’14.0” latitude and 37°24’25.9” longitude) is the main communal mora of Gamole Paleta with much cultural and social significance. This mora belongs to Kanta Lehayte. It is also communal mora for the whole residents. The area of Mora Sagale is 24.3m x 14m. It has a pafta, with an area of 7.1m x 6.4m. There are eight tall generation trees, Olayta trees, which belong to the whole community of Paleta Gamole. It also has a communal ritual dancing ground, which also serves as a playground for children. It also has three separate palas (one of which is seat of Kala’s representative), a pafta with 4.8m height and stands on 18 poles and one central pole.

Important cultural, social and political discourses and activities of Gamole, such as generation initiation rites, preparation for war, victory ceremonies, harvest ceremonies, blessing of the land, etc., take place at Mora Sagale. Five roads lead to different directions from this mora.

According to Konso belief, menstruation makes women unclean and because of this women are forbidden to enter into or cross through sacred places like Mora Sagale. During important public ceremonies, adult females dance outside this main mora. However, this rule does not apply to females who reached the age of menopause or very young girls. Craftsmen, wrong doers and foreigners are also not allowed to enter into or cross through these mora.

At the back of the pafta of this mora there is also another sacred place with a bunch of erected Olayta trees. This sacred place and Olayta trees belong to Kanta Lehayte, whereas the grand mora, Mora Sagale, with all its associated features belongs to the whole Gamole. Trophies,
like skulls of killed games, brought after successful hunting by the kanta people of Lehayte are displayed here.

b. Mora Shilale: Mora Dhawra and Swearing mora

Mora Shilale is the most sacred communal mora of Paleta Gamole as it has *Daga-khakha*, a swearing stone where wrong doers make oaths. Though this mora is located in Kanta Shilale, it also belongs to the whole community of Gamole. It is here that bad things, like famine, drought, war, flood, etc., are cursed. The total area of this mora is 20m by 8.8m and its pafta’s area is 9m by 6.4m. The pafta stands on 21 poles (one central pole) and has a 6.4m height.

There are eleven trees bunched in to an Ulahta in this mora. These Ulayta trees are/were erected to symbolize the transfer of power from one generation to another. The taller Ulayta tree represents the generation grade on power and the shorter Ulayta trees represent the previous generation grades. This difference has a symbolic meaning. Since the generation on power is seen to be above every body its Ulayta is taller than the others. If there were taller Ulayta trees when a new generation assumes power, they are cut from their bottom to shorten them, so that the last or the new one could stand taller.

Besides these there is one arumta. The innermost wall of Paleta Gamole, which towers up to 3.5m, bounds this mora in the west. Three main foot paths lead to different directions from this mora.

c. Mora Alayto: Mora Tooya, Watching mora

Mora Alayto (5°20′14.1″ latitude and 37°24′23.4″ longitude), belongs to Kanta Lehayte, is situated on high ground of the outermost wall of Gamole. It is the watching mora of the town. Watching places could be more than one depending on the presumed directions of the enemy threat. From this mora people could watch their surroundings and could pass information about incoming and outgoing persons. This mora is also a place for traditional astrologers to watch the movement of
the moon in relation to the position of some constellations and predict the weather condition. Besides this, it is also used for general public purposes. Though this mora has Pafta, Olayta trees, pala and arumta, it does not have dancing ground, kawula, tomatasha and Daga-diruma.

d. Other general-purpose Kanta moras

The other moras are general-purpose moras that belong to each kanta. In these games, etc. Some of these moras lack one or more cultural features like dancing grounds, pafta, Ulayta trees, Daga-diruma etc. For example, Mora Kilankalto (meaning narrow gate, 5°20′10.0″ latitude and 37°24′24.3″ longitude), which is mora of Kanta Shilale, has a pafta, pala, olayta trees, arumtas and one tomatasha; but lacks Daga-diruma, and kawula. Mora Ayana (5°20′10.6″ latitude and 37°24′21.2″ longitude), which is the mora of Kanta Ayana, has a pafta, Olayta trees (last one was erected on November 19, 2007), a dancing ground outside the mora (formerly used to be threshing field), and pala; but lacks Daga-diruma, arumtas, tomatasha, and kawula.

Mora Alayto (mora of Kanta Lehayte), Mora Kobtale (mora of Kanta Keltoya, which does not have pafta), Mora Porgela (mora of Porgela Kanta-Porgela means below road), and Mora Tarate (mora of Tarate Kanta) do not have Daga-diruma, kawula and tomatasha. But they have pafta, olayta trees, pala and arumta stones. On the other hand, Mora Galgalaya (mora of Galgalaya Kanta) and Mora Urgumata (mora of Kanta Urgumata Kanta) have pafta, dancing ground, pala, arumta and olayta trees; but do not have dhaka dhiruma, kawula, and tomatasha. Mora Qulqulayta (mora of Kanta Otaya) has pafta and the other features; but it does not have dancing ground. Mora Otaya (mora of Kanta Otaya) have pafta, two arumta stones, two olayta trees, pala (which has a length of 9.8m) and a small dancing ground; but it does not have Daga-diruma, kawula and tomatasha. Skulls of a gazelle and a baboon are displayed on the olayta trees as trophies.
e. Mora Karmale: General-purpose mora outside Paleta Gamole

Mora Karmale, south of Baleda Gamole, is a general-purpose open public mora located outside of Paleta Gamole outer wall.

Mora Karmale is also one of the main moras of Gamole. Mora it is used for ceremonies. Each year children of Gamole go from one house to another singing, dancing and asking for food. Mothers of each provide food for these children. When the children reach at the house of an unmarried boy who is between 15-35 they insult the latter for he failed to marry. After they visit every household in Gamole, each child brings a stick from the surrounding field and takes it to Mora Karmale. The stick bunch of the former year is burned and the new sticks are erected at its place. The burning of the old sticks has symbolic meaning: it means “we all have peacefully passed from the old year to the New Year together and let bad things of the old year be burnt away like the sticks.” To end katayta ceremony, all the children head to Mora Sagale for a closing dance called korayta. Katayta ceremony also has another functional meaning. By counting the piled sticks each year, one can roughly estimate how many unmarried young children there are in Gamole in that year.

IV.1.6. Dinas, burial sites, Daga-dirumas Daga-helas and Waka

A small strip of dina that surrounds Gamole serves as buffer between Gamole walled town and the surrounding agricultural fields. In addition to this, the dhina serves as traditional toilet place for the community. Most of the woods that constitute the dinas are Euphorbia, which are used to prevent and control fire that suddenly arises in the town.

The dina surrounding Paleta Gamole is mostly destroyed due to population, development pressures, expansion of agricultural fields.
Accordingly, the dina and a cemetery (a cemetery that belonged to Horhora and Kalote families, members of Togomaleyta and Passanta clans respectively) on the southern side of Gamole have been mostly destroyed due to the construction of a big water reservoir, construction of new households and new farm fields. Currently there are five standing and many fallen and broken Daga -dirumas in this field. Due to effect of this developmental pressure, only a few remnants of euphorbia trees of the former Dina are seen on the southern side of the town.

The Dina on the eastern side the Paleta Gamole has been cleared in favor of establishing an Orthodox Church (5°20′10.9″ latitude and 37°24′33.2″ longitude). This church was established by clearing many tombs from the community cemetery (5°20′08.3″ latitude and 37°24′32.7″ longitude) of Passanta clan, which is still functional. Some of the Daga- dirumas have been re-erected at the northern compound of the Orthodox Church.

A new dry latrine that was built a few meters east of the church was also constructed by clearing the Dina. Small shops, a flour-mill and individual households were also established at the expense of the Dina.

To the south of the Orthodox Church and the Passanta clan cemetery was also another clan cemetery (5°20′07.5″ latitude and 37°24′34.1″ longitude), an ancient cemetery of Koysa Family, Kertita clan. In the south, the old Konso-Jinka road cuts this cemetery. A few remaining tombstones have been re-erected on the western side of the abandoned said road.

The northern and western sides of Gamole are steep. Household dirt and ash are damped at the northern hilly steep. The western hill descends to a gully and has some remnants trees from the old destructed dina.

Dhinias are often burial sites. As such the remaining dinas at the southern and eastern part of Gamole are also burials. Due to this, there are about 13 small and large tomb stones/dirumas in the Passanta cemetery. The largest of these erected stones is 145cm tall and has a
perimeter of 68cm. The smallest erected stone is 32cm tall and has 54cm perimeter. As the cemetery is bushy, it is difficult to see more erected stones.

At the southern end of the former dina there is a cemetery (Passanta and Togomaleyta clan cemetery as mentioned above). At this cemetery, which is an open field currently, there are 5 visible burial erected stones with a maximum and minimum height of 81cm and 29cm respectively. Besides, there are many fallen and broken steles/burial stones. The area south of this cemetery is an open mora, Mora Karmale (5°20'02.9" latitude and 37°24'23.1" longitude). Here there is a pile of katayta sticks mentioned earlier.

Two of the sixteen stones are Daga-helas, where as the others are burial stones. The tallest of the Daga-helas is 165cm tall and the shortest is 30cm. On one of the graves there is a gravestone with smaller stone at the base, representing the number of plots of land the deceased person had, and a standing, but decayed, wooden statue, waka.
IV. 2. Gocha Walled Town (Paleta)

IV.2.1. Background

Gocha is located about 9km west of Karat town and a few hundred meters east of Konso-Jinka road. As informants say Gocha was one of the biggest walled towns in Konso.

The establishment history of Gocha is similar to that of Gamole. As elders say, the establishment of these two towns was related to the coming of the Kala family, chiefly family of Kertita clan in the three sister towns (Gamole, Mechelo and Gocha) nineteen generations a go.

IV.2.2. The stone walls and kantas (wards)

Gocha has three walls. The external wall is 1745 meters long and covers an area of 88,715 square meters. However, currently the walls of Gocha are mostly destroyed and very few families live in the town. The reason for its abandonment and destruction of the walls is attributed to the devastation of the town by the Italian army during the 1935-41 Italian occupation of Ethiopia. According to informants Gocha town was burnet along with lower Dhokato and Dera. Due to this its dwellers were dispersed in the surroundings and remained there even after the war was over. Some people did return to their original walled town but they did not renovate the ruined walls. At some places the outermost wall is intact. For example at coordinate 5°20′21.5″ latitude and 37°24′02.5″ longitude the wall measurement is 160cm height and 180 cm wide.

Though Gocha is a big town, it has only two ancient kantas (wards): Kanta Lehayte and Kanta Kartohayta. However, as the Gocha community live in dispersed settlements around the walled town, there are three new additional kantas: Kanta Oybeto, Kanta Qayle and Kanta Pola.
IV.2.3. Gates and Moras

Gocha has five main gates and two smaller openings, *Fulas*. The main sacred ritual gate is Kara Baleda located at 5°20′24.1″ latitude and 37°23′58.8″ longitude. This gate used to have big wooden poles and an arc, which, however, are currently decayed.

Moras of Gocha

Gocha has six moras, five within the walled town and one out side, at the western vicinity of the town. Only two of Gocha’s moras, Mora Katayta and Mora Tubaya, have pafta. One mora, Mora Kasara, used to have a pafta in the past which now is decayed.

Mora Kurbita (located at coordinates 5°20′23.2″ latitude and 37°24′01.0″ longitude), is the most important sacred mora of Gocha Paleta. This open mora, just at the western entrance of the town has an
area of 1349.2m². On the northern side, this mora is bordered by a road that leads to the main gate, Kara Kurbita, which is 40.20m from a second outer gate. There are 26 erected stones, 10 wakas and 7 Olayta trees at this mora. One of the erected stones is Daga-hela and the others are Daga-dirumas. The wakas are located at the periphery of the open mora.

All major rituals including generation initiation ritual are performed at mora Gurbita. Due to this there are 7 tall Olayta trees. Three of these Olayta trees were erected recently, on the 21st of January 2008. These three newest Olayta trees were erected for the three past generations who were unable to erect their generation trees on time because the ritual was prohibited by the Military regime. The Gocha Paleta community make oath at this Mora. The spacious dancing floor is surrounded by Daga-dirumas, Daga-helas, wooden statues, Wakas, erected for memory of heroes. This shows there was practice of burying heroes in moras in the ancient times. There is a bunch of katayta, children’s Olayta, on northern corner of the mora. There are also eight big and small acacia trees, which are also sacred.

IV.2.4. Dhina and other features in the surroundings

There is a small Dina groove on the western side of this mora. Being an ancient burial, this dina has many erected stones and decayed wakas. This site is also traditional latrine. Formerly the whole Gocha community used to take care of this burial site but the communal conservation was weakened in the recent times. Currently a local association, PARKA, An Environment and Culture Association, in collaboration with the community is fencing and clearing this site.

On the western side of Gocha town there are a flour mill, and an elementary school. The south side of the town descends to a valley with a stream which is shared with the community Gamole.

Formerly there was a big Dina on the northern and eastern side of Paleta Gocha. However, this dina was cleared by individuals during the
Military regime in favor of agriculture. The dinas, which have only few surviving big acacia trees are going to be rehabilitated and conserved by PARKA Association and the community.

IV.3. Mechelo Walled Town (Paleta)

IV.3.1. Background

Mechelo is one of the oldest walled towns in Konso. Like Gamole and Gocha, its establishment is related to the coming to the region of the Kala family. According to oral tradition, a person named Kole, some Burji Uma clan members and the Kala family emigrated from Borana to Koyra/Burji. The Uma clan stayed at Koyra/Burji, whereas Kole and the Kala family traveled to Aylota/Guamide hills. From Aylota they traveled to Duro/Kodale and then to Kashale (Yandale). However, they were unable to permanently settle at Kashale (Yandale); so they traveled to Haduse, a place in Borana, the other side of the Segen River. From Haduse they traveled to Gendima, and then to Busso (both in eastern Konso).

According to oral history, when these emigrants came to Mechelo, the Mao people inhabited the area. The Mao people were unhappy about the new arrivals. The Kala and Kole people understood this and devised a strategy to get rid of these Mao people. They knew that the Mao people had enmity with the Gergere or Borana people. So the Kala and Kole people chewed tobacco and spitted it around their homes at night. They also urinated at the gates of every Mao household to make it look like that many Boranas had come to spy them during the night. In the morning the Kala and Kole told the Mao people about the visit of the Boranas who are prepared to attack them. Most of the Mao people who saw the tobacco and the urine marks were scared of the Borana attack and evacuated Mechelo. Some members of the Mao people, latter renamed as Gerale were incorporated in to the Togumaleyta clan, were assimilated with the new comers.
Kala was leader of the Kertita clan where as Kole was leader of the Passanta clan. In Konso tradition, two clan leaders are not allowed to live together as this would bring power struggle, leading to social instability in the society. When such kind of situation happens, the senior clan leader has to leave to another place in respect of his junior. Accordingly, Kala, who was senior had to move to another place. So, Kole and his family stayed in Mechelo where as Kala and his family crossed Kira Kole River, a river between Busso and Mechelo and finally settled at Bana hill, the present day Kala forest and residence. According to this oral history, this event took place about nineteen generations ago. This event is believed to have marked the establishment date of the Mechelo Paleta.

IV.3.2. The stone walls

The Mechelo paleta has three walls. The external wall measures 1746.5 meters and covers an area of 116,893 meter square area. The middle wall has a length of 432m and the inner main wall, which is the smallest is 187 meter long and covers an area of 13,015 meter square. The inner most wall is the highest when compared with the middle and the external walls. Though at one point the height of this same wall reaches up to 4.15m, measured from outside (at point ~5°18′42.9″ latitude and ~37°24′32.5″ longitude), its average height is 1.94m. From within, the wall reaches up to 3m meter high at one point (at point 5°18′46.1″ latitude and 37°24′36.9″ longitude). Though the average width of the main wall is 1.37 meters, it varies between 34cm and 3.54m. The raw material used for its construction is local basalt with a maximum and minimum dimension of 2.6m and 3cm respectively.
IV.3.3. The gates

The external wall of Mechelo Paleta has four main gates: Kara Karkara or Kara Baleda, Kara Askala, Kara Katata or Kara Galgalaya and Kara Henna. Kara Karkara, located on the western side of Paleta Mechelo, is the main ritual gate. This gate has 1.7m. height and 1.9m height.

The other three gates are used for various purposes: to go to markets, water source, agricultural fields, neighboring towns, etc. Big logs were used to close the gates at night in the former times. Currently these gates are not closed as there is no threat (from enemy or wild
animals) to the community as the former times. The main gate, Kara Karaka still have decayed wooden arcs and poles.

IV.3.4. Spatial and cultural organization of the Paleta
- Kanta organization

Mechelo Paleta is divided into four kantas (ward) divisions: Alkali, Kuile, Kapata and Galgalaya and Hena. Kanta Katata, located at the center of Mechelo walled town (Paleta) predates the other three kantas and the Paleta’s main Mora (Cherbeqa) is located in this Kanta.

As it is the case with most of the other Konso walled towns, the other three kantas were established as extension of Kanta Katata to provide space for the growing population of Kanta Katata.

IV.3.4.1. Main Moras, their functions and associated cultural features

Mechelo has seventeen moras. Some these moras have paftas and some do not. Unlike most moras in Gamole Paleta, the moras of Mechelo have Daga-dirumas and Olayta trees.

The organization and function of these moras are more or less similar with the other moras of Konso. Only the most important ones are addressed below.

a. Mora Čerbeqa: Mora Guta (Main Cultural Mora) of Mechelo.

Located at a hilltop, Mora Čerbeqa is at the center of Paleta Mechelo. This mora is the main sacred cultural mora, Mora Guta, of the whole community of Mechelo and it is found in Kanta Katata. It is an open mora (without pafta), with an area of 20.35m x 14.7m. There are four erected Olayta trees at this mora representing the whole Mechelo community.

There is a single Daga-diruma (which has 1.52m high and 67cm circumference) and an arumda, ritual spear sharpening stone, at Mora Čerbeqa. All ritual dances of the community are performed at this mora.
At the center of the dancing floor is a half buried stone called shila khorata used as a spot where a person found to be guilty places the fine decided upon him by the community elders.

In addition to these, announcements to the community are made from this mora. It also serves as mora tooya, watching mora.

Mora Čerbeqa has three gates. The foot paths lead to Kanta Hena, Kanta Galgalaya and Kanta Kuile.

b. Mora Ayana: the second sacred mora of Mechelo

Mora Ayana has a wide dancing area, which is 24.3m by 21.4m. It also has wide public assembly place whose floor is lined with big flat slabs of rocks. There are six Daga- dirumas (on the western corner of the dancing floor) and five arumta stones (ritual spear sharpening stones/maturity stones) at this mora. At the southern corner of the dancing floor, a bunch of erected katayta sticks are present. This mora is bounded by a stone wall with four gates at its eastern, southern, western, and northern sides. Both the eastern and southern gates lead to Kanta Askala; whereas, the northern and western gates lead to Kanta Katata and the main gate of the town, Karagara Gate.

Generation victory/ manhood marking stones (stele) Daga-dirumas are erected here. There are six such Daga- dirumas erected by six generations, at its western corner.

In Keena Region steles are erected from right to left and thus, a stele on the right side is older than the next stele on the left side. Accordingly, the outer right side stele at Mora Ayana, the stele that commemorates the generation-grade of Hirba (given name Kasarmala) is the oldest stele and the outer left side stele, the stele that commemorates the generation-grade of Melgusa (given name Urguba) is the youngest.

The tallest steles represent the most victories and successful generation-grades, whereas shortest steles represent unsuccessful and failed generation-grades. Thus, the two tallest steles (the fourth and fifth steles from right to left) that measure 2.24m high, were erected for the
two most successful Hirba generation-grades (with given name of Qayranguba and Karmola). The shortest stele, 82cm high, was erected for the unsuccessful/failed Kalkusa (given name Tahayleita) generation-grade.

**c. Mora Shangala: Main Swearing Mora**

Mora Shangala (5°18′44.1″ latitude and 37°24′28.2″ longitude) is a sacred swearing mora, Mora Khakha, of Mechelo Paleta. This open mora covers an area of 27.1m. by 10.4m. At the center of this mora there is a columnar basalt, swearing stone, that is 55cm high with a circumference of 80cm. A circular stonewall of 1.18m diameter surrounds the swearing stone.

A person who is suspected of committing a crime or who is suspected of doing something that is against the traditional law (such as killing a person, committing adultery, etc) has to swear at this swearing stone to prove that he is innocent. Failure to swear here results in cursing of the suspect by the community elders. It is believed that a bad fortune, including death befalls the guilty as a result of the curse.

This Mora serves also as place where community elders curse drought, epidemic disease, enemy, etc., and beg their deities for good harvest, peace, fertility, community health, etc.

**IV.3.4.2. Other Kanta Moras**

Apart from the above-described three communal sacred moras of Mechelo Paleta, the remaining fourteen belong to different Kantas (wards). Kanta moras are used for general social and cultural purposes such as, cultural dance, public assembly, places where elders and children pass leisure time, places where traveling guests stay for the night, as men’s sleeping place, etc.
IV.3.5. Dinas, Daga-helas and Wakas Dinas (grooves)

In spite of their social and cultural functions, Dinas have been deforested in many of the Konso Paletas. Currently only few walled towns still preserve their Dina, of which Mechelo Paleta is the one.

Local informants say that formerly dense Dina had surrounded the Mechelo walled town. During the military regime a large area of the Dina was given for the Protestant Church and the rest was cleared for construction of health center, peasant Association office, school, agriculture office and two flour mills. Currently 2500 square meter area Dina remains in Mechelo. Mechelo still has a larger dina when compared to the other walled towns of Konso. A large part of dina of Baleda Mechelo exists on the western side of the walled town, though it also thinly extends to the southern side of the town. The Orayta or Karkara burial site, is located in the Dina out side of the western outermost wall and has numerous burial wooden statues, wakas, and Daga-dirumas (erected stones). Here, a total of thirteen wakas, of which twelve were erected to commemorate heroes and one, called ledha erected to commemorate a clan leader, and thirty-eight steles are observed.

As one enters the outermost wall of Mechelo through the Karkara Gate, one encounters a small burial site which has thirteen Daga dirumas, one ledha and five decaying wakas, belonging to ancient heroes. While most of the Daga-dirumas (steles) are still standing, some are fallen and broken due to age and /or neglect.

There are also many ancient wakas erected in the Dina. As access was difficult they are not counted and recorded.

IV.3.6. The Poqola’s (ritual chief) homestead organization and groove

There are no political chiefs per se in Konso. As Hallpike (1970: 31) says, “…the towns are divided into wards, each with an elected council of elders; there are no chiefs and each town was traditionally autonomous.”
However, there are lineage chiefs, called Poqola, with ritual, ceremonial and conciliatory functions. These chiefs often dwell in seclusion at some distance apart from the walled towns. There are limited sacred foot paths which community uses to go to the chief’s house for ritual purposes.

Mechelo has a ritual chief named Poqola Garo Gahano, who is ritual head of the Passanta Clan. This chief lives in seclusion, with his family, in a big fenced household compound (5°18’58.8” latitude and 37°24’12.7” longitude) about 1 km west of Mechelo Paleta. In front of the Poqola’s compound is a public assembly place, an open mora, measuring 25.4m by 12.40m. The compound is 22.6m long, 20.5m wide.

Up on entering inside the compound, one finds two hearths on the right side corner of the compound. These hearths are related to funeral rite of the Poqola and Poqoltata (Poqola’s wife). It will be necessary to explain here the use of these hearths. When the ritual leader or his wife die, eight oxen and an old cow are prepared for their funeral rite. These cattle are collected from the families of the Poqola’s family, the kantas and the Paleta. Before the corpse of the deceased Poqola or Poqoltata is taken to the burial place, the old cow is slaughtered. The cow’s skin is used to shroud the corpse. The meat is roasted at the hearths and is eaten by the community. After burial the mourners return back to the Poqola’s house and slaughter the eight oxen. Unlike the cow’s meat that is eaten commonly by the people of the Paleta, the meat of the oxen is divided between the kantas. On the other hand, the meat of the oxen is not roasted like the cow’s meat. The kanta residents boil it using the two hearths and eat the boiled meat separately. No body is allowed to take the remaining meat to his home.

To the right of these hearths, there is a bunch of eighteen erected Olayta trees. Under these, there is a small space that mimics an agricultural field. The trees and the small space are associated with two annual rituals.

The first ritual is called hoto-fura ritual, a ritual performed at the seed sowing time in January. Each such season, elders of the Passanta
clan in Mechelo appear before their Poqola for blessing. The Poqola gives them a sacrificial lamb. The elders sacrifice this lamb, roast and eat it together. The limbs of the lamb are roasted unbroken. These unbroken limb bones and the horn are stored in the Poqola’s house and no body touches them. The meat has to be consumed completely in the Poqola’s compound. Once a person gets into the Poqola’s compound for this ritual, he is not allowed to get out until the ritual is finalized. After this process ends, one woman from the Poqola’s family puts freshly cut grass in the hands of Passanta clan elders. The elders bless their community for good harvest season, fertility and peace. After the elders blessing, the Poqola blesses his clan members. After the blessing is concluded, the process of Olayta tree erection follows. Before the tree is erected, elders grease its bottom using fresh butter. This symbolizes peace and good harvest. Youngsters of the Passanta clan erect the Olayta tree women shout in ululation. Thereafter, a woman from the Poqola family gives various kinds of seeds to the representatives of the Passanta elders who sow part of the seeds in the above-mentioned small space under the Olayta tree and takes the rest with them to their community. These blessed seeds are shared between Passanta lineage members, after which they go out to their farm fields to start sowing the seeds.

The second ritual is called the Tuta ritual, a ritual performed before the harvest in September. At this time, everybody prepares local drink called Ćhaqa and food for the Tuta/harvest festival. Ritual elders called katana shorohota lead this festival. Each clan sends a small amount of the harvested seed as an annual gift to their Poqola through their elders thanking him for his blessing.

The Poqola’s household compound divided into an upper human living section, oita, and a lower section, orkayta, used for cattle and various purposes. The two sections are separated by stonewall that has 1.4m height. The oita and orkayta have 12.4m and 10.7m width respectively. There are eleven houses and structures in these two sections, seven on the upper section (oita) and four on the lower section
orkayta). The houses on the upper section (from left to right) include akita (Poqola’s main living house), kofa (living house of the Poqola’s elder son), aleda mahada (storage for precious materials), aleda anqala (a house used as bedroom of the son’s wife, special cooking place and maize storage), reqa (used as adult’s grinding place- with four grinding stones (yomaya) in a row and one children’s grinding stone, store as well as guest reception), qudha (children’s sleeping house until they reach the age of marriage), and kosa (general purpose store). The houses on the lower section (from left to right) include kosa (two story structure where the upper part is used for storage and the lower to keep cattle), another reqa (house used for cattle and as guest’s sleeping place), and aleda lukula (chicken’s house).

A few meters east of the Poqola’s compound is located his sacred grove, Mura Poqola (located at 5°18′54.7″ latitude and 37°24′15.6″ longitude). Mura Poqola serves as burial place of the Poqola family and their closet relatives. Though there are many naturally decayed wooden burial statues, wakas on the ancient tombs, only a single waka (with a height of 1.32m and a circumference of 0.57m) that was erected on the tomb of Poqoltata Ammena, wife the living Poqola who died six years ago is still in good condition.

Christian and non-Christian members of the Passanta clan in Mechelo are buried here as well. A wooden cross is erected on Christian tombs. This shows the harmony between the traditional and non traditional belief systems.

A small sacred forest named Mura Dumbano or Mura Ella (spirit’s forest) is located east of Mura Poqola (5°18′42.2″ latitude and 37°24′25.4″ longitude). Though the Saudhata clan of Mechelo owned this forest, currently is owned by the whole community. In the former times ritual chiefs entitled kata and shorguta performed an annual harvest ritual, Kilota Bara ritual at this sacred groove.
IV.4. Dokatu Walled Town Clusters (Paletas)

IV.4.1. Background

Dhokato is a collective name for the three sister walled towns named lower Dhokato, Burquda and Hulme. Lower Dhokato is located a few hundred meters west of Karat town, capital of Konso Special Woreda Administration, and north of Konso-Jinka road. Both Burquda and Hulme walled towns are located to the southwest of Lower Dhokato walled town. The Konso-Jinka road passes between Burquda and Hulme walled towns. Burquda walled town, which is separated from Hulme walled town by the Konso-Jinka road and a market place called Omboko, is located southeast of Hulme walled town and three kilometers west of Karat town.

Generally the towns in the Dhokato cluster collaborate in rituals, hunts, warfare and in extinguishing sudden fire. They also have common swearing, ritual and cultural assembly places, moras, which will be elaborated later. Moreover, these three sister towns have the same ritual leader, *poqolla*, entitled Bamalle. In the modern administrative unit, they also together constitute one Peasant Association administration called the Dhokato Qebele Administration.

The three associated walled towns commonly known as Dhokato were amongst the first walled towns in Konso. The first settlers were emigrants from Borana/Liben through Koyra/Burji, Aylota, Ala and Duro as informants say.

Before walled settlement started, these emigrants lived in scattered settlements and often clashed with each other. To make things worse, they were also incessantly invaded by their powerful neighbors, the Borana and the Guji Oromo people. As Hallpike (2000: 64) puts it, “...The effect of these invasions was to impel the Konso into large walled settlements”. Thus, Konso walled town settlement was a later development in Konso settlement history.
According to lineage count of the Tigistaida clan in Dhokato, Orgeda, the first Poqola (clan leader and ritual chief) of Dhokato’s Tigistaida clan, came to Konso from Liben, Borana, before twenty generations ago. According to this oral tradition, the first wall construction started by the fifth lineage, by Teliya of Tigistaida clan. This could roughly be about 400 years ago.

On the other hand, the Kalkusa generation grade that passed power to Hirba generation grade this year is the twenty-fifth generation grade according to oral informants. Since a generation grade changes every 18 years, the time elapsed by these twenty five generations is roughly 450 years. Thus, the first emigrants settled around the Dhokato hills in Konso at about this time according to Konso oral tradition.

Hallpike (2000:75-76) quotes a text from a person named Utsai Telaxaya and discusses this in combination to other writings and reaches at an age of about 50 years difference (from the above mentioned age) for the initialization of Konso walled settlements as follows:

“In the Past people lived in scattered houses in the fields. The home of the Bamalle was then at Paltoa. The armoured men [by men on horses and mules in chain-mail armour, the siplongara (sipla= iron)² came and killed people living scattered in the fields, and so they gathered together and made towns. They built walls and rampart-walks, after the armoured men came and killed people, so when the armoured men came [back] the horses and the mules could not climb the walls, and spears were useless, and they threw stones. One man called Teeana … was killed by a stone and so they were afraid and went away [this presumably refers to the first attack]. The Bamalle family were afraid of spears and went away up there [to their present home on the top of a nearby hill]. After this the armoured men did not come again. After this the Ewa Borana came and killed a few people in the fields and they hunted them back to the Sagan River, and when the people saw they fought them. After living there they became

² explanation of armour given by Hallpike (2000: 75).
Warliya. After they saw these Warliya they gave the alarm, and the town came out and attacked them. [On the other hand Hallpike compares Shako, 1994: 83 as follows:]”The Wardai who were Oromo speakers, inhabiting what is presently northern Kenya, overrun Konso about 400 years ago. Among many they killed the Pamalle, the clan head of the Arkamayta and the poqolla of Dekatto towns” (Shako, 1994:83).

Hallpike continues his discussion: “... While they are not referred to as Borana, it is possible that they were, and had captured some chain mail in their wars with the Muslims.”

Be that as it may, before the establishment of the three walled towns of the Dhokato cluster of walled towns, the emigrants lived in small and scattered hamlets on hilltops. Besides, these settlers often fought with each other over land and these inter-group conflicts and wars were common on all sides. On the other hand Konso land was mostly covered by forest and so had dangerous wild beasts that threatened their life. More threatening than these, however, was the raids from the Guji and Borana tribes. Thus, strong interrelation and mutual protection was unavoidable subsistence issue for these dispersed and weak settlers.

As these settlers were under continuous attacks from their hostile neighbors, they decided to live together. As Hallpike (2000:76) quotes from Korra, “since the scattering of the settlements was the cause of society’s exposure to this type of attack, it was found that living close together was a useful solution to this problem. Thus the settlers around Garati Ketena begun to build closely clustered settlements and constructed the famous stone walls around them.”

As informants say, when they reached at this decision, elders and clan chiefs gathered and slaughtered an ox. They also cut a tree and made a drum using the skin of the animal. They called the drum ‘ketena timba Karata’ meaning ‘ketena, drum of Karata’. When the drum was beat all the people gathered and commonly roared 'our name is Karata and our
Some names of the first pioneer families who come together to establish the walled settlements of Lower Dhokato, Hulme and Burquda are known. These include such families as Shosha, Dhinghe, Songogo, etc., in Lower Dhokato; Ashuma/Pata, Lasha, Ful’o, etc., in Burquda; and Kurpana, Hoisiya, etc., in Hulme.

IV.4.2. Stone walls of Lower Doketo

Lower Dhokato is the largest walled town in the Dhokato cluster of walled towns. It is also one of the earliest and the largest walled towns in the whole Konso. The town has six rings of dry stone walls showing that it is among the most fortified towns in Konso. The outer wall has a length of 1667 meters and covers an area of 158,293 meter square.
As Dhokato is one of the first walled towns in Karate Region, its walls are high and impressive. The walls’ external and internal height and width vary at different points according to the position of the wall. The external height of the innermost wall reaches up to 3 meters, while the outermost/external wall’s maximum height is 3.6 m. On the other hand, the maximum internal height of the innermost wall reaches to 1.9 meter while that of the outermost walls maximum height reaches to 2.2 meters. The maximum width of the external wall is 3.8 meters while the maximum width of innermost wall is 2 meters. Generally, the outermost wall is higher and wider than the inner walls.

The construction of the external wall of Lower Dhokato is said to have been started by the Kaylola generation grade before 1897 but was disrupted and was not completed because of the invasion of Konso by Emperor Menelik II’s army in 1897. This disrupted wall starts at coordinate 50°20′16.4″ and 37°25′28.7″ longitude and ends at coordinate 50°20′32.8″ latitude and 37°25′31.8″ longitude.3

IV.4.3. Gates of Lower Dokato

Main paths within the walled towns are often zigzag, so as to slow and hinder movement of an enemy and thieves. Many narrower footpaths branch from these main paths and moras leading to private homesteads and kantas. The main and secondary internal paths are complicated path-webs that are very difficult for an outsider In the earlier times, logs were laid across internal paths to hinder movement of a thief who tries to run and escape at night. Formerly, main gates were also closed by big logs at night. The gates are not closed currently.

Lower Dhokato has 6 main gates, Karas. Theses are Kara Shutte (in the east), Kara Kho-kara Ileka (in the northeast), Kara Parguta (in the north), Kara Ataro (in the northwest), Kara Urmala (in the south) and Kara Buybure (in the west).

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3 The perimeter/circumference and the land area of Lower Dhokato would have been larger if the wall construction was finished.
*Kara Ataro* in the northwest and *Kara Shutte* in the east are the earliest gates fixed when the Dhokato walled town was established. *Kara Ataro* has 1.4m width, 3.6m breadth and 1.6m height. It has two wooden decaying poles (1.6m. high) fixed at both sides of the gate.

*Kara Shutte* is the main ritual and hunting gate. People use this gate to go to and return from hunting during the *Kara* ritual. *Kara Shutte* has 1.8m width, 1.3m breadth and 1.35m height.

*Kara Ileka* is the main gate of Ileka section of the Dhokato walled town (see below for division of sections). *Kara Ileka* has 1.6m, 3m and 2.2m width, breadth and height respectively. During Kara ceremony every member of the younger generation grade, khela, a generation one step below the generation grade that is on power brings one ritual spear sharpening stone (boulder), arumda, and puts it out side *Kara Ileka*. Each member of this grade has to prove his strength by lifting the stone up to his shoulders in front of elders who sit behind the wall. Elders sprinkle milk using *saganta* tree leaves on each youngster who has successfully lifted the stone up to his shoulder. One of these stones is put outside the gate to represent the generation where as the rest are put, after the ceremony, at the Kantas mora and the residence of the *senqeleta’s* (generation group leader).

Currently, there are 6 arumda stones out side Ileka gate. These stones should have been 25 to represent the known 25 generation grades. However, some of these stones were removed for unknown reasons.

*Kara Parguta* is another main ritual gate of Kanta Parguta. It has 2.2m, 2.9m and 2.5m width, breadth and height respectively. It also has a decayed wooden arc.
IV.4.4. Section and Kanta (Ward) and homestead organization

Section and Kanta (Ward) Organization

As Hallpike (2000: 98) puts it, “... each town is divided into two named sections, and these sections are further subdivided into wards, kanta.” Explaining the reasons why towns were divided into sections Hallpike continues, “... there are some traditions about the places of the origins of the founders of the different wards or the immigrants who have moved there.” Likewise, Lower Dhokato has two sections namely Ileka and Parguta. Of course, these two sections of Lower Dhokato include Hulme and Burkuda. This division mostly functions during Kara ceremony as will be discussed below.

Most of the time, new kantas are established by extending an additional wall to delineate them. Sometimes, however, more than one kanta could be found in a single wall enclosure. In addition, Kantas are again divided into sub-divisions called Kanta Ibita, meaning division that includes close neighbors who borrow fire from each other.

IV.4.5. Main Moras and their significance

Lower Dhokato has nineteen moras. Its two sister towns have their own moras too. Nevertheless, some of the moras in the three towns provide services to all three communities during common rituals such as the Kara ceremony.

A. Mora Alawudla

Mora Alawudla is one of the most sacred sites of the Dhokato cluster. It is located northeast of Lower Dhokato at coordinate N 5°21'.011" and E 37°25'.457". It is the main cultural and ritual mora of the three sister towns. Each generation grade of the Dhokato cluster towns gathers here, after they are blessed by their ritual head/regional poqolla, the Bamale. There are many ritual sharpening stones, arumdas,
at this open mora. Before going out to the ritual hunting, during the ceremony of the power transfer between the generation grade members, the three sister towns’ members sharpen their ritual spears on these stones.

At the end of the ritual hunting, the generation grade hangs the animals’ skull, often a lion’s or leopard’s skull, on a living tree at the same open mora. This tree, locally called Kobda, has edible beans which are the size of coffee beans; but as this tree is in a sacred site, the tree is itself sacred so its beans are neither eaten nor cut. Each generation grade erects a Dhaga-hela at this sacred mora as part of the conclusion of the Kara ceremony.

**B. Mora Kolalta**

Mora Kolalta, an open mora located 50 meters east of Lower Dhokato at 5°20'24.3'' latitude and 37°25'44.4'' longitude is the oldest mora in Dhokato. It is said that, elders of the pre Dhokato scattered settlers that latter formed the Dhokato cluster gathered at this particular meeting place for negotiations. This meeting place gradually became multi-functional permanent public assembly place, mora. This mora, has a big acacia tree in the middle of the open field.

Mora Kolalta properly belongs to Ileka section of Dhokato cluster. However, during the Kara generation transfer ceremony it is used by all Dhokato sister towns. The Kara ritual dance of the whole Dhokato cluster towns is officially opened and concluded at this mora.

On the other hand, like Mora Chemote in Burquda, the land where this mora is located belonged to the Pata family of Saudhata clan which was the head of the Ileka group of settlers. Because of this, the Ileka group erects an Olahyta (generation) tree at this mora before erecting the same in its own ward mora. An ox is sacrificed at the ceremony.
Mora Kolalta has four gates. When the Kara dance ceremony commences, the two sections\(^5\) of the Lower Dhokato cluster, known as Porguta and Ileka enter into this mora through the eastern gate. However, when the Kara ritual dance ends, these groups exit through different gates. The generation grade group of Hulme town and the Parguta section of Lower Dhokato exit through the northern gate. The town of Burquda itself exists through the southern gate; whereas that part of Lower Dhokato those are included in the Ileka section exits through the western gate. After they depart from this mora, each group also initiates the Kara dance ceremony in main moras of its respective kanta.

On the other hand, Mora Kolalta is related to another annual youth’s cultural ceremony called Ilika Kitota, the cultural significance of which is not clear. On the western corner of Mora Kolalta there is a small open space where youngsters erect Olayta katayta, also called Ilika Kitota, every September.

C. Mora Dhetate\(^6\)

Mora Dhetate is located in Lower Dhokato and it is the main cultural mora of Dhokato’s three sister towns. Ritual ceremonies like Kara and Khora Bara (annual communal meetings of the community members of the three sister towns) takes place at this mora. Generally, every ceremony of the three sister towns take place at this mora. Due to this Mora Dhetate has a huge dancing and assembly space.

D. Mora Chemote

Mora Chemote, in Burquda town, is the main swearing mora of the three sister towns. The land where Mora Chemote is located had

\(^5\) As mentioned earlier, Lower Dhokato walled town has two sections: Porguta and Ileka. Amongst the four kantas of Lower Dhokato, two kantas, Kanta Haqele and Kanta Otentita are in Porguta section; whereas, Kanta Lehayte and Kanta Otaya are in Ileka section. Besides this, Parguta includes the town of Hulme; whereas Ileka includes the town of Burquda.

\(^6\) Mora Dhetate is belongs to Lower Dhokato walled town. However, it is also common ritual and cultural mora for the three sister towns.
belonged to Pata. Pata is said to have spiritual power called hadha. Because of this spiritual power, Pata was believed to curse and inflict death on an evil doer by pouring boiled coffee, called hola. For this power quarreled families used to bring sorghum, milk and butter to Pata. Pata mixed these with a ritual plant called Hansabata and smeared the ritual stone with it. He then sprinkles the mixture in all directions to purify the land. After he performed this purification ritual, he brings the quarreled families together, and make them eat together from the sacrificial milk, butter and sorghum. Due to this historical situation, Mora Chemote has continued serving as a common swearing mora of the three sister towns of Dhokato until now.

Fig. 13 Plan of Mora Chemote and its high walls, Dokatu.
Besides this, before the conclusion of Kara ceremony, all members of the three sister towns have to perform Kara ritual dance at this mora.

**E. Mora Koptale**

Mora Koptale is located in Lower Dhokato. It belongs to Kanta Odantita and is the main mora of Parguta section of Lower Dhokato. Power transfer discourses by each generation grade group of the three sister towns take place at this mora. After the power transfer decision is made, the *senqeleta*, leader of the generation grade, takes the power symbolizing stick from the retiring generation grade at this mora.

During this power transfer ceremony there is a ritual called *dhota*. For dhota ritual a bull is suspended high on four logs carried by the power taking generation members and is stabbed at its nape from underneath by a ritual spear, *oran*, by member of a ritual family named Bamale. This bull has to be red/brown in color and should be very healthy with unbroken horns. The ox’s meat is grilled and eaten by the gathered people; whereas its cud and skeleton are buried under the
olayta tree. Its skin is striped and given to the generation grade members who then tie it around their arms. After this the stick symbolizing the power transfer is handed over by the out going generation grade to the power taking generation grade. Elders sprinkle milk and *teff* grains on the generation grade members. The milk is sprinkled to wish fertility, while the *teff* grain is sprinkled to wish population increment to the society.

**D. Mora Kitola**

Mora Kitola, an open mora out side Hulme walled town is one of the most important ritual moras in the Dhokato cluster and including the whole Karate Region. It is an annual communal assembly mora for the whole of Karate Region. As informants say, the Karate Katana-Aba Timba, elders and generation leaders gather at this mora once in a year, on the month of January, to discuss matters related to the successes and/or failures in Karate Region. It is here that the people of the Karate Region take blessing from the Aba Timba. Here, the Aba Timba prays for rain, good order and fertility of the society.

On the other hand, this mora, every 18 years the generation grades of Hirba and Kalkusa erect Olayta trees to commemorate their generation.

During the Kara ceremony the last ritual dance of the three sister towns takes place at this mora before it is concluded at Mora Kolalta, where it started. During this ceremony the killed ritual animal's skin is hung on a big acacia tree at center of this mora.
Dara and Olanta Walled Towns (Paletas)

IV.5.1. Background

Dara and Olanta paletas are located to the East and South of Karat town respectively. They are amongst the oldest Konso walled towns (with Patangalto, Idigile, Gamole and Gabo) in Karate Region after Lower Dhokato, Burquda, Gandima and Hulme, according to Kimura (2004:87). Dara covers an area of 68,587 meters square and its outer most wall has a length of 1048 meters.

The earliest settlers were said to have emigrated from Ala and Aylota. Before the walled town of Dara was established these settlers lived at a place named Marmare, which is a few hundred meters west of Dara, with Olanta and Patangalto people. However, because sudden fire repeatedly devastated the town of Marmare, the inhabitants of Marmare decided to part and establish separate towns of Dara, Olanta and Patangalto, all of which are in Karate Region. However, as Kimura (2004:89) says, “Although Olanta, Patankalto and Dara were founded from the abandoned settlement of Marmare; Dara appears to be autonomous, with its own *poqolla tuma*.”

IV.5.2. The stone walls

Dara is surrounded by six rings (one central and five extension walls) of very impressive high walls that reach as high as 4.5 meters at some places. As Dara is located in the eastern edge of Karate region, it is believed that these walls were made to deter attacks from the neighboring Borana and Guji. The dimension of rocks that are used to construct the walls reaches a maximum dimension of 81cm at some places.
Map 13. Olanta Walled town major features

Map 14. Dera Walled town major features
The walls of Dara town are extended towards the east and south, a direction from which enemy attack was eminent. The outermost wall of Dara is currently under restoration. The cost of restoration is covered by a local culture and environment conservation association called PARKA.

Olanta Paleta has 4 walls. The Maximum external wall height, width and breadth of Olanta’s walls is 320 cm., 200 cm., and 320 cm. respectively. The length of the outer most wall is 1176 meters and covers an area of 85,556 meters.

IV.5.3. The main gates

Dara Town has four main gates in its most outer wall. These gates (Kara Ćerbeqa or Baleda, Kara Bilalto, Kara Balambale and Kara Chirato) are all located on the northwestern and western side of the town. This decision was made, may be, because the eastern side of the town is the direction of enemy attack.

Kara Ćerbeqa or Baleda (located at 5°20′00.4″ latitude and 37°26′45.4″ longitude), with 195cm width, 230cm breadth and 220 cm height is the main ritual and cultural gate. This gate is used by hunters to enter into the town after the ritual hunting. Warriors enter into the town, with trophies, after successful war against an enemy.

Kara Balambale (located at 5°19′51.7″ latitude and 37°26′46.5″ longitude), with 186, 300 and 243cm width, breadth and height respectively, is the main cultural gate used after the residents of Dara gave support to extinguish fire incidence in other towns. This gate, with external wall height of 3.86m, has 4 decaying wooden arcs. The fifth extension wall that starts southeast of Amerayta Gate, gate of the second inner wall, ends here. The other main gates are exit to Bakawule, Karate, other towns, markets and agricultural fields.

Olanta-

Olanta town has 3 main gates in its outermost external wall. These are Kara Dide or Kara Olanta, Kara Mille and Kara Ileya. Kara Dide or Kara Olanta is the main ritual gate. It is located on the northern side
(5°19'50.8" latitude and 37°26'03.0" longitude) of Olanta Town. One has to climb uphill through a zigzag path to reach the entrance; and thus it is difficult to run up to the gate because one will be pulled back by gravity. Currently this gate is the main exit to Karat Town. On the western inside corner of this gate there is Mona, a circular space used to keep cattle that come to the village to stay or for sale. The wall at this gate is gate is 170cm. wide, 280cm. thick and 240cm. and high. Formerly the gate had wooden arcs, of which only 2 decayed wooden barks survive currently. Kara Mille is an exit to water point for women. Kara Ileya was an exit to farm, water and toilet. Formerly, this gate was an exit to a demolished open cultural mora, Kitoma, where many cultural ceremonies were performed. During the military regime the local administration had demolished this mora to make a play ground for children.

Olanta town is unique for it has a small gate, funa ela (5°19'44.4" latitude and 37°25'58.8" longitude), entrance of the spirits. This gate, 220cm below the top of the external wall, is 100cm. high and 50cm. wide. According to oral tradition, spirits gather at night in a forest (dhina or mura pora-ela) near the wall and come to the main swearing mora, Mora Futsukama, at night when every villager is asleep. As spirits do not use gates used by human beings, this gate is not closed at night like the other normal gates.

IV.5.4. The Moras

Dara has 9 moras; 8 moras inside the walled town and one ritual mora out side the walled town located about 55m northwestern Kara Čerbeqa/Baleda.

Mora Čerbeqa (5°20'02.4" latitude and 37°26'47.3" longitude) is the most sacred mora of Dara. Hunting rituals are performed here and the skulls of the killed animals are hung on a tree in this mora. The bones of the killed animals are also ritually buried at this mora. This mora has 2 olahita trees and a big dancing area. As it is the case with
the other ritual moras, adult women are not allowed to walk across this mora, though it is allowed for virgin girls. Furthermore, only heroes are allowed to touch the ground of this mora with their spears.

Mora Shirto ((5°19′57.8″ latitude and 37°26′44.3″ longitude) is a sacred oath making place of Dara walled Town.

Mora Shirto belongs to Shirto, the poqalla tuma of Dara who comes from Kertita Clan. This mora is an open mora but as it is a ritual mora, it has 2 Olahita trees that are actually fallen. The main swearing mora of the Dara, Patangalto and Olanta towns is Mora Futsukama located in Olanta.

Olanta has 15 moras. Nine of these have paftas, men’s sleeping houses (including mora Silaha whose pafta is under reconstruction), and the other six are open moras (without pafta). Mora Katale has a small open space and is children’s mora. This mora has one short olahita tree and 3 small Daga-dirumas. As there is no other walled town with children’s mora, Olanta town is unique in this respect.

Mora Qayrana (5°19′54.0″ latitude and 37°26′02.9″ longitude), is located out side Olanta, and cut by the Jinka - Bakawule road. This mora formerly belonged to Gelabto Kanta, is not functional these days. But its 4 Daga- dirumas are still standing.

Mora Ćanqara (5°19′46.1″ latitude and 37°26′00.02″ longitude), belongs to Kanta Haqele, is the main cultural mora of Duraite, i.e., the common name of Olanta and Patangalto. There are 4 Daga-hela and 8 Olayta trees at this mora. There is children’s sacred timba (sacred drum) inside the pafta of this mora.

Mora Dhakasayto (5°19′45.5″ latitude and 37°26′04.7″ longitude) is another mora that houses three timbas named Tusaro, Turka and Paka. These timbas belong to the walled towns of Jarso, Olanta, Patangalto and Dara. On the other hand, Duraite’s (i.e., Olanta and Patangalto) timba and kasara, horn of gazelle, are housed in an individual’s house. When there is an outlaw in the towns of Olanta and
Patangalto the timba is beaten and the kasara is blown as a sign to mobilize community members to catch and jail the outlaw.

Mora Futsukama (5°19′45.3″ latitude and 37°26′03.3″ longitude), which actually belongs to Kanta Orgipa, is the main the swearing site of the towns of Olanta, Dara and Patangalto. During the imperial times, people who came to Bakawule district court to give testimony took oath at this mora. Mora Futsukama is an open mora with 3 Dage-dirumas, 7 Olahita trees and 3 Arumdas (ritual spear sharpening stones). The mora is divided into two halves by a foot path. One of the erected stones, called dhaga shahi, is taller than the others and is the main swearing stone. As fertile women are not allowed to walk across the mora, they use the external path to cross the mora.

IV. 6. Mecheke Walled Town (Paleta)

IV.6.1 Background

Mecheke is located on the hill of the same name, between Mechelo in the north, Saugame in the south, Gaho in the west and Gera and Aba Roba to the east.

The time of establishment of Mecheke Paleta is not clear; but it can be related to the formation of its three kantas. It has only one elongated outer wall. Local informants say that there were three small towns Aybala (a small abandoned walled town with two walls), Enna (another abandoned small walled town with one wall) and Kendale (a small non-walled town north of the current Mecheke) before Mecheke was established. As the people in these three small towns were few in number, they were vulnerable to attacks from the neighboring Gera, Saugame, Mechelo and Busso communities. To counter this, elders of the three small towns reached at common understanding and decided to merge and form a large and strong walled town, which was later named as Mecheke. The three kantas of Mecheke namely, Koora, Kalame and Qućale/Kuchale represent the former scattered three small communities.
IV.6.2. The Walls and Gates of Mecheke

IV.6.2.1. The walls

Mecheke has only one east-northwest elongated wall which has a length of 1322 meters delineating an area of 68,841 meters square.

The wall is constructed mostly using slug like iron rich baked volcanic clay/rock dug from the surrounding.

As in all Konso walled towns, the wall height varies according to the topography of the area, meaning the wall is high where the ground is flat and is short where it is hilly. As such, at the western side of the
The topography of western part Mecheke is flat and the wall is high, whereas on the eastern side the it is hilly and the wall is shorter.

Though the wall is ruined at some points (such as at point $5^\circ 17'24.0''$ latitude and $37^\circ 23'52.3''$ longitude), generally it is in good condition.

At some places the wall has been recently opened to make outlets for newly established modern structures like school, dry latrine pits, peasant association office, etc.

IV.6.2.2. The gates

Mecheke has five main gates: Kara (Fulla) Galgalaya in the southwest, Kara (Fulla) Gerero in the east, Kara (Fulla) Kotoqe or Koria/Kereha and Kara (Fulla) Gendala or Fulla Banna in the northeast and north, and Kara (Fulla) Dhakaysato/Dhakahiseto or Kalame in the south. Kara Kerero is the main sacred/ritual hunting gate. It also functions as a watching point.

Besides these, there are many additional small openings called and phoqosha; these small openings are used as outlets to water points, latrines, school, etc.

IV.6.3. Moras and associated features

Mecheke has eleven moras. Except Mora Kutiye and Mora Harta the other nine moras have paftas (or magana as they are called in Fasha Region). Some of these moras have public assembly and dancing places, Olayta trees and Daga-dirumas, whereas the other few are minor moras with out the mentioned cultural features. Five of the moras, Mora Harta, Mora Orbaqishe, Mora Kerero, Mora Kutiya and Mora Koria belong to the whole of Mecheke community, whereas the other six are Kanta Moras.
a. Mora Orbaqishe, Main Cultural Mora

Mora Orbaqishe is the main mora in Mecheke where all kinds of cultural events like kurayla or game dances are performed. The area it occupies is 26.3m by 16.4m. It has a pafta which is in a very good condition. It has nine small and big Olayta trees and one Daga-diruma (135cm tall) at the center of the dancing place. It also has seven decayed wooden statues, wakas.

b. Mora Harta, Main Mora of Heroes

Mora Harta (5°17′25.3″ latitude and 37°23′53.9″ longitude) belongs to Kanta Kalame and the whole Mecheke community. All heroes who hunted big games like lion and leopard have to come here with their trophies. The skin or skull of the hunted animal stay at this mora for three days before it is moved to the heroes house. Women are prohibited from entering it. This mora does not have pafta. There are seven Olayta trees and seven Daga-helas at the center of the mora. The tallest of these Daga-hela is 187cm tall and the shortest is 23cm tall. In addition there are two Daga-dirumas , six decayed wakas and a bunch of twelve Olayta trees in this mora.

c. Mora Kerero

Mora Kerero (5°17′24.2″ latitude and 37°23′59.7″ longitude) also belongs to Kanta Kalame and the whole Mecheke community. This mora covers 14.45m by 13.6m area. It also has a new Pafta with a pot on its apex, a dancing and assembly place, two maturity/ritual spear sharpening stones.

This Mora is located immediately at the entrance of Kerero Gate, a gate through which hunters enter into Mecheke from the east. As Kimura (2005:43) says, “men who distinguished themselves in warfare or slew lions were known as heroes. They were buried in prominent places, often near or in moras.” The burials at the southern outer corner of Kerero Mora are good example to this. This small rectangular area was the
burial site of distinguished heroes of Mecheke Paleta. In the past there were many heroes’ burials with wakas, memorial statuettes and gulena, simple memorial woods erected on burials. Currently there are only two heroes’ burials of circular stone walls. One of these burials belonged to a hero named Galgalo Awo. Galgalo Awo, who died 20 years ago is remembered for killing a leopard. The second burial belongs to a hero named Dhebo Hashume who died sixteen years ago still remembered for killing a lion.

There is also one Daga-diruma at this burial site with 130cm, 26cm, and 33cm height, breadth and diameter respectively. It is not known for which generation grade this stele was erected. In addition to these, there are six wakas at this burial site. According to informants many other wakas that used to exist at this burial site were stolen.

d. Mora Koria, Mora Dhawura (Main Swearing Mora)

Mora Koria (5°17’28.7″ latitude and 37°23’50.9″ longitudes) belongs to Kanta Koria. However, it is also Mora Dhawura, main swearing mora of the whole Mecheke community. The area it covers is 26.7m by 32m. As the pafta’s roof is decaying, the community of Kanta Koria is gathering grass to conserve it. The mora’s wide circular dancing floor has a bunch of eleven Olayta trees and one Daga- hela at its center.

e. Mora Kutiye: Olayta Erection Initialization Mora

Mora Kutiye (5°17’27.8″ latitude and 37°23’48.8″ longitudes) is a small open mora (with an area of 11.4m by 5.9m) that belongs to Kanta Kalame. This mora does n’t have a pafta. It has a bunch of nine small Olayta trees and one Daga- diruma at its center. Erection of Olayta trees of the whole community of Mecheke begins here by ritually slaughtering an ox. This mora is sacred because Mecheke’s ritual leader named Aba Timba dwells adjacent to it.
IV.6.4. Cultural and modern features around Mecheke Paleta

There are various cultural/traditional as well as modern developmental features/infrastructures surrounding the Mecheke walled town. These include cultural features such as hawula (burial site), dina and lida (threshing field) and modern developmental and religious structures such as Peasant Association Office, Church, school, health post, dry latrine pits and floor mills.

In addition to the burial site described above, there is a second burial site adjacent to the outer eastern wall. This burial site extends to both sides of a road that leads to Kerero Gate and Mora Kerero. According to local informants, this burial site used to have many wakas. Due to theft, currently there are only four wakas at this site. There are also three Daga- dirumas at this site.

As it is the case and tradition of Konso walled towns, there is a trace of Dina groove surrounding Mecheke paleta. However, the dina is thin and at some places it has been totally destroyed in favor of agriculture.

There are also two hardas, traditional ponds, both of them a few hundred meters southwest of the walled town. The furthest harda, located with in the Qufa sacred forest (Qufa is the Regional Poqola of Keena, one of the three Regional Poqolas of Konso), is named Katable Harda. The other traditional pond, named Harda Irbaqale (Irbaqale Pond), is located a few meters west of the elementary School. The construction date of this harda is unknown.
IV.7. Burjo and Gaho walled towns (*Paletas*)

IV.7.1. Background

Burjo and Gaho are located in Keena Region, one of the three major regions of Konso. Gaho is located about 12kms. southwest of Karat and Burjo is about 15kms. southwest of Karat. These towns have closely allayed to and pay allegiance to Qufa, the main *poqolla tuma*, the regional poqolla (chief) of the Keena Region. These two towns are important for their unique stone house construction, Daga-hela erection and for their harvest ceremony and generation grade organization.

The period of establishment of Burjo and Gaho is not clearly known. As informants say, they were built before ten generations ago. According to Kimura (2004:87) Burjo “... is supposed to be the oldest Fasha [Keena] settlement.” Both towns were burned during the incorporation of Konso into the Ethiopian Empire and during the Italian occupation, according to informants.

IV.7.2. Walls, Gates and Moras

Burjo and Gaho are small towns with a single wall each. Burjo’s wall measures 872.5 meters and the town covers an area of 28,614 meters square. On the other side Gaho’s wall measures 799.5 meters and the town covers 40,145 meter square area. Compared to the walls of the other Konso towns, Burjo’s and Gaho’s walls are shorter. This may be because there was minimal enemy threat. The maximum external wall height of Burjo is about 2.55m at Kara/Mora Moyle (5°17′16.2″ latitude and 37°21′03.0″ longitude).
Burjo has 2 kantas, 4 moras and four gates. **Mora Gugna** is located outside the Burjo paleta and it is the main public mora of Burjo. There are 3 Daga-helas at the center and an Olayta under a big ritual
tree located at the northern corner of the Mora. These 3 erected stones (steles) were erected for the three generation grades: Melgusa, Kalgusa and Hirba. Informants say that these 3 steles were erected in immemorial past, probably when the generation set system started. Unlike in Karata region where each generation (hela) erects its own Daga-hela after initiation, helas in Keena region do not erect new daga-hela after initiation. There are 3 small flat stones under these 3 Daga-helas (erect stones/stele). The leaders of each generation grade sits under its respective Daga-hela to bless its respective generation grade after the hela initiation ritual.

**Mora Soge** (5°17′24.9″ latitude and 37°21′08.1″ longitude) is the main sacred swearing mora of Burjo. This mora is also an open mora where ritual of the harvest festival called *tuta* is performed.

**Gaho** has 9 moras and 6 main gates. Unlike the moras of Burjo, which are without pafta, most moras in Gaho have pafta.

**IV.7.3. Kimbilita** (stone houses) and **Lokutatokide** (houses standing on a single pole)

The paftas (maganas) of Gaho are of two types. The first type is common also in Karata region and the big house is grass thatched. The second type of magana is entirely constructed using stones, ie. the entire wall and the roofs are constructed from rocks. This type of house is called Kimbilita.

This type of magana construction is a unique to Gaho, and of course, Keena tradition. Stone built house construction is not restricted for public gathering places; individuals also construct entire houses by using stones in many Keena villages. These houses are often low and blending to the landscape, and are very difficult for an outsider to locate.
In Burjo and Gaho there are also houses built standing on a single pole. These houses are called *Lokutatokide*, meaning one poled. These houses often serve to store precious items like butter, honey, and important cultural, ritual and historical relics.

**IV.7.4. *Tiga Timba*, Drum House**

Though its explanation is not clear the number three has association with many cultural features in Burjo. The generation grades, Melgusa, Kalgusa and Hirba are related to three families: Hirba with Tabena Family, Melgusa with Kugna Family and Kalgusa with Soge Family. As mentioned above there are three daga-helas in Burjo. Besides these, there are three *shorogutas*, three *dhawuras* (priests), and three timbas (drums).
Burjo has three timbas that represent the three generation grades of Keena. The three timbas of Burjo, called *Keeha Timba Keenna*, are housed in a small pafta, located at coordinate 5°17′22.7″ latitude and 37°21′05.4″ longitude, standing on four poles in an open and reserved field inside Burjo town. The generation grade on power takes out its respective timba in June, during wheat harvest, and beats it while encircling Burjo town three times. This ceremony is called tuta (harvest, ceremony/festival). Burjo town is the pioneer of tuta festival in Keena region. Until one generation grade finishes its term on power that is in 18 years, the other timbas that belong to the two generations are not taken out.

**IV.8. Busso walled town (Paleta)**

**IV.8.1. Background**

The town of Busso differs from the other Konso walled towns for it is not fully encircled by a wall. Busso town surrounds a conical ill named Pola hill (5°18′48.1″ latitude and 37°25′18.1″ longitude). Pola hill is steep in the southern and northern sides and has an altitude of 1520m.

The age of Busso town is not clearly known. According to informants, immigrants from Ala, Koyra/Burji and Borana/Gergere came 9 to 11 generations ago and settled at different sites. These immigrants were composed of Kertita (who emigrated from Ala), Argamayta (who emigrated from Koyra/Burji) and Saudhata clans (who emigrated from Borana/Gergere). The first immigrants, who belonged to the Argamayta clan, came to Konso led by a clan chief named Arja who settled at a place named Pishmalli. The second emigrant group, the Argamyta clan, came from Koyra/Burji ten generations ago. The third group, the Kertita clan led by a clan chief named Nabulo, came from Borana before nine generations ago. As informants say, however, there were also other families from varies other places but these families are now forgotten.
Whatever the case, these dispersed settlements later came together and to establish the town of Busso.

E. Watson (1998: 88) has a related version of Busso’s settlement history as follows: “Busso was not always a compact walled village, at a time memory there were five dispersed areas of settlement: Teshmalli, Iffa, Pishmalli, Polokuta and Polataa. However, it is said that living like this was not good, the villagers did not thrive, and so they decided to come and live together (A.D. 1996). Each old ‘village’ brought soil from their area and they were mixed together and buried in what became Murgito mora, the most sacred mora in Busso. The main pogolla families in Busso were present in those times, and some of their old homesteads and mora can still be seen, though covered in vegetation. Some ceremonies are still carried out in these original residences.” Watson (1998: 128) also says this resettlement took place before 8 to 10 generations ago.

IV.8.2. The walls and town boundary

As mentioned above Busso is not a completely walled town. The circumference of the town including the walls is 1859 meters long and the town has an area of 116,398 meter square. Busso has marked outer walls at some points; at other places there are no walls and the boundary of the town are sloppy hills.
Map 18. Busso walled town and associated features

Fig 16. Busso Walled town, view from East
The walls of Busso were constructed at areas where the ground has relative flatness. For example, the northwestern side of the town, which is relatively flat, has a small outer wall which has a length of 45.8m. 18m of this wall has been destroyed to open an entrance for vehicles into the town. So, currently only 27.8m. long wall is intact. This wall, which extends to both sides of Kara Sessaida (5°18′54.1″ latitude and 37°25′15.0″ longitude), has 1.90m. height and 3.50m. thickness. On the other hand walls were constructed where there are gullies. A wall that has 34.80m. length on both sides of Kara Dhimalo (5°18′51.8″ latitude and 37°25′18.5″ longitude) was constructed where there is a gully. This wall has 3.0m. height and 1.20m thickness.

A new road that runs from south and passes on the eastern side of the town extending to its northern limits is Busso’s boundary to the east. The steep hill that is bounding Busso on its western, southwestern and northwestern sides also serves as the town’s boundary in those directions.

IV.8.3. Section and Kanta organization

Busso has three main sections named Pishmalli, Sessaida and a smaller one, Iffa. These three sections formerly had traditional administrators entitled Iligayte. These sections are related to the settlement history as mentioned above and have cultural significance. For example, “there is a rule that a man born in one section is not allowed to live in the other, although he can marry a woman from either” as Hallpike (2000:98) says. On the other hand these sections also have allegiance to the two regional poqollas, Kalla and Bamalle. As Watson (1998: 107) remarked, “… Busso and several other villages have split allegiance. In Busso this can be seen territorially as half of the land in the village (Sessayta) is thought to be under Kalla and half (Pishmalli) under Bamale, which derives from a time when they were supposed to have lived in and occupied these areas. The men’s house in Jeleqele
mora which is on the boundary between these areas symbolizes this...
The men’s house is a large thatched roof over wooden support pillars on a stone stage. Behind the pillars, away from the pathway is a raised way, which is however extremely difficult to go along because of the low thatch of the house. This raised walkway is supposed to be the boundary between the territories of Kalla and Bamalle. During the nine days of mourning on the death of Kalla, all the people from Sessayta must walk on the upper pathway-staying on the Kalla’s land.”

Busso Paleta has five kantas, namely Kanta Deracho, Kanta Itigle, Kanta Nalaya (these four kantas constitute the Pishmalli section of the town), Kanta Kolalta and Kuile (these two kantas constitute the Sessaid Section of the town). Though Iffa is one of the three historical sections of Busso Town and still retain this status for cultural functions, in the modern semi-peasant Association administrative division it has been lumped with Kanta Itigle, as does Kanta Deracho and Kanta Guile. However, for cultural purposes, such as burial, they are different entities.

IV.8.4. The gates

Busso has six main gates and sixteen moras. The main gates of Busso serve as section gates and Paleta gate. Kara Bishmala (5°18′39.2″ latitude and 37°25′26.9″ longitude), which leads to Mora Morguto, is the main ritual gate of Busso.

**Morguto Gate** is 1.60m wide and 2.40m high. At the vicinity of the gate, outside, there are about 31 standing steles. Formerly there were wakas but they are all decayed or stolen. On the western side of the gate there is a new house roofed with corrugated iron sheet. Formerly the hut was thatched with grass. This house is used to keep corpse of youngsters until burial time. There is also this type of corpse house besides Sessaida Gate.

**Kara Sessaida**, Sessaida Gate, which is also the main gate of Sessaida section, is another main gate of the western wall. At the vicinity of the outer gate of Kara Sessaida there is a bushy *miskata*, a site where
the corpse of Nabulo, head of the Kertita clan, stayed until he was buried in his clan cemetery. This miskata is sacred site as Nabulo is one of the founding fathers of Busso. Sessaida Gate has wall on both sides. At the gate the wall has 2.0m. height and 3.60m. width. There is one Daga-diruma within the gate. The other gates are Section and kanta gates.

IV.8.5. The Moras

As mentioned earlier Baleda Busso has 16 moras.

Mora Deracho (5°18′44.2″ latitude and 37°25′20.8″ longitude) is Busso’s main mora, mora guta. The mora’s pafta is thatched with grass to the ground. Unlike other paftas, which stand on few poles, this old style mora has complete wooden wall. Deracho Mora is 30.40m long and 14.50m wide. It has a wide dancing floor, 3 Olayta trees and 7 Daga-helas.

Mora Murguto (at coordinate 5°18′39.0″ latitude and 37°25′27.7″ longitude) is the main ritual mora, mora dhawura. This was the first mora to be established in Busso by the founding fathers of Busso. This mora is located out side Busso at the eastern side. It is 22.0m long and 61m wide.
Fig. 17 Every day life within the walled towns- Drinking Chaka (the traditional beer).
1. Evaluation of Key Management Issues

During the course of data gathering in the areas selected and identified for the nomination, the team has logged its observations which are relevant to the future management of the site. These observations were latter compared with the key issues identified by the management committees at the local (Paleta) and at the district levels, and by the stake-holders meeting. They were further brought for discussion at the general meeting of all the management committees together and were accepted as key issues.

a- Protection and conservation of the Konso living culture and cultural landscape:
   - the forests, stone terraces, walled towns, cultural spaces and associated features (mora, pafta, holayta, daga-hela, daga-diruma, waka), hardas, the kara and the tuta rituals.

b- Abandonment of the traditional ritual practices. The socio-cultural, economic and traditional politics relay on these rituals:
   - Currently, most walled towns partially follow the traditional ritual practices;
   - the Kara rituals which have educational and research significances are abandoned except in Dokatu and its sister Paletas.
   - the Tuta tanks-giving ritual is being abandoned.

c- Deforestation of the traditionally protected Dina grooves around the walled towns:
   - the Dina are used to serve as traditional latrine area;
   - the traditionally planted and used plants to combat fire are cut and thus the security system is off;
   - Fire wood reserve is depleted as the Dina are under threat.
d- Impact of introduced religion on the traditional belief system and on the conservation of cultural properties:
- there are, sometimes, tensions between the two;
- the Konso material culture is strong so that the religious divide is usually defused;
- so far there is no difference of opinion between the two on the conservation of the terraces, ponds, stone walls and Mora;
- difference is observed mainly during the Kara and the Tuta ritual ceremonies.

e- Environmental protection using the traditional system:
- need for aforestation of the traditional forests using indigenous trees and plants:
  - grow junipers for their ritual use and for building the Mora;
  - grow finger cactus in the Dina for its use as fire extinguisher and for soil conservation;
  - grow the shrubs and conserve them for use as medicinal plants.

f- Discourage harmful practices:
- to be discouraged are the habits of killing animals and cutting trees.

g- Inventory and documentation of all cultural properties within the landscape:
- the tangible heritage properties are abundant and are related in most cases with the intangible aspects of the Konso heritage;
- use and research is possible only through thorough inventory.

h- Need for further research on the Konso heritage properties:
- the Konso people as an example of the struggle against and harmony with nature;
- the living cultures are enlightenment to present and future generations;
- the rituals and associated practices are unique;
- conservation and protection should be based on research.

i- Need to define knowledge based tourist destinations within the Konso country:
- as the areas to be visited are alive with cultural activities, caution is needed not to interfere with the day-to-day lives of the people.
j- Build tourist friendly environment with in the towns:
   - better sanitation, cultural sleeping facility within the Mora, organization of cultural evenings.

k- Make sure that the construction of the Konso museum is a reality.

l- Need to train local community guides.

m- Need for an information center in the administrative town, Karat.

n- Work according to the tourism plan agreed with UNWTO.

o- The inability of the community to benefit from its heritage properties:
   - this has led to reluctance in conservation, hostility towards tourists and distrust in the government agencies.

p- Visitor management benefiting the community.

q- Impact of modern education on the traditional culture:
   - community members who went to mission schools abandon the traditional ways;
   - and they show neglect to the traditional knowledge in medicine, astronomy and do n’t participate in the ceremonies- as demonstration of modernity.

r- Balancing modern ideas with traditional knowledge:
   - need to understanding the importance of traditional knowledge in terrace techniques which proved to be better suited for the Konso terrain;

s- Construction of roads, schools, health centers, mills, expansion of towns and quarry activities are affecting the terraces, traditionally respected ritual points and objects, the forests and the Dina.

t- Modern education pressure on the cultural future of the youth.

u- Need to understand the Land use Proclamation by the community:
   - the poquola still retain their traditional power; and their traditional use of the forest and land is sometimes contested by some community members.

v- Impact of development and population pressure on the heritage:
   - there will be a need for legal document to create harmony between development pressure and and heritage protection.
Thus the key issues identified fall into the following seven Main Issue Categories:

1- Conservation,
2- Inventory and documentation,
3- Research and education,
4- Presentation and interpretation
5- Sustainable tourism,
6- Development pressure,
7- Legal issues.
## 2. SWOT ANALYSIS

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<th>Opportunity</th>
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| 1. Conservation  
a)1 - The Paleta (walled towns) and the stone walls |  
- The communities still practice their traditional life style with in the towns.  
- Damage to walls is addressed communally.  
- Communities are determined to retain the integrity of walled towns. |  
- Response to conservation need is not prompt.  
- Corrugated metal roof houses are being built with in the walled towns. |  
- The growing attention of visitors to see the stone walled towns can encourage the community to continue the traditional conservation system. |  
- Development pressures such as water pipe lines and population pressure leading to town extension may threaten the walls at some spots. |
|  
a)2 - The Mora and other cultural properties within the Mora space |  
- Communities continue to maintain Mora using the traditional conservation system.  
- The cultural function of the Mora is still active.  
- The Daga-Hela (man-hood stones), Holayta (generation trees) and Waka (funerary statues) are protected by the community. |  
- Response to maintenance of pafta thatched roof is slow because of shortage of grass. |  
- As the main centers of cultural activities, the Moras can be used as main tourist focus; and thus conservation by the community is warranted. |  
- Growing price of wood and grass makes conservation difficult. |
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|       | − Damage to cultural property can easily be identified. | − The Waka are not presented properly and are left in the open to weathering.  
− The Waka are not to be conserved according to the tradition. | − The Waka) are admired by all for their unique artistic style; thus they can be used as tourist attractions.  
− There are strong government regulations protecting the cultural property | − The Wakas are damaged by weathering and stolen by dealers |
| b) -The stone terraces (Kawata) | − The terraces are the means of the Konso lively hood.  
− Conservation need is deeply rooted.  
− The Kanta (ward) labor system is used for conservation. | − Near the main roads, stones from old terraces are sometimes removed for construction of houses. | − The government agricultural policy supports terrace conservation.  
− Recognition by others of the Konso soil and water conservation is encouraging factor. | − Road construction is affecting the terraces along major road.  
− Development of new towns and market centers and expansion of existing towns is affecting the terraces by claiming terraced farms |
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<th>Weakness</th>
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<th>Threats</th>
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</table>
| C) The Harda (ponds) | − They are actively used by the communities.  
− The use of the Harda continue for cattle  
− Conservation and maintenance is done collectively by the communities. | − They are not fenced; hence exposed for damage by cattle.  
− Maintenance is not prompt. | − The need for water conservation is growing; thus the hardas will always be necessary. | − Future maintenance may involve use of cement and concrete.  
− New water wells are being developed for potable clean water. Thus the harda may be used only for water. |
| D) The traditional forests and grooves (Dina) | − The traditional forests are respected by the communities for they contain important ritual spots, and the junipers from the forests are used for cultural ceremonies.  
− The use of the forests is determined by the chief priest.  
− New indigenous trees are left to grow.  
− New indigenous | − The Poquola burials in the forest are not fenced. | − The government environment policy legally insures the protection of the forests.  
− The bio-diversity can attract researchers.  
− The burials in the forests have Wakas on them (wooden statues) that could attract visitors.  
− Environmental institutions could further contribute | − As wood source for construction gets scarce, theft is threatening the forests.  
− The Wakas in the forests are threatened by theft. |
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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
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</table>
| Dina                       | - Euphoria plant from the Dina is still used as fire extinguisher.  
- The Dina serves as fire wood source.  
- The Dina still serve as traditional latrine space.  
   - Dina groove planting is not frequently practiced as it used to be in the past.  
   - The destruction of the Dina has led to difficulties in the traditional latrine system. | - Dina groove planting is not frequently practiced as it used to be in the past.  
- The Dina serves as fire wood source.  
- The Dina still serve as traditional latrine space.  
- As an effective fire fighting plant and source of fire wood, the Dinas are being planted again. | - As an effective fire fighting plant and source of fire wood, the Dinas are being planted again. | Land previously used for the Dina is claimed by the young as population increases. |
<p>| II. Inventory and Documentation | - Earlier works by researchers have                                                                                                                                          | - There is no data base of past registers.                                                                 | - The Cultural Policy supports the                                                                 | Information gathered may                                                                 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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<td></td>
<td>documented some of the heritage properties. - The communities are supportive of further inventory of their cultural properties.</td>
<td>- There is no exhaustive inventory of the Konso heritage properties. - There is no trained personnel in place.</td>
<td>inventory and documentation of heritage properties. - Many researchers and institutions are interested to take part in the inventory and documentation activities in Konso.</td>
<td>disclose the whereabouts of heritage properties for theft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Research and Education</td>
<td>- Many scholars have worked on Konso culture and heritage. - The Konso are hospitable to researchers. - The integrity of the cultural landscape further attract researchers. - The cultural landscape is dynamic and educational.</td>
<td>- Research results are not yet disclosed to the community and/or not translated to local language.</td>
<td>- There are many scholars who are very interested to study the Konso cultural properties. - The Konso Museum project will attract researchers and students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IV. Presentation and Interpretation</td>
<td>- Access is possible by car to most places. - The Konso are ready to provide their cultural objects for museum display. - Every community has</td>
<td>- No interpretation facility in place. - The sanitary condition of the walled towns is not adequate.</td>
<td>- The New museum project will provide the necessary space and facility. - The Konso traditional conservation system is attracting local</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue</td>
<td>Strength</td>
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<td>a cultural property to be presented to tourists.</td>
<td>- No posters and signs to indicate the location of properties. - Some community members have no sympathy for outsiders.</td>
<td>tourism. - The UNWTO tourism plan has laid the ground for presentation and interpretation. - The UNWTO supported Information Center could serve as a venue to introduce the Konso culture.</td>
<td>- Better road bring in more tourists. - New settlement along the new roads decrease population pressure on the walled towns. - Education opportunity open for the young - insure that the local communities are benefiting from new infrastructures.</td>
<td>- Roads violate the integrity of the landscape. - Towns expand at the expense of terraces. - Quarries destroy terraces and ritual spaces. - Ritual spaces and objects could be destroyed. - Increased abandonment of traditional customs by the young.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Development Pressure

- Better communication facility ensures easy access to heritage properties. - Schools, health centers, flower mills, water tankers, latrines, churches are constructed outside of the traditional walled towns

- No consultation between the administrators and the community before constructions. - No impact assessment done prior to constructions.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Weakness</th>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VI. Sustainable Tourism</td>
<td>- The communities are conscious of the benefits of tourism.</td>
<td>- The tourist facility is not adequate</td>
<td>- The government is committed to use tourism in its poverty alleviation program</td>
<td>Too many tourists can impact the integrity of the landscape.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- There is already a significant international awareness about the Konso culture.</td>
<td>- There is no mechanism to benefit the community</td>
<td>- Commitment of the local Administration.</td>
<td>Tourist flow within walled town could violate the peace of the community.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- The UNWTO is engaged in tourism development plan for Konso</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Recognition of the unique Konso cultural landscape by UNESCO could support in the promotion of sustainable tourism.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- The construction of new eco-loges will keep tourists longer in Konso so that they can visit more of the Konso landscape.</td>
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</table>
3. Guiding principles

1. To insure the conservation of the cultural properties and maintain the integrity of the cultural landscape.
2. To document and protect the heritage properties within the cultural landscape.
3. To insure the pride of the community in its intangible and tangible culture;
4. To support the communities in their presentation efforts of the cultural properties and insure a better visitor satisfaction.
5. To insure that the community play a major role in tourism management and tangibly benefit from improved visitors experience.
6. To support the community to revive the traditional cultural manifestations such as the Kara and Tuta, which are being abandoned.
7. To create a balance between the traditional life style and development pressures.

4. Management Objectives and Strategies

Based on the consultations and identification of key issues with the local communities, management committees, Konso district administration and stake holders, the identified issues are grouped in to 7 major Key Issues that are addressed in the SWOT analysis above. The management objectives thus arise from these issues.

Objective One:
To insure the continuity of the local community conservation traditions and involve stake holders in the process.

The cultural properties are being conserved by the local community members following the traditional system. There is no any
other conservation activity outside of the community’s culturally regulated maintenance system.

- The terraces are generally well conserved although the expansion of towns, road constructions and quarries are impacting them at some places.
- The walled towns are currently under threat by the construction of houses with corrugated metal roofs. Nevertheless, the stone walls, the Moras and associated cultural objects are being maintained following the traditional way.
- The burials (usually with Wakas) located outside of the walled towns are not well kept and shrubs have grown around them which are used for latrine.
- The Wakas are vulnerable for theft and thus use of fences is recommended.
- The Dina are cut and disregarded, but are being replanted again in some places.
- The forests, although suffered from serious deforestation, they are now protected by the community. Nonetheless, theft of woods is prevalent.
- The Harda (ponds) are in good state of conservation in some Palettas, where as at one instance (Harda Dokatu), it was observed that it needs a very serious maintenance and conservation work. The Hardas are not fenced and are open for trampling and destruction by cattle.

The strategy to achieve the above objective include:

a. The community led conservation tradition of the heritage properties has to be encouraged.
b. Support the conservation efforts of the community through financial support from the local government, regional government and at the national level.

c. Raise the necessary funding to support the conservation efforts of the community through NGOs that are currently working at the community level.

d. Approach Tour Operators and environmental organizations so that they could financially and professionally participate in the conservation efforts.

e. Initiate awareness creation programs to the community members on the importance of their culture and its place in comparison to other cultures elsewhere.

**Objective Two:**

**To mobilize and involve the local communities to locate, list and document all heritage properties within the cultural landscape.**

- Past inventory works have documented a fair number of the heritage. Nevertheless, because of the prevalence of theft and natural destruction the existing data has to be verified.
- Active rituals are still practiced. The locations of some of these rituals are documented. The remaining undocumented sites will need to be mapped and the data has to be compiled.
- Cultural objects that are needed for future museum display and collection have to be collected following appropriate procedures.

**The strategy to achieve the above include:**

a. Use community participatory approach.

b. Let the community have the registers under their custody.

c. Train able community members in inventory work and documentation skills.
d. involve NGOs, Research Institutions, Regional and National cultural institutions and stake holders to support the effort financially and professionally.

**Objective Three:**

**To insure that research on Konso culture is used to educate the community and the information is included in the educational program of the local schools.**

- The Konso culture has been subject to various research works but none of these results were communicated to the community.
- The importance of the traditional knowledge of the Konso may be neglected through time unless communicated to the young.
- Informing the community about the importance of the values of their culture in comparison to other similar cultures can provide them with a sense of belongingness to the greater global cultures. This could provide them an additional drive to conserve their cultural landscape.

**The strategy to achieve the above include:**

a. Presentation of research results to the community in the form of posters, exhibitions, conferences create awareness that in turn help as a conservation drive.

b. Education through museum display of cultural objects and their presentation to the community and outsiders.

c. Introductory texts on the value of the Konso cultural landscape can be prepared.

**Objective Four:**

**To provide for a system for heritage presentation which insure its protection and satisfy visitor interest.**
So far there is no any systematic heritage presentation approach. This has to change as the communities are becoming increasingly conscious of the importance of heritage presentation. The Konso culture, although relatively well studied, has not been well promoted so far. The Konso are known mainly for their terraces. There will be a need to bring the full picture to all through all mediums.

Discussions with the community Management Committees showed their interest to make their cultural properties accessible to visitors with adequate information.

Now there is a plan to build a Konso Museum through a joint partnership of the communities, Konso district administration and the Embassy of the French Republic in Ethiopia.

An Information Center is planned to be constructed in Karat town (Konso Administrative center) with support from the UNWTO as part of its Konso “Community Tourism Project”.

**The strategy to achieve the above include:**

a. Prepare and place road side panels with the appropriate visitor information at the junctions of feeder and main roads.

b. Improve the sanitation condition within the walled towns.

c. Prepare tourist tracks and build traditional guest houses (Pafta) to make tourists stay longer among the community.

d. Ensure the construction of the new Konso Museum as planed.

e. Ensure the UNWTO supported construction of Konso information center as planed.

f. Prepare posters and brochures that focus on major aspects of Konso cultural landscape.

**Objective Five:**
To generate benefit to the community through sustainable and responsible tourism.

- Tourism is a developing economy in Konso. Tourists are attracted by the walled towns and the terraces. Since Konso is located on the road running south, to the tourist preferred Southern Omo area, many tourists stay there for a short visit.

- The visitor fee is collected by the government Finance Office. So far there is no direct benefit to the visited communities. This issue has been addressed by the Regional Government and it is decided that part of the revenue is to be directly used by the community. It is noted in the Regional Tourism Bureau Directive for Konso, (pers. communication from Mr. Urmaile Chewle, Head of the Konso Tourism Desk) “...it has been decided that the visitor fee is 50 Birr per person and between 10 and 20 Birr for a car depending on its seat capacity. 70% of the fee goes to the community where as the remaining 30% is shared between the Konso Tourism Office (15%) and the Regional Tourism Bureau (15%). The use of the community share is defined as follows: The use of 40% of the revenue is to be decided upon by the community, whereas 30% is to be used directly for conservation purposes. How to equitably use this revenue has to be addressed.

- The UNWTO supported tourism plan has entered in to action and it is expected to ensure the benefit of the community. And yet the community management committees have to insure that the integrity of the cultural landscape is maintained.

The strategy to achieve the above include:

a. Encourage the regional government to enable the community to directly benefit from the tourist revenue.

b. Train community guides who can participate in the tourism business.
c. Encourage artisan community cultural object productions which could be sold to tourists as souvenirs.
d. Organize cultural evenings with in the Paletas to make tourists stay longer.
e. Support the local Tourism Office to achieve the action plans of the UNWTO and encourage them to project for future plans.
f. Prepare brochures for tourists that touches on Konso values and ethics.

**Objective Six:**

**To create a balance between the changing life conditions brought by development pressure and the integrity of the cultural landscape.**

- The expansion of the road that goes to the South Omo has negatively impacted the terraces, ritual spaces and objects. Part of this impact could have been mitigated had there been an impact assessment and consultation with the local communities.
- Feeder roads that lie between major roads and the various walled towns (Paletas) are constructed following the terrace contours.
- Quarry activities have an impact on the terraces.
- Small trading centers and towns are emerging and expanding along the roads.
- Population increase and economic change of the community members are leading towards a different life style in the traditional towns. It has also led to the expansion of the existing walled towns and formation of new settlements near them. The rise in the price of grass and wood has also led to the construction of houses with corrugated metal.

**The strategy to achieve the above include:**
a. The future expansion of roads have to be approved and inspected by the community management committees.
b. As the development of new trading centers impact the cultural landscape, their future development has to be regulated by the Community and District Management Committees and enforced by the Konso Administration.
c. To allow the natural expansion of the walled towns in their traditional way by letting new constructions only outside of the walled towns.
d. Stop construction of any new corrugated structure within the walled towns.

**Objective Seven:**

**Set the necessary ground to provide for the legal enforcement of the management objectives; and thus community based protection of all the heritage properties within the cultural landscape is insured.**

**The strategy to achieve the above include:**

a. Draft a legal document specific to the protection, conservation and use of the Konso cultural landscape.
b. Insure the ratification of this legal document by the House of Representatives of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS).
CHAPTER VI
Implementation of the Plan, Phased goals and Action Plans

6.1. Mechanism for the Implementation, Phased goals and Management zones

The implementation mechanism involve the full commitment of and direct participation of individuals, government institutions and NGOs. The local community is the main body responsible to implement the plan. The mechanism to be followed and bodies responsible for their implementation are thus outlined based on their roles in conservation, inventory and documentation, research and education, presentation and interpretation, sustainable tourism and development pressure.

A. Conservation

1- The Community- The local communities through their management committees do perform the following:

Continuous activity:

- Hold periodic meetings (once every three months) to assess the state of conservation of the heritage properties within their respective territories.
- Outline priorities for conservation needs based on urgencies.
- Encourage the community members to continue the traditional conservation culture.
- In the case of difficulty encountered by the community to do conservation (due to cost implications), present a request for support to the Special Woreda (district) management committee.
• Use as an appropriate as possible, revenues from tourism for conservation purpose.

2- Konso Special Woreda (district) Administration-

**Short term- (2008-2009)**

a. Implement the decision of the Regional Government Tourism Bureau to allocate portions of the tourism revenues to communities; and support the communities in its use.

b. Ensure that the tourism revenue share allocated by the Regional Tourism Bureau be used for the conservation purposes.

**Medium term-(2010-2011) and continious**

• The Special Woreda management committee, based on requests from the community management committees, report of the Konso Information and Culture Office and its own observations, allocate budget for conservation works which are financially difficult for the local communities.

• When the conservation task is heavy, prepare and submit a proposal for support, to the Regional Culture and Information Bureau.

• Solicit support for conservation from other sources such as Embassies who support culture and environment, and tour operators and other stake holders.

3- NGOs

PARKA: As a local NGO whose aim is to support culture and environment protection,

**Short term- (2008-2009)**

• it continues its support to the communities for the conservation of terraces, aforstation of the Dinas (grooves)
and support the protection of the traditional forests through the traditional PARKA work groups.

- PARKA will also support the community in their clearing and fencing efforts of the burial areas where the wakas, Dagarum and daga-hela (erected stones/stele) are located.

Konso Development Association (KDA)

**Medium term 2010-2011**

- it can start supporting conservation efforts of harda (water ponds) and terraces.

4- The government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS).

**Short term- (2008-2009)**

- As the highest regional administrative authority, it issues decrees relating to the protection of the Konso cultural landscape.

**Medium term-and Continious (2009/2010-??)**

- It allocates the necessary budget for conservation needs as requested by the Konso Special Woreda administration.
- Provides the necessary capacity building for the conservation efforts.
- It oversee that conservation works are done accordingly and appropriately.

5- Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

As the highest government authority in the country concerned with the conservation of cultural heritages, it provides support as requested.

**Medium term and Continious (2009/2010-??)**
• Provides the necessary capacity building as required and requested by the Regional Bureau of Information and Culture or the Konso Special Woreda administration or Management Committee.
• Request and allocate the necessary budget from and as approved by the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance, for conservation.
• Solicit support from other major stake holders in the country and from abroad.
• Over-look that the conservation works are done following the appropriate methods that do n’t affect the integrity of the cultural properties.

B- Inventory and Documentation

**Short term- (2008-2009)**

• The Konso Special Woreda (district) Information and Culture Office involve the local communities to locate, list and document all heritage properties within their boundary.
• The Office perform the verification of the existing inventory data of Wakas with support from NGOs, such as PARKA, the regional Culture and Information Bureau and ARCCH and the Embassy of the French Republic in Ethiopia and its collaborating institutions.

**Medium term-(2010-2011)**

• The Konso culture and Information Office include the inventory and documentation plan in to its Five Years Strategic Plan of the Konso Culture and Information Office and that of the Special Woreda.
• The Konso Information and Culture Office with support from the competent Regional and Federal institutions, involve
local communities to identify and plot on map all ritual locations (actual and abandoned but remembered). It also start to record the intangible aspects of the Konso culture in collaboration with researchers.

C- Research and education

**Short term- (2008-2009)**
- The Konso Culture and Information Office ensure that research results that touch on Konso culture and landscape are communicated directly, when ever possible, by the researchers themselves; and periodically by the Office, to the community members.

**Medium term-(2010-2011)**
- The Konso administrative council integrate to its Strategic Plan, the commencement of an educational program in Konso schools, that focus on aspects of the Konso culture and its place in relation to other cultures.
- The Regional Government, through its Information and Culture and Education Bureaus, support the educational program and provide material and professional support.
- The Federal ARCCH is to provide capacity building including training of the educators, publications and audiovisual materials.
- Donors supporting cultural protection programs (such as the French and Neitherland Embassies) will be approached for further support.

D. Presentation and interpretation

Presentation and interpretation is done at various levels.

**Short term- (2008-2009)**
• Execute the joint UNWTO and Konso Tourism Desk Plan, to build an Information Desk at Karat town (annexed), p.45, action 3 of the plan). At the same time,

• prepare brochures, by knowledgeable Konso scholars, for tourists focusing on major aspects of the Konso heritage properties. The “Scientific Committee” appointed by the Konso Administration for the Museum purpose can perform this task.

• Insure that the French Embassy and Quai Branley Museum supported new Museum serve as a center for the presentation of the Konso culture.

• The Action Plan put forward by the UNWTO (annexed) for the presentation and interpretation will be in force until 2009. Thus actions on: Developing and diversifying the visitor offer (pp.53-55), Guide development and training (pp.55-56) and Communication and promotion (pp.57-58) be implemented by the community and the Konso Tourism Desk with support from the regional Tourism Bureau and the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Medium term- ?(2010-2011)

• The community will be ready to receive tourists by

• keeping the Paletas as clean as possible which include sanitation system.

• create friendly environment for visitors.

• Ensure that road side panels are placed at major junctions: at Awassa, Shashemene, Sodo, Arba-Minch and Karat (Konso) towns; and at the junctions of the smaller roads leading to the individual Paletas (walled towns). This is to be done through the joint collaboration of the Regional Tourism
Bureau, the Konso Tourism Desk and the local communities to be visited.

E- Sustainable tourism

**Short term- (2008-2009)**

The action plan developed by the UNWTO (annexed) has addressed the mechanism for its implementation until 2008, extended to 2009.

There will be a need for a follow-up and continuation of this action plan based on success.

- The Konso Special Woreda Tourism Desk will ensure the implementation of the Tourism Action Plan.
- The concerned community management committee implements the plan at the community level.
- The Community Management Committees define, with approval of the community, the use of the tourism revenues which has been decided by the Regional Tourism Bureau to be used by the communities.
- The implementation of the above is ensured by the regional Bureau of Tourism.
- identify local crafts that are preferred by tourists and engage in their production.

F- Development pressure

**Short term- and continuous (2008-2009)-??**

- The Konso Administrative Council assure that the heritage properties with in the defined landscape are protected, legally.
- The “Draft Legislation” protecting the cultural landscape will be endorsed and passed by the Parliament of the Regional Government:
- the direction that traditional towns take in time is set;
- the placement of infrastructures is to be decided by the community.

G- Legal protection for the cultural landscape

**Short term** *(2008-2009)*

- Draft a legal document that protects the Konso cultural landscape and insure its continuous and regulated use by the communities.
- Ratify this document by the government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples regional State.

2. Monitoring

Monitoring is done at various levels. The local community management committee of the individual paleta (peasant associations) is to perform a periodic monitoring of changes with in its own territory and report, monthly, to the Special Woreda (Konso district) Chief Administrator who call a quarterly meeting of the district Management Committee and present the report. The latter, based on the community management committees (and? stakeholders reports), conduct a quarterly verification and monitoring visit of all activities on the landscape and present its report and recommendations to the Konso district administration. The Konso district administration then reports, bi-annually, to the regional government Bureau of Culture and Information, who in turn presents its annual report to the Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples Regional State. The Bureau equally sends a copy of its report and requests for additional support to the Federal Center for Research and conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the tourism plan, the UNWTO prepared and approved document is operational
(Annexed). The Konso Tourism Desk, SNV, Regional Bureau of Tourism and the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism are responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the tourism aspects.

2.1- How?

As the community management committee members are members of the community living in the individual Paletas, monitoring at the community level is a continuous process. Thus no change can happen unobserved and this is reported to the Special Woreda Management Committee.

Based on the above, the Konso Special Woreda (district) Office of Culture and Information and the Management Committee with support of the Konso Administrative Council conduct physical inspection of the areas that need inspection, on quarterly basis following the Ethiopian budget year calendar. This is done at the end of September, December, March and June. (It is to be noted that the the Konso Chief Administrator is the chairman of the Management Committee where as the Head of the Culture and Information Office is its Secretary.) In the case of any development that affects the properties, the Office and the Committee enforce legal measures to mitigate the problems. In the case of any natural hapsard affecting the properties, action is taken by involving the community and promptly reported to the regional government bureau of Information and Culture. The regional government Bureau of Information and Culture conduct two monitoring visits to Konso, one at the end of December and another one at the end of May. Based on this physical inspection, direct contact between the local communities and review of the reports filed, the Bureau presents its report including its recommendations to the Regional Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (S.N.N.P.R. S.). A
copy of the annual report and recommendations are sent to the ARCCH for further assistance as needed.

2.2- Stake holders role

NGOs working to support, protect and conserve the cultural heritage are obliged to report to the Woreda Management Committee of any issue that they may encounter affecting the property. The latter conduct prompt physical inspection at the area affected or threatened. Other stakeholders such as tour operators, agricultural or development agents, law enforcement organs, etc... report to the District Management Committee and the Konso District Administration of any harm suspected or materialized that may endanger the cultural property.

To perform the above

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>-Prepare a condition register (entry) book at every paleta.</td>
<td>Community Management Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Hold regular monthly meetings of the community management Committees.</td>
<td>Community Management committee Chair man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Make a community management committee physical inspection of the landscape based on need.</td>
<td>Community management Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Asses at the end of every month and list condition based on observation; and send the report to the Konso Chief Administration.</td>
<td>Chairman and Secretary of the Community Management Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-Call members of the district management Committee for a quarterly meeting.</td>
<td>Konso Chief Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Carry out physical inspection of areas according to need; And evaluate performances relative to the action plan.</td>
<td>District management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Create a data base of periodic conditions of heritage properties; and log performances relative to the action plan.</td>
<td>Konso Head of Information and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Prepare a bi-annual report (at the end of December and May) to the Bureau of Information and Culture of the Regional Government.</td>
<td>Head of Konso Information and Culture Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Carry out physical inspection and monitoring of the cultural properties and performances indicated in the action plan; (January and early June) and report to the government of the SNNPRS at the end of the physical year.</td>
<td>Regional Bureau of Information and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Carry out physical inspection of the area based on reports and requests of the Regional Bureau of Information and Culture and take the necessary measures.</td>
<td>Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural heritage (ARCCH) Ministry of Culture and Tourism</td>
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</table>

3. Evaluation and reports

The Konso people are currently exposed to the ever growing influences of change. The development influences that are touching everybody in the world are also felt in Konso. Physical access to areas that were difficult few years ago is no more a problem. Schools are opened at
every paleta (peasant association). Health centers, flower mills, churches are indicative of the fast changing life styles. Population growth is aided by better health care. The traditional towns are growing and elements of change that may be regarded as indication of the betterment of life condition is altering the some aspects of the cultural properties. It is therefore, important to periodically evaluate the present plan in light of the above.

The Plan, although it is meant to serve for the next 5 years, in reality, it is an intermediate management plan. The inscription of the Konso cultural landscape in the World heritage List could provide the ground and the drive for the responsible bodies to periodically evaluate and update the plan.

It is believed that some unforeseen developments in Konso and its surroundings could provide the ground for a need to revise the plan. People living in areas adjacent to Konso core land proposed for the nomination are likely to ask for inclusion of their area and may revive their old traditions. It is also possibility that the famous Konso paleoanthropological site (KGA) protection is insured and the need to integrate it in to the Konso cultural landscape may be indorsed by the community. In addition to the above, the periodic management committees meetings may raise issues that necessitate an update of the plan. The applications of the action plan could influence the evolution of the future conservation, protection and use of the Konso cultural landscape.

It is there fore recommended that, at the end of every year an annual evaluation meeting be held at Konso Karat town. This evaluation meeting is to be organized and chaired by the Head of the Regional Bureau of Information and Culture in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH). The Konso Special Woreda (district) administrative council, the district Management Committee, the
community management committees and other stake holders will attend the meeting. In addition to evaluating the annual performances, the meeting shall address new issues that arise with the question of the integrity of the cultural landscape and other factors that may need mitigation.
### 4- Action Plan

1. **Conservation**- To insure the continuity of the local community conservation tradition and involve stakeholders in the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Responsible body</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Regular inspection &amp; maintenance of the terraces, walls, Moras, Hardas, burials in all paletas</td>
<td>2008 and continuous, regular</td>
<td>Community Management Committees</td>
<td>Konso Woreda (district) Management Committee -Office of Culture &amp; Information, -PARKA - Konso Development Association.</td>
<td>Regular inspections are done and quarterly reports prepared by each Paleta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Obtain budget from the government to support conservation efforts</td>
<td>Starting 2009</td>
<td>Konso Administrative Council</td>
<td>Regional Bureau of Information &amp; Culture</td>
<td>Budget obtained to support community conservation efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Support Community efforts in the conservation of Moras, terraces,</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>PARKA (Association for the protection of Konso natural and cultural)</td>
<td>The Christensen Fund (TCF), USA</td>
<td>Conservation work done in Dera and Busso in 2008, and in Dokatu, Gocha,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walls and Hardas and aforstation of the Dina (forests)</td>
<td>Properties</td>
<td>Fasha (Burjo) and Jarso in 2009.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Start to use the ‘tourism revenue portion’ allocated by the Regional Bureau of Tourism for Conservation of tourist attractions endangered such as the Wakas. | Starting 2009 and continuous | - Community Management Committees  
- The Konso Information and Culture Office  
- Konso Tourism Desk  
- District Management Committee | - Portion of the revenue is used for conservation of Wakas. |
| - Collected and selected Wakas to be displayed in new Konso Museum will be conserved | 2008 | - Konso Office of Information and Culture | - National Museum of Ethiopia, (ARCCCH),  
Embassy of the Republic of France (Addis Ababa) through the Quai-Branley Museum (Paris)  
- Bureau of Information and Culture (SNNPRS). | - Wakas will be conserved and presented for display. |
2. **Inventory and Documentation** - To mobilize and involve the local Communities to locate, list and document all heritage properties with the cultural landscape.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Responsible body</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Verity and up date the earlier register of Wakas produced in 2000</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information and Culture</td>
<td>- Local Communities, - Embassy of the French Republic (Addis Ababa), - ARCCH, - Bureau of Information and Culture (SNNPRS).</td>
<td>- An updated data base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identification and documentation of Konso cultural objects for museum display and reserve</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information and culture (through the Konso Scientific Committee established by the Konso Administration)</td>
<td>- Local communities, - Bureau of Information and Culture (SNNPRS), - National Museum of Ethiopia (ARCCH), - Embassy of the French Republic (Addis Ababa).</td>
<td>- Collection of cultural objects with a data base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity building for community members in Inventory and</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information and Culture</td>
<td>- Bureau of Information and Culture (SNNPRS), - ARCCH.</td>
<td>- Local community members trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>2009- and continuous</td>
<td>- Community Management Committee</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information &amp; Culture, Bureau of Information and Culture (SNNPRS), ARCCH.</td>
<td>- List of the heritage objects and their locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Inventory and listing of all Wakas, Daga-helas, Daga dirumas, and ritual places</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mapping of the above</td>
<td>2010-2012</td>
<td>- Bureau of Information and Culture (SNNPS)</td>
<td>- Local Communities, ARCCH, Christensen Fund (?)</td>
<td>- A comprehensive cultural map of Konso.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Research and Education - To insure that research on Konso culture is used to educate the communities and the information included in the educational program of the local schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Responsible body</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Initiate communication with schools and start informal educational programs focusing on the values of heritage and conservation needs</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>PARKA</td>
<td>- The Christensen Fund, - Konso Office of Education, - Konso Office of Information and culture.</td>
<td>- Heritage clubs in schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use the new Konso museum as a venue for periodic lectures by researchers</td>
<td>2009-Continuous</td>
<td>Konso Office of Information and Culture</td>
<td>- Researchers working on Konso heritage.</td>
<td>- Number of lectures given /Year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hold periodic presentations on conservation and Konso values in the individual Paletas.</td>
<td>2009-Continuous</td>
<td>Konso Office of Information and Culture</td>
<td>- The Community Management Committees, - The regional Bureau of Information and Culture, - ARCCCH.</td>
<td>- Number of presentations made/year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Presentation and Interpretation - To provide for a system for heritage presentation which insure its protection and satisfy visitor interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Responsible body</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Insure that the Konso Museum construction is finalized and it becomes operational as per schedule.</td>
<td>2008/9?</td>
<td>- Office of the Chief Administrator of the Konso Special Worked (district)</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information and Culture, - The Communities - Regional Bureau of Information Culture, - ARCCH.</td>
<td>- Museum in place and ready for tourists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Insure that brochures and posters are produced and used</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>- The Konso Scientific Committee (appointed by the Konso administration)</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information &amp; Culture, - Regional Bureau of Information &amp; Culture, - ARCCH.</td>
<td>- Brochures and posters produced and used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Insure that the construction of Konso Information Center is completed and it becomes operational</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>- Konso Tourism Desk</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Trade and Industry, - Konso Administration, - Regional Bureau of Information and Culture, - Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism.</td>
<td>- The facility will be in place and commence its function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Prepare and place road side panels with the necessary</td>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>- Konso Tourism Desk</td>
<td>- Local Communities, - Konso Administration - Regional Bureau of</td>
<td>- Panels in place on the road at Awasa, Shashemene, Sodo,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td>Responsible Authorities</td>
<td>Arba-Minch, and Karat; and at junctions leading to the individual Paletas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the sanitation condition of the walled towns (prepare clean latrines, clean the wall areas and paths)</td>
<td>Starts in 2009-2010 and continuous</td>
<td>- The community Management Committees</td>
<td>- Community members, - Konso Office of Information and Culture, - Konso Tourism Desk, - Konso office of Health, - Konso development Association, - PARKA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create friendly environment for visitors</td>
<td>2009 and continuous</td>
<td>- The Community Management Committees</td>
<td>- The Community members</td>
<td>- No tourist harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build and organize traditional guest houses (Paftas) for tourist overnight use in the traditional towns</td>
<td>2009 and continues</td>
<td>- The Community Management Committees, - Konso Tourism Desk</td>
<td>- Konso Office of Information and Culture, - Konso Administration, - PARKA, - Konso Development Association.</td>
<td>Traditional facilities in place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **Sustainable tourism**—To generate benefit to the community through sustainable and responsible tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Train local Community guides</td>
<td>2009 and continues</td>
<td>Konso Office of Information and Culture</td>
<td>- Regional Bureau of Information &amp; Culture, -ARCCH</td>
<td>- Local guides trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ensure that the tourist fee payable to the community has reached the community</td>
<td>2009 and continuous</td>
<td>Konso Tourism Desk</td>
<td>- Regional Bureau of Tourism</td>
<td>- Money paid to the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Support the community to decide on the use of the tourist fee</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Konso Tourism Desk</td>
<td>- Regional Bureau of Tourism</td>
<td>- Use plan in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identify traditional items that represent Konso culture and start to produce them for tourist consumption as souvenirs</td>
<td>2009 and continuous</td>
<td>Konso Tourism Desk</td>
<td>- Communities, -Konso Office of Trade and Industry.</td>
<td>- Souvenir items produced and sold by communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Development Pressure- **To create a balance between the changing life conditions brought by an avoidable development pressure and the continuity of the integrity of the cultural landscape; and mitigate these changes to conserve the cultural landscape.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation period</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural/environment impact assessment is to be done prior to any new development activities</td>
<td>2009 and Continuous</td>
<td>Office of the Konso Chief Administrator</td>
<td>-Konso Cabinet offices, -The Konso House of Representatives, -District Management Committee, -Community management Committee, -The regional Bureau of Information and Culture</td>
<td>-No activity without prior approval of the Konso Administration -Mitigative actions taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Integrate legal provisions in to the legal document providing for the protection of the Konso Cultural landscape</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>-The regional Bureau of Information and Culture, -ARCCI KCL</td>
<td>-Parliament of the SNNPRS, Konso Administrative Council, District management Committee, Community Management Committees.</td>
<td>-Need of Impact assessment and other provisions supporting conservation of property integrated in to the Legal Document</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Legal protection of the Konso Cultural landscape—Set the necessary ground to provide for the legal enforcement of the management objectives; and thus community based protection of all the heritage properties within the cultural landscape is insured.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<th>Partners</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft a legal document providing for the protection and conservation of the Konso cultural landscape</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Regional Bureau of Information and Culture, -ARCIKCL</td>
<td>-Parliament of the SNNPRS</td>
<td>Draft document will be ready</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorse the legal document and start its application</td>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>The parliament of SNNPRS</td>
<td>Regional Bureau of Information and Culture, -Konso management Committee, -Konso Parliament (people’s representatives), Community management Committees.</td>
<td>-Document approved and published.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Existing Management Structure

South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional Government

Other Sector Bureaus

Bureau of Information and Culture

Bureau of Trade and Industry

Other Sector Bureaus

Konso Administration

Other Sector Offices

Konso Information and Culture Office

Konso Trade, Industry and Tourism Office

Other Sector Offices

Konso Tourism Desk

Gocha Paleta

Dera Paleta

Dokatu Paleta

Gamole Paleta

Mechek Paleta

Mechelo Paleta

Burjo Paleta

Basso Paleta
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Multimedia


**LAMARQUE P. & DEMEULENAERE É.** 2007, *Dikkissama / The King never Dies / Le roi ne meurt jamais,* Paris, Little Big Men Production. DVD, Konso Dialogues, English/Français Subtitles, 73 min.

1= Kala forest
2= Poqola (Kala) burial
3= Poqoltita burial
4= Harda (pond)
5= track to Kala compound
6= isolated burial
7= burial for non-first born kala family members
8= water spring
9= newly planted Juniper
10= Gocha community entry point
11= Kala compound
12= funerary ritual space
13= Kala residence
14= Kala residence gate
15= Ulahita (generation tree)
16= Shila Duda-Tuta (grain sacrificial boulder)
17= Shila Gedena (ritual boulder of women during mourning)
18= Tiga Kenota (young male ritual place)
19= Mura-Tuta (point of grain ceremony)
20= Shila Saga (ritual boulder for conflict resolution)
21= Shila Saga (ritual boulder for victory)
22= Kiloda (sacrificial point against pests)
23= sacrificial point for fertility
24= sacrificial point for the Gamole community
25= first public appearance point of the Poqola
26= animal (goat) sacrificial boulder
27= grain sacrificial boulder
UN World Tourism Organization – ST-EP Programme

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project
and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia

Report of Mission by Dr Richard Denman, UNWTO consultant
December 2006
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This report is based on a mission undertaken by Dr Richard Denman, UNWTO consultant, between December 11 and December 22, 2006.

Special thanks are due to Mr Tesfa Teshome, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Mr Abdurahman Kibsa, SNV Ethiopia, and Mr Abdi Tenna and Mr Dessalegn, Tourism Parks and Hotels Commission, SNNPRS for making arrangements for the mission and participating in it. We are also grateful to Ms Almaz Beyero Hirbaye, SNNPRS Commissioner, for her support for the mission and forthcoming project, and to Mr Gezahegn Ayledo and Mr Derese Kochena and other staff within the Konso Special Woreda (District).

Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State
1 INTRODUCTION

ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty) is an initiative of the World Tourism Organization, launched in response to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Millennium Development Goals. In 2004 the UNWTO conducted a mission to Ethiopia which led to the identification of a set of possible projects to be supported through the initiative. One of these projects was the Konso Community-Based Tourism Project. Subsequently, the ST-EP Foundation approved a contribution to this project of 80,000 US Dollars, to be spent over two years.

The main objective of the project is to enhance local economic impact, and in particular community benefit, from sustainable tourism in Konso. A first outline of the project was drafted during the mission in 2004. In December 2006 UNWTO supported a further mission, carried out by its appointed consultant Dr Richard Denman, with the purpose of preparing a detailed work programme and administrative arrangements for the project, so that it could start at the beginning of 2007. This report provides the results of the mission and contains the work programme and other supporting information.

Overall coordination of the project will be provided by the regional Tourism, Parks and Hotels Commission (TPHC) for Southern Ethiopia and the project will also be supported by the national Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Technical Assistance will be provided by the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV). SNV has already been working with the Konso Special Woreda (District Council) and the Konso Tourism Desk to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of tourism and identify priorities for the forthcoming project. This report acknowledges and picks up on their work.

The Terms of Reference for the mission contained the following objectives:

- To formulate a detailed 2-year work programme for the implementation of the Konso Community-based Tourism Project.
- To make arrangements with development agencies, especially UNDP and the World Bank, in order to secure their contribution to the project.
- To provide inputs for an agreement to be signed with key stakeholders regarding transfer of funds and project implementation.
- To represent the UNWTO at the project inception meeting.

The ToR also required all meetings and activities to be written up in the final report.

In addition to the work on the Konso project, the mission was extended to include a visit to the South Omo area, as this is a high profile destination with many issues.

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2 The original mission report called the proposed project the Konso Community-based Tourism Project. It is suggested that the project might be renamed the Konso Community Tourism Project as the work ‘based’ seems somewhat redundant, and the project is tackling issues beyond the established concept of CBT (community based tourism). The project is about, and for, tourism which benefits and involves interaction with the Konso Community, and so this shortened title is appropriate.

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project
and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
related to the interface between tourism and various tribal groups requiring sound management, stakeholder engagement and planning for the future. It had not been possible to visit South Omo during the 2004 scoping mission, yet it was felt that this may provide an important location for a future ST-EP project, which could be linked to the Konso project as the areas and the issues are closely related.
The programme of the mission was as follows:

December 2008 –

Sunday 10th: Arrival in Addis Ababa

Monday 11th, Tuesday 12th: Meetings in Addis Ababa with Ministry of Culture and Tourism, SNV, GTZ, UNDP and various tour operators

Wednesday 13th: Travel to Awassa, meeting with TPHC. Travel to Arba Minch

Thursday 14th: Travel to Konso. Meetings with Konso Special Woreda and Konso Tourism Desk Officials. Visit to campsites in Karat-Konso, Dara village and the district primary school. Discussions with French embassy officials (museum-project), and manager of Parka (culture NGO).

Friday 15th: In Konso. Stakeholder workshop with over 25 participants to discuss the project and identify concerns and aspirations. Visit to Konso handicraft shop and to identified sites for museum and new hotel development projects. Meeting with Konso Tourism Desk and Konso Special Woreda to discuss financial arrangements for the project. Discussion with owner of St Mary hotel.

Saturday 16th: In Konso. Visits to Konso highlands and route to Doha hot springs; Gesergio community and possible campsite location; possible site for information centre in Karat; Jarso weaving village. Working group meeting to run through initial outline work programme.

Sunday 17th: Depart Konso – send off meeting with Special Woreda officials. Travel to Jinka, South Omo. Visit to Jinka Museum and discussion with director, South Omo Research Centre. Discussions with local tour operators and representatives of the guides association.

Monday 18th: Journey through part of South Omo. Observation of three different tribal groups. Visit to weekly market in Turmi (Hamar tribe) and discussion with local guides. Meeting with Turmi local administration officials. Visit to lodge/camp in Turmi and discussion with manager; visit to Hamar village.

Tuesday 19th: Meeting with officials of the South Omo zone administration in Jinka. Return to Konso. Visit to local market in Konso. Pick up official of Konso Tourism Desk, who joins us for remainder of mission. Travel to Arba Minch.

Wednesday 20th: Travel to Addis Ababa. Meeting with World Bank.

Thursday 21st: Further discussion with SNV and Ministry of Culture and Tourism Officials. Inception meeting for Konso Community Tourism Project, including report back on mission activity and outline of next steps.

Friday 22nd: Depart Addis Ababa. End of mission.
The mission involved a considerable amount of time travelling, as Konso is over one day's drive from Addis Ababa. Moreover, the collapse of a river bridge on the only road access into South Omo, shortly before the mission, required a considerable amount of rearrangement and necessitated the team wading across the river and using new transport on the other side. However, in the end it was possible to complete the full mission as planned. Much of the time spent travelling was used constructively in sharing information and thoughts about the project.

2.1 Meetings in Addis Ababa and Awassa

Meeting with Ambassador Mohamoud Dirir, Minister of Culture and Tourism

The Minister underlined his support for the mission and the forthcoming project. He pointed out that tourism is now fully recognised as a tool for poverty alleviation in Ethiopia and is identified as such in the poverty alleviation strategy. Likewise, the tourism policy for the country pays full attention to poverty alleviation. This is important in persuading UNDP and other agencies of the relevance of the project.

He pointed out the particular relevance of tourism to poverty alleviation in the Southern Region. There is an important opportunity now to provide communities in this area with the framework and skills to benefit more from tourism, while at the same time promoting this part of the country as an 'alternative Ethiopia' offering a diversified experience complementary to the established northern historic route.

Meeting with Mahamouda Ahmed Gaas, State Minister, Ministry of Culture and Tourism

The meeting discussed the heritage assets of Konso and how they relate to tourism development issues. There is a need for a considerably improved structure behind the handling of tourism in Konso, including a ticket office, transparency in distributing income received, better interpretation and souvenir sales. There is an opportunity for the area to be exemplary in the establishment of community-based tourism.

It was confirmed that the Konso archaeological site will become part of the visitor attractions in due course, but public access is still restricted while the excavation and research continues.

The World Bank-supported project on handicrafts has provided improved knowledge on design of handicrafts in line with market demand. The results could be useful in Konso. Training based on the results of the project could be offered.

The approach of the Konso project should be to ensure local communities are engaged from the beginning to create a sense of ownership. The schools could be involved.

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
Initial discussion with Abdurahiman Kibsa, Pro-poor tourism development advisor, SNV

The discussion covered the existing structure of tourism delivery in Konso and the work of SNV so far in capacity building and institutional strengthening there. The parallel engagement of the Konso Special Woreda and the Regional Tourism Commission was explained. The need for coordination bodies at both a regional and a local level was identified. Abdurahiman said that he was unaware of relevant NGOs working in Konso other than cultural heritage NGO, Parka, which was relatively new.

The Konso Tourism Desk is the key body but officer capacity is limited and this may need to be expanded to fulfil the requirements of the project. The tour guides have a new association at the district level and this can be built up.

During the last year stakeholder engagement has been established through a Tourism Task Force. SNV has helped this through capacity building. This could provide the basis for a local working group for the project.

The community structure in Konso is based on 9 clans, each with a single leader. However, it makes sense initially to work with a small collection of villages which are accessible to Karat (the main town) and which are already being visited by tourists. The Konso Tourism Desk is already identifying the different strengths of these villages.

Abdurahiman spoke of his previous experience of the GTZ project in the Bale mountains and the successful educational visit already made there by some of the officials from Konso (but not yet by the KTD and community representatives).

A key issue for Konso remains harassment of visitors and the need to get more recognised income from tourism for the communities. There is also a need to improve information for visitors on how to behave.

NB Abdurahiman later supplied two papers – Annual Progress Report of the Konso Tourism Development Assignment, and Possible Actions for the Konso Community-based Tourism Project. Both are very valuable and have been used to inform the recommendations in this report.

Meeting with Girma Hailu, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP

Mr Hailu confirmed that tourism and the objectives of the Konso community tourism project were broadly in line with UNDP’s interests and policy. UNDP seeks to assist with capacity building and improving livelihoods. He did not believe that there was further need to discuss the details of the project as this had been explained before and he was aware of the approach. It was now a question of being clear about whether UNDP was in a position to provide a financial input. To address this, it would be necessary to seek an answer from his colleagues. He requested that an email be sent to the Resident Representative, Mr Sasserono, copied to the Economic Unit (Ms Vinetta Robinson and Mr Tomoko Nishimoto).

The following email was subsequently sent by Richard Denman:
Dear Mr Sarassoro,

I have just finished a meeting with your colleague Mr Girma Hailu, together with Mr Tesfa Teshome from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Mr Abdurahimn Kubsa of SNV. At the meeting Mr Hailu suggested that we send an email to yourself and Ms Vinetta Robinson at the Economic Unit.

The purpose of our visit was to follow up a meeting in August between Marcel Leijzer of UNWTO and Mr Hailu. At that meeting Mr Leijzer explained that UNWTO was initiating a project on community based tourism development with the Konso community in southern Ethiopia, and had allocated $80,000 over two years to the project. Additional funding is being sought from other bodies to support some small scale capital projects associated with the project (to the tune of around $50,000 to $100,000). We are very keen to establish whether UNDP can support this initiative financially. Mr Hailu had responded positively to Mr Leijzer, as the link between tourism and poverty alleviation is now firmly recognised by the Ethiopian Government. I am currently on a mission to develop the details of the project with the Konso community and I leave for Konso tomorrow. At my meeting with Mr Hailu I had hoped to be able to discuss the project further and get more understanding of the possible aspects of the project that could be of interest to UNDP. However, while confirming that the project was of interest to UNDP, Mr Hailu said that we really needed to put it before yourself and the Economic Unit before any decision about funding could be taken.

It has been left that I will report back to Mr Hailu and UNDP colleagues when I return to Addis Ababa on December 21st. By then I will have a clearer picture of the project and the detailed work programme. In the meantime, it would be useful to know of any points that UNDP may wish me to consider while I am in Konso, so that I am fully able to answer your questions on my return. I am leaving for Konso tomorrow but I hope to be able to receive knowledge of my emails while I am in the field. I would be grateful, therefore of any point that you may wish to make at this stage, and for a suggestion on how I can feed back to you on December 21st.

Richard Denman - consultant for UNWTO

No response to this email was received. It also proved impossible to contact Vinetta Robinson on the phone as she was about to go on leave, although messages were left for her. On returning to Addis Ababa on December 21st we telephoned Mr Hailu but he was unavailable. A subsequent phone call from Mr Hailu to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism after the mission indicated that UNDP are unable to finance the Konso project because they are working on other sectors.

Meeting with Fikreselassie Admasu, Chair of Ethiopia Tour Operators Association

He feels that tourism in Ethiopia generally should be:
Government led;
Private sector activated;
Community based.

In the southern region the visits to the tribal areas tend to leave too little benefit behind. There needs to be better link between operators, services and community.

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Konso is a very precious area – he referred to the landscape, villages, clothes, community customs and housing etc. However, a gap exists between the visitors and the community. Benefit to the community could be not only in cash flow but also to support schools, clinics, water etc.

Accommodation in the area is a major weakness and is currently unreliable. However, rather than develop hotels he believes there is considerable scope for community-based accommodation. He quoted the example of a Japanese group he had taken to Konso, which stayed in the chief’s house in the village. The group enjoyed this very much. Not much investment is needed – requires privacy, water, reasonable light.

It is important to talk to the individual communities about what they should each provide and also how to tackle the issue of harassment etc.

There is no problem with visiting groups being prepared to make financial payments. However, at the moment payment goes to the local government and not communities. This lion’s share should go to the community – this needs to be properly worked out and made clear to visitors. However, the village should be seen to be giving something back to the visitors as a result – welcome. The actual amount that visitors are charged is not the issue – the way that this is done and how it is put across is the main issue – this must be right.

There is a need for a well managed and trained body of guides, and there should be an agreed mechanism for using them. The tourism bureau should ensure guides are responsible to tourists and to the communities. Maybe there is a need for a corps of 10 guides, who are licensed and carry i.d. cards.

The wider tourism industry should carry some responsibility for supporting the communities, not just the tour operators.

He feels that the community-based accommodation in Bale Mountains and Mekret works quite well. Communities there feel that the visitors are their guests and not intruders. There is give and take by both visitors and communities.

The tour operators association would be willing to participate in the project, either through himself or other officers.

**Meeting with Dario Morello, General Manager, Green Land Tours**

Green Land is one of the more active incoming tour operators in Ethiopia. It handles around 7,000 clients per year in Ethiopia and around 50% of them go to South Omo, with most of these stopping in Konso or the way or on the way back. He may be looking for around 25 rooms each night in the high season.

His clients split between those who are interested in camping and community-based accommodation and those who are looking for higher quality lodge type accommodation. Currently the existing hotels in Konso are unacceptable, but he uses them out of necessity.

In order to address the problem, Green Land is proposing to build a lodge style hotel in Konso similar to their Swayne’s hotel in Arba Minch. Land has been found for this
Sawadee are very interested in campsite development in the area—to be a simple land area with toilet and showers. Groups would stay for two nights. Development should be environmentally sensitive. Long drop toilets are acceptable if well managed—the community would need to be trained how to look after them. In Tanzania Sawadee developed a camp site for a few thousand dollars. The site was then given back to the community. An NGO, Green Development Foundation (works with coffee growers), supervised the creation of the site. Sawadee might be interested in investing in this way in Konso. Sawadee would be happy for the community to use the camp site for other groups, not just theirs.

The quality of guides is very important. Sawadee may be interested in helping with the training of guides. They might be able to supply a Dutch trainer, to work say with 10 guides, including on issues of how to handle tourists.

They currently use Dinote in Konso. He is knowledgeable about the culture but not able really to control the kids in the villages. One possibility would be for Dinote to be involved in giving the tourists an initial introduction and then for the young guides to take groups off to the villages.

The fee payment process could work much better. There is need for trust between the villages and the office. This works well in Tanzania, where groups make a payment to the office and the Maasai villages trust the office that they will get a return. In Tanzania, official receipts are given (he does not often get a receipt in Konso).

It would be very good for the tour groups to be given an introduction before they make visits to the villages.

Tourists would like to know about the use and results of the moneys they give (either through the charge or in addition). Some groups may wish to visit projects where the money is being spent.

He thinks there are various ways in which the villages could offer activities to tourists that would be of interest for his groups. Examples include:
- Accommodation (see above).
- Showing the cotton picking, spinning and weaving process, right through the cycle.
- Looking at different agricultural practices, e.g. sorghum growing.
- Creating a house, like the community house, that visitors could sleep in.
- Local women making lunch for groups
- Activities involving the children.

These kinds of activities could be included in the offer and paid for together with the admission charge and shown on the receipt.

Meeting with Tony Hickey, Ethiopian Quadrants tour company

Around 15% of his clients go to South Omo and pass through Konso, but few stop there. South Omo is seen as having the more exotic and interesting tribes (e.g. Hamer and Karo) and the accommodation in Konso is also poor and visitors get
swamped by kids - so there is little reason to stop. There needs to be something different to encourage a stay.

There is an opportunity to improve the village experience, and create a better understanding of what makes Konso different. This might be achieved through:

- Improved guides/interpretation.
- Having a centre that explains why Konso is unique.
- Interpreting their approach to agriculture.
- Improved cultural experience (but needs to be natural - not too rehearsed).

In South Omo the communities/tribes are not in control of the tourism that happens. However, there has been some progress there, especially amongst the young guides and cooks. His company camps in South Omo.

It is important for people to understand the need for attention to detail - for example, having the right kinds of surfaces inside and outside showers to enable water to run off (e.g. boards with open slats). Often, the problem is that local people have not seen these things elsewhere.

A problem is lack of understanding at a regional level about the relationship between communities and tourism and the kinds of authentic experience that visitors are looking for.

Study tours can help.

Meeting with Rem Neefjes, Country Director, SNV and Daniel Trunéh, Program coordinator, SNV

Richard Dehman outlined the meetings that had been held in Addis Ababa. The programme for the remainder of the mission was discussed.

The question of sources of additional financial support for the project was raised. SNV said that they had been trying to arrange a meeting with the Netherlands Embassy - Mr. Hans Poley, First Secretary for Economic Affairs had previously expressed an interest in tourism. A further contact, also through the Embassy, was Jani Poley (no relation to the above) who is working on environmental issues in the central rift valley and has an interest in related tourism opportunities. SNV agreed to continue to seek contact with the Embassy.

Meeting with Magdi Amin, Senior Private Sector Development Specialist, The World Bank

[This meeting was held after the Konso/Omo field visits, on return to Addis Ababa]

Richard outlined the situation of the Konso project and the desirability of additional funding for small capital projects as identified in the original project outline.

Magdi clarified the work of the World Bank on destination management activity in Ethiopia. Shaun Mann from the WB in Washington will be visiting Ethiopia at the end of January to develop this work further. Although the initial concept will relate particularly to Lalibela, the support of the World Bank for destination management is...
being seen as relating to Ethiopia as a whole. This is about developing a coherent programme of action, with components at a national as well as a local level, leading to measurable results.

The comprehensive destination management programme is unlikely to be in place for another year. However, there is likely to be some preparatory work, including research and work on methodologies etc. Some of this work may address issues of community benefits and links between tourists and communities.

Richard Denman suggested that the Konso project, addressing the issue of local tribal communities and visitor interface, within the context of the wider Southern Region and South Omo, could provide a useful input to this and might be considered for inclusion in the destination management project. Magdi was not in a position to comment further on this as clearly the destination management project is still to be worked up. However, he pointed out that any support for work of a preparatory nature at this stage was unlikely to cover financial assistance for small capital projects.

The Bank has links to a number of trust funds that can assist with certain types of project. An example is a Japanese Trust Fund which can be used on project preparation. Some grants are available for social development activity.

It was agreed that the Bank would want to be kept closely informed of the outcome of the mission, including the action programme proposed for Konso and the scoping exercise in South Omo, and would look at this in the light of their developing interest and work on tourism and destination management.

Richard raised the question of possible Bank support for private sector investment in Konso, notably for new hotel development. Magdi said the Bank was really here to help government (national and local) rather than private sector projects. However, such projects might be assisted through the IFC and in particular through the PEP Africa programme that has an interest in tourism (their nearest office is in Nairobi). Irene Visser was given as a contact there.

On the subject of support for micro and small enterprises, Magdi said that the Bank can support capacity building and other technical assistance (e.g. provision of expertise, study tours etc.) but not capital.

Heritage Project coordinated by Dr Tewodros but it is unclear whether this is really in a position to help heritage conservation in Konso.

The Bank is assisting many infrastructure projects, e.g. on transportation, water etc. There has been an agreement at governmental level that tourism benefits arising from such projects will be taken into account when considering prioritisation. It will be worth considering Konso and South Omo’s needs and opportunities here. These issues may be reflected in the destination management approach.

Magdi was not aware of other agencies’ activities in supporting tourism. He believed that the Irish were quite interested in this field. USAID and IDEAS is generally
expanding their activities in Ethiopia. Overall, UNDP is seeing a change in their Ethiopia programme and there have been delays in this.

Meeting with Almaz Beyero Hribaye, Commissioner, Tourism Parks and Hotels Commission, SNNPRS, Awassa

This meeting was held at the Regional Commission’s office in Awassa, on the way between Addis and Konso. The meeting was also attended by Mr Abdi Tenha, Team Leader on tourism development, and Mr Dessalegn, Project Expert, both of whom proceeded to participate in the remainder of the mission.

Richard Denman outlined the background to the project and the kinds of activity that it would cover. He also outlined proposals for reporting and control, including a quarterly regional steering group meeting and a monthly local working group meeting. Tesfa from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism reaffirmed that the principal agreement for the project would be between the UNWTO and the Regional Commission.

Almaz approved of the proposed reporting and control arrangements. She said that the Commission would assign an expert to the group. She questioned why the national tour operators association was proposed for involvement in the steering group, considering that there are local operators in the region. Richard and Tesfa underlined the importance of involving the national association as these are the operators who send most visitors to Konso and are directly working with the international travel trade – it is essential to influence them and have them on board. This was agreed.

Almaz asked that the responsibilities of the different organisations and of the steering and working groups should be set out. This was agreed.

Richard said that UNWTO did not wish to see too much of the budget used for attending meetings. It was agreed that the Ministry, SNV and the Commission would meet their own costs in attending Steering Group meetings.

Almaz underlined the importance of providing capacity building and equipment for the Konso Tourism Desk. She also felt that in due course there may be need to address wider destination management activity, such as litter clearing.

Abdi ran through the product and development issues in Konso. Issues discussed included:
- Selection of villages to concentrate on, and different offers from these villages.
- Opportunity to provide catering, but must assure visitors on good hygiene and sanitation.
- Potential to develop more cultural performances etc.
- Need for handicrafts to be more geared to the tourist market.
- Need to provide visitors with knowledge of where income from tourism is going.
- Reducing competition between guides and coordinating them
- Need for guidelines on issue of admission tickets and income sharing of money
It was agreed that the project may seek to employ additional staff, but they should be able to be taken on board eventually by the Woreda.

Almaz expressed serious concern about the project money being handled by the Region. If the process involved the Regional administration it could result in long delays in the money being released to the project. She would favour a separate bank account being opened for the project in Arba Minch and for the finances to be handled locally. However, the Region would still be in a position to take overall responsibility for the project and to sign the agreement with the UNWTO.

2.2 Meetings and activities in Konso

Meeting with Gesahegn Ayledo, Head of Finance and Economic Development, Konso Special Woreda (KSW), and Derese Kochena, Konso Tourism Desk (KTD)

This initial meeting in Konso was held with the key personnel in order to obtain a briefing on current and recent activity and gain a first impression of what they wished to see from the project.

Existing set-up and current delivery

The KSW established the KTD last year. Five posts were identified:
- Coordinator of the Desk (not filled)
- Tourism officer (filled by Derese)
- Culture officer (filled by Dinote)
- Camera man (not filled)
- Licensing and standardisation officer (not filled)

Derese was transferred to the Desk from the Education office, and Dinote from the Culture office. Currently there are just these two people working for the Desk and there do not appear to be immediate plans to fill the other posts. [It transpired during the mission that Dinote is really essentially still working on cultural matters. He is involved in tourism informally through his work with groups but is not so actively involved with the Tourism Desk — it was agreed that his position with respect to tourism needs to be clarified].

Derese outlined the existing activity of the KTD. Essentially they are responsible for:
- Receiving the ‘admission’ fee from groups and organising guides for them.
- Undertaking guiding. There are now 5 trained guides in Konso, but two of them have got other jobs and are not working as guides. This just leaves Derese, Dinote and one other as current guides. There are also a number of informal, untrained guides and this causes a problem.
- Liaising with village communities.
- Participating in recent capacity building and development activity as a pre-cursor to the project (see below).
Recent activity

Derese, Gesahegn and Abdurahiman ran through the recent capacity building and development activity, much of which was facilitated by SNV.

- A stakeholder forum was held in October 2005, with a large and wide ranging participation, including representatives from 6 villages; officers from KSW representing different departments and activities; hotels representative; police; Konso Development Association; High school; etc.
- A tourism task force was established. Participants mentioned included: Gesahegn; Head of Capacity Building; Head of Women’s Affairs; Head of Public Organisation (Administrator); Head of Micro enterprise; Culture Officer; Konso Development Association; and the Clan Chief from Gamole. However, other people may also have been involved.
- 5 people from this task force were sent on a study visit to Bale mountains (just officers, not community representatives).
- Training in sanitation was provided (3 days). A Sanitation Team has been established, organised through the KSW and bringing together officers with relevant functions. This is taking note of sanitary regulations that exist at a regional level but have not been implemented in terms of imposing and inspecting. 4 hotels, 2 pensions and 11 small eating establishments have been identified which need inspection.
- A tourism strategy and action plan was prepared.
- The Konso Tourism Desk was established as an independent unit. Capacity building has been provided for the Desk.
- 5 guides have been trained, taking part in a course organised for the whole of the Southern Region by SNV and the Regional Commission - 10 days residential in Arba Minch in May 2006. A certificate has been issued to those trained. A guides association has been formed.
- The admission charge was raised from 30 to 40 Birr per head. Official agreement has been reached by the KSW Cabinet that 50% of the admission income will go to the communities and 50% to the local authority. However, the procedure for this has not been finalised and this is still not happening in practice.

Future requirements

The following requirements were mentioned at this initial stage by Derese and Gesahegn:

- Establishment of the KTD office. Currently KTD uses a small office tucked away in the KSW administrative building, with a desk and chair but no equipment. Ideally an office building/presence is required. They ran through a list of electronic equipment sought.
- Personnel/ time to work with the individual communities.
- Improvement to the visitor attractions, which may include:
  - Identification and diversification of offer at different villages.
  - Conservation and restoration of the typical houses in the villages and also of their culture.
  - Help with sanitation in the villages - e.g. toilets for community and visitors

Discussion also informed by Abdurahiman’s Progress Report on Konso Tourism Development

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- Improving and diversifying the offer – organising women to prepare food; improving handicrafts for sale; etc.
- Campsite development (Karal; Gesergio; Doha)
- Display of artefacts, e.g. the burial Wacas, - possibly via a museum.
- Capacity building, training, education (short and long term), for a range of different stakeholders:
  - The KTD and tourism task force
  - Local communities, esp. women
  - Children
  - Guides
  - Sanitation team
- An information centre in town.
- Promotion – internet, brochures, T-shirts etc.
- Support for HIV/Aids work.

Discussion with Mr Koshenna, Manager, PARKA NGO

This was just a brief discussion as Mr Koshenna was about to leave town.

PARKA is a recently established small NGO located in Konso with a manager and two administrators. It rents an office and has a computer (currently malfunctioning).

The objective of PARKA is conservation of the cultural heritage. It is funded by the Christensen Fund, a US based charity with a mission to foster cultural diversity. This has supplied a USD 58,000 grant over one year. Christensen has a representative in Ethiopia but no office there. PARKA does not appear to be receiving financial support from other sources.

PARKA partly works through traditional local community groups called ‘parkas’ – hence the name of the NGO.

They work with these groups on specific projects to conserve the heritage. A recent example is a tree planting scheme. They are also involved in supporting living cultural heritage, e.g. traditional music.

They believe that cultural conservation and tourism are interlinked and they are keen to support ecotourism as one of their objectives.

Information on Christensen can be found at www.christensenfund.org. Information on the site about the $58,400 grant is as follows:

| Parka Environmental & Cultural Protection Association | To work with traditional “parka” farmers groups to restore culturally-based environmental awareness and ways of tackling local development and natural resource challenges, and to protect sites of cultural and biological diversity in the Konso montagnard landscape of Southwest Ethiopia. |

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Discussion with Jamel Oubechou, Conseiller de Cooperation et d’Action culturelle, French Embassy

A short discussion in the field with M Oubechou and two colleagues (one an architect from France) who were visiting Konso. They were here to move forward a project supported by the French Embassy to develop a museum in Konso. The group was being accompanied by Dinote (the culture information officer). They were not previously aware of the ST-EP project and Richard Denman briefly outlined the project and its objectives.

Richard suggested that there should be synergy between the two projects and that possibly the museum could act as a focal point for visitors, performing a reception and orientation function. M Oubechou agreed that the projects should keep in touch and share information etc. However, he expressed some reservations about the role of the museum in visitor reception, orientation and information, and he pointed out that the site indicated by the KSW for the museum is a little way out of town.

A paper from the French team outlining the museum concept was provided by KSW. The concept and description is very focused on museum objectives and activities (research, conservation, educational displays) rather than on visitor centre type activities (orientation, interpretation). A sizeable building is proposed:

- Reception area (50 – 80 m²) for information, ticketing and possibly some sales space
- Administration offices (100 – 120 m²) for director and 5 staff and researchers
- Exhibition area (500 – 1000 m²) focussing on the presentation of different collections/pieces.
- Educational area (50 – 80 m²)
- Reserve collection area (not open to public) (200 – 300 m²)
- Workshop and technical space (50 – 60 m²)
- Service area – toilets etc. (50 m²) With possibly a small canteen in addition.

The building would be constructed with local materials in sympathy with the environment. Subsequent discussion with Dinote revealed his idea that maybe there would be a re-creation of Konso village buildings outside the museum, as a further dimension.

Gesahegn, from KSW, underlined that KSW would require the two projects to work together.

Stakeholder forum in Konso

The KTD had called a stakeholder forum for the morning of our second day in Konso. The forum was chaired by Gesahegn from KSW. In addition to our team (UNWTO (RD), Ministry, Regional Commission, SNV) attendance included:

KWS administrative officer
Konso Tourism Desk (Deresse):
Youth and sports officer
Education officer
Capacity building officer
Tax officer
Agriculture and Rural Development officer
Women's officer
Konso Development Association officer
Energy project officer
Finland Save The Children Fund project officer
Information and culture officer (Dinote)
Vice Chair, Ethiopian Tour Operators Association (Afnafu Bizuneh)
A trained local tour guide
Hotel owner (Green hotel or Edget hotel)
Clan Chief, Gamoile village
Elder, Gesergio village
Administrator, Gesergio village
Elder, Mecheke village
Administrator, Mecheke village
Elder, Dutai village

An additional seven or eight people joined the meeting after it had started, and are not recorded here. Overall, the number of attendees and the spread of types of activity and interest represented was impressive and encouraging.

The meeting was conducted in a mixture of Amharic and also the Konso language, with some translation into English. It took almost 3 hours.

Richard Denman outlined the background and purpose of the project and the kinds of activities it was likely to cover. A presentation was also made by Gesagen on behalf of KSW. Supporting statements were made by SNV, The Ministry and the Commission.

The meeting then consisted of questions and remarks from the floor. A number of the interventions were quite lengthy and only the gist of them was translated into English.

The main points arising were as follows:

- In general the project was warmly welcomed. The Clan Chief made a point that he remembered Richard's first visit over 2 years ago - many people come to see him and ask questions but few ever follow this up, and so he was very pleased that I (i.e. UNWTO and partners) had returned again and had established a project with resources.

- The village representatives appeared interested in tourism but they are concerned that the villages/community are still not benefiting from it. This is affecting how they treat visitors and must be sorted out.

- The administrative arrangements outlined were broadly approved. However, there was a strong call for the financial administration to be local and not tied up in Regional/Awassa bureaucracy. A long list of officials who might be on the monthly working group was suggested, but then (prompted by RD) it was accepted that this should be a smaller, efficient working group who could call on other officials as necessary.
• There was considerable interest amongst the village representatives and the officers in maintaining and strengthening cultural heritage. This is seen as being of paramount importance. The project should see this as an objective.

• Partly in the light of the above, it was felt that the PARKA project should be represented on the monthly working group. However, there was some concern about the direction of PARKA and the benefit to Konso resulting from this. It was generally seen, though, as an important and relevant initiative that must be engaged with this project.

• There is a long term need for better services for the community and the tourists – phone, electricity, water, banking – seen as beyond the immediate scope of this project but needing to be taken into account.

• It was difficult to get village representatives to identify specific poverty/social priorities and needs and to identify how tourism income might benefit them. Elders said that community priorities were up to the villages. However, Derese pointed out that tourists might like to know how the money from them is being spent.

• The Youth Officer pointed out that many youths are trying to sell souvenirs in the street. He felt that better organisation of handicraft production and selling would be a good thing. The Youth office might help with this and consider how young people could benefit.

• The village representatives called on the government to speak with one voice – not to give conflicting views.

• Richard said that the project and action plan should be theirs. He will give some framework and guidance in the report, with sufficient detail to be helpful, but to some extent this should be flexible and shaped to meet their priorities as the project moves forward.

• It was formally agreed to establish the local working group.

Meeting with finance officer, KSW on financial arrangements

This meeting looked specifically at the options for receiving and managing the project funding from UNWTO.

Although the Regional Commission could technically receive the money, their concern was that if their finance officer had to become involved in the release of money there could be a serious danger of delay.

The KSW finance officers sought to reassure the group that KSW had experience of handling separate project funding in dedicated bank accounts, and of managing the accounts without delays. The example of the Finland Save the Children project was quoted, whereby regular reports are sent to Finland on project progress, and authorisation is given for spending to be undertaken in the forthcoming period.
1. Money is paid from UNWTO to the Regional Commission, probably into a separate account. The Regional Commission releases funds quarterly to the project, based on receipt of account from the previous quarter and budget for the forthcoming quarter.

2. Money is paid by UNWTO into a separate project account, opened by KSW in Arba Minch. The Regional Commission (as chair of steering group) receives quarterly reports and approves action and spending plans for the next quarter. However, subject to this regular approval of the expenditure plans, the actual handling of money and signing of cheques is undertaken by the KSW (finance officer and KTD officer to be signatories), and Regional Commission does not handle any money transaction.

KSW is happy with alternative 2. It was agreed that this would be discussed further with the Regional Commission and UNWTO.

The constitution of the local monthly Working Group in Konso was discussed. It was agreed that this should constitute around 5 to 7 people. Additional concerned bodies should also meet with the group, perhaps through having say 3 - 4 larger meetings during the year.

Hotel experiences and discussions

The team stayed in the Green hotel, near the centre of Karat. This hotel is used by some of the passing tour groups. Rooms were basic, with cold water facilities, but reasonably clean and with sound beds fitted with mosquito nets. Some electrical and water fittings did not work, and there were bare electrical wires in some bedrooms. Electricity was available for a few hours only and for one day there was no water. Towels were not provided. High volume music blaring from the rudimentary bar straight into the bedrooms was indicative of lack of staff awareness of guest comfort. The hotel did not register guests and appeared to keep no records.

The team took breakfast and evening meals in the St. Mary hotel. During one of these, a discussion was held with the owner. He also showed us the hotel bedrooms. The hotel building is quite substantial and appears relatively sound in structure, with rooms giving out onto balconies. However, the restaurant area of the hotel and the accommodation block are both very dirty. Tables in the restaurant area are rough and un-covered and lighting is stark. There was a foul smell on the staircase, apparently coming from rotting food or possibly sewerage. One of the bedrooms shown had a flooded bathroom owing to broken plumbing; a second was intact but smelt rather damp and unappealing. Staff in the restaurant appeared to be untrained and offered no welcome or level of service – they simply brought food when asked (and sometimes had to be reminded). Food quality was reasonable in terms of Ethiopian fare, and basic pasta and omelettes were available. Many foreign visitors would find the experience daunting.

The owner of the St. Mary hotel was friendly and pleasant. However, he gave the impression that he found the hotel business rather a struggle. He knew that the property was in a poor state of repair but appeared to be at a loss to know what to do about it. He said he would be grateful for any advice. He was also receptive to the provision of training for staff. He has a family that may inherit the hotel, but at the moment they are not engaged and do not appear to show an interest in the hotel operation.

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
The third hotel in Karat, the Edget, is of similar standard to the other two. The lunch we had here was of poor quality and extremely greasy. Some of the team met the hotel manager. He expressed an interest in further advice/assistance and staff training.

There are at least three entrepreneurs with an interest in developing new hotels in Karat, including Green Land (see above under Addis Ababa meetings). They have earmarked sites. Atnafu Bizuneh, from Hadar Tours, showed us his site, which is high above the town, commanding fine views. He is planning on 36 rooms. He wants to develop the land based around ecotourism principles and wishes to pay particular attention to generating local benefit through his employment policies and local supply-chain management. He also intends to involve the community in the operation, with the community taking a stake in the business after three years. He is at the business planning stage. A main stumbling block if lack of collateral. He has been talking with international operators about partnership arrangements and is keen to approach the World Bank.

Field visits

A number of field visits were made to familiarise us with the product and consider development opportunities. Brief comments are given here.

Camping site in Karat. This is owned by the KSW and has recently been fenced. It is near the town centre and has fine views, thereby offering some potential. An existing toilet building is completely dysfunctional and needs removing and replacing, and the whole site needs restoration and maintenance. This could be a project for a small business.

Craft outlet in Konso. This is run by a missionary group and sells a limited range of handicrafts — mainly woven cloth and items of clothing. The sales area is small and there is little on display. They report that there is a reasonable throughput of international tourists.

Site for possible information centre. This site, identified by KTD, is little more than 100 metres from the main central crossroads in Konso and highly visible on the main street. It seemed of sufficient size for an information centre. There is currently a building on it, owned by KSW but in temporary occupation by a private person. We were assured that there would be no problem in moving this person and replacing the building. We expressed our concern over this and emphasised that the handling of the situation must be sensitive to the occupant’s wellbeing.

Dara Village. This walled village is within walking distance of central Karat. The village has the typical fascinating appearance and atmosphere of Konso villages. A noticeable problem is lack of sanitation and the presence of many flies. A previously erected toilet building outside the village has become totally dysfunctional.

Jarso Village. Near to Dara, this village is striking for the percentage of households operating traditional weaving looms, including some using simply spun yarn from local cotton. There is clear potential to make more of this as a visitor experience.
Gersergio village. Located near ‘New York’, a natural landslide phenomenon with mud towers, this village and area has physical appeal. It is proposed as a location for a camping site, partly for trekking tourism. We discussed possible locations for the site and the kind of facilities that would be needed and management requirements by the local community. It provides an example of where some guidance by tour operators on possible use and standards required would be most helpful before development commences.

Road to Doha hot springs. We did not reach the springs (which are another natural attraction and where further facilities are proposed). However, the journey confirmed the attractiveness of the mountainous countryside and the appropriateness of the terrain and existing tracks for walking and cycling tourism.

Local primary school. We visited a local school close to some of the villages. This is likely to be a very interesting experience for some groups. We made a small donation for which we received a receipt, thereby demonstrating the ease of such a process. We also spoke to a few teachers about possible lessons with the children about tourism and relating to visitors.

**Meeting to address outline work programme for Konso Community Tourism Project**

At this final meeting in Konso, the team (UNWTO (RD); Ministry; Regional Commission; SNV) met with Derese (KTD) and Gesahegn (KSW) to discuss in detail the possible work programme for the project.

Richard Denman led the discussion and introduced a set of possible action areas. These were broadly similar to those presented in the work programme in this report (See Chapter 4). In drawing up this list, Richard had taken into account the previous technical assistance work by SNV, the initial identification of requirements and actions by KTD and KSW, and the comments at the stakeholders forum. The team discussed each action area one by one.

The results of this working session have been closely reflected in the work programme presented in Chapter 4, so full details are not given here, but the main points raised by the team in response to RD’s list are indicated below.

**Indicators:** All team members contributed further thoughts and ideas, demonstrating clear understanding of the importance of simple measures of progress and impact.

**Staffing:** It was agreed that the project would require more staff time than simply Derese. It was agreed that two more people should be found to work under Derese. Gesahegn raised the problem of lack of available skilled manpower. It was agreed that ability to communicate well with the community was the primary skill required. Richard raised the issue of ongoing employment of these extra staff after the project. Gesahegn said that the KSW would take responsibility for paying the salary of these two staff members (in addition to Derese) after the first year of the project. SNV would arrange for capacity building in community development and sustainable tourism for the staff team. They will also help to identify suitable computer skills training (likely to be available in Arba Minch). Further training materials and information could be supplied to the team. It was felt that staff might benefit from a study visit outside of Ethiopia, e.g. to elsewhere in E Africa.

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**Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project**

_and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia_
Market research. Importance of tour operator engagement and market knowledge was agreed. Survey processes were discussed, including simply monitoring of who stops in Konso.

Community consultation. Agreed as core of the project. Abdi recommended we move step by step and also that we start by talking to the elders and main representatives about how best to undertake the process – all agreed. Gesahegn felt that a visit to Bale would be highly valuable for community representatives. Handling of funds and ticketing was discussed further. It was suggested that Sunday Schools may be a route for reaching the kids.

Office and information centre. Seen as a key element. Richard ran through some concepts for the centre. He suggested that equipment should be cut back to the basic requirements: furniture, computer, printer/fax/copier; digital camera; generator; motorbike.

Information and promotion. Importance of photography agreed – Ministry can assist here. Simple website – cost needs checking. Give consideration to T-shirt development.

Village projects. Various ideas were discussed. There was a debate on the need for camp sites to offer fixed tents – need to check with tour operators – possibly seen as a second phase. Simple accommodation buildings were discussed. E.g. tukuls. There can be different models of community engagement/ownership/return. Cultural performance groups to be encouraged/supported. Catering could include food/picnics for trekkers. World Bank Safety Net Project could be a source of additional funding for village projects.

Guides. The team felt that a corps of 10 trained guides in total could be a good target. Further guide training could be delivered by SNV and Region. Additional international training, if sponsored, would be seen as a secondary top-up level.

Handicrafts. The need for more investigation was agreed. More thoughts and ideas are needed from the Steering Group and operators. Additional expertise may be needed.

Accommodation. The Ministry can advise and supply hotel training, which could be delivered in Konso. It was also agreed that owners/managers may need help with business planning. As far as new quality hotel development is concerned, it was agreed that it would be difficult for the project to assist directly, but future help could be given with preparing/training local population and with local supply chain development.
2.3 Meetings and activities in South Omo

Meeting with Nigatu Dansu Muli, Vice Administrator and Head of Capacity Building, South Omo Zone Administration, together with officers from the Tourism Desk, Urban Development and Trade and Industry

Richard Denman set out the background to the ST-EP initiative and the current project in Konso. He explained that the Konso project should also be seen in the context of South Omo and that the Regional Commission and SNV had wanted UNWTO to consider the scope of possible future initiatives in South Omo linked to ST-EP.

Mr Nigatu outlined the considerable and unique resources of South Omo for tourism - 16 tribes with their own culture and language; national parks, reserves and wildlife; fine landscapes. The new road from Arba Minch to Jinka will make it more accessible. However, the primary challenge is to bring more benefit to the communities from tourism in a well managed way. Service facilities for tourism are also generally poor and development has been slow.

We discussed poverty issues in the Zone, including its relative position with respect to the rest of Ethiopia. A major issue is resource use and lack of knowledge of sustainable livelihoods. Important aspects include population increase, drought and flooding; water availability and use; limited school attendance and health issues.

The Zone Administration has recently given a higher priority to tourism development and assigned 5 people to the tourism desk. However, there is a serious lack of knowledge and capacity in the office, and it lacks basic equipment. There is also a considerable difficulty in working in the more remote parts of the Zone owing to transport problems. They have plans to work with local enterprises to improve quality and to engage with the local communities, but there has been little implementation owing to limited resources and knowledge. They also wish to control the activities of illegal operators and to increase inspections.

Recent guide training, run by the Regional Commission and SNV, has been successful.

They are very keen to establish a project like Konso, involving work with the communities alongside strengthening the capacity of the Tourism Desk to provide coordination and deliver services. Ideally, they would like such a project to cover the whole area but it may be more practical to concentrate on priority locations. They believed that priority might be given to the more visited areas/tribes such as the Hamer (Turmi), Mursi (Mago National Park) and Karo. The relationship between the Parks (Omo NP and Mago NP), their communities and tourism is important. This focussed approach could be set within the context of wider destination management for the whole area.

A project should tackle the relationship between tourists and communities, addressing the lack of appreciation and awareness on both sides.
Visit to Jinka Museum/South Omo Research Centre and discussion with director, Jean Lydall

The Jinka Museum contains presentations and collections relating to the ethnic groups of South Omo, as well as providing a research resource and meeting facilities. It sells an excellent range of souvenirs. Some groups come here for orientation. The Research Centre, based at the Museum, has sought to open a dialogue on responsible tourism and held a workshop in December 2005 on this subject with 70 participants from 11 ethnic groups.

Jean Lydall, as a social anthropologist, provided some very helpful insights into the complexity of issues involved in relating tourism to tribal groups. This conversation underlined the need to think carefully about the meaning of 'poverty' in this context and the type of benefit that ST-EP is trying to bring about. Additional income does not always lead to community benefit. Spending time seeking income from tourists can lead to a neglect of traditional lifestyles and livelihoods. The workshop revealed a very mixed range of reactions from participants about the positive and negative impacts of tourism and the opportunities it brings.

Jean explained the different position of the various tribes. The Hammer and Karo, for example, are quite organised in the way they obtain income from tourists. The Mursi find the relationship harder and are still seeking the right approach that suits them. The experience underlines the importance of spending time listening to the different communities and understanding how they want to develop their relationship with visitors.

Meeting with tour guides and local tour operator, covering South Omo, Jinka

The guides confirmed that there is a problem with tourists arriving for a short time, taking photos and leaving, with little benefit to community. Many groups are not given proper orientation.

The Mursi are the tribal group where there are most problems with the visitor-community relationship and this is getting worse. Some others, e.g. Hamer, are more organised but they still need help. There is a problem with some local Hamer guides not being trained.

The Tourism Desk is rather too Jinka focussed. They are trying; but have limited capacity. They could do more.

The tour operator confirmed that visits to tribes are the main draw for his visitors and numbers and numbers of tourists are increasing. There is probably a need for more guides to meet this growth. Currently there may be around 100 tourists in Turmi per day in the main season.

There are various codes and different practices for making central charges and then charging on top for photos, but there is no clear system and tourists do not know what is really expected of them.

People standing around and haggling with tourists for payment mean that they are not getting on with their traditional livelihoods.
It is important to take the consultation with the tribes slowly, obtain some success and then build on this.

They are very keen on the idea of a new project to try to sort this out. It would be good if the project covered the whole area as the issues are broadly similar with the different tribes.

The guide training worked well and the guides do work together. However, relationships with national tourist operators could be strengthened.

Providing better orientation for tour groups on arrival would be good. Many do now go to the Jinka Museum. A higher proportion of tourists are genuinely interested in the tribes and wish to be responsible tourists, than in the past.

Many groups use camping areas near the villages and this tends to work quite well. The guides feel that communities may not be benefiting from this activity financially as much as they could. More could also be done with handicraft sales.

The operator feels that quality of hotel accommodation in the area is generally poor and needs to be improved.

**Discussion with Community Coordinator, Omo National Park**

We met briefly with Samuel, finance and administration coordinator. He gave us the phone number of James Young, Community Coordinator, in Addis and RD phoned him from the UK after the mission.

Omo National Park has recently been taken on by African Parks Foundation. They have a long-term programme. Tourism will mainly be organised by the letting of concessions. Working with communities is seen as very important to the conservation strategy. There are 8 tribal communities in and around the park.

At the moment the park is very little visited owing to huge access problems. Since taking over in January 2006 APF has been concentrating on infrastructure and conservation activity.

The Park is keen to involve the communities in tourism over time and see this as part of the way forward. This might involve community camp sites etc. 23 community members have already been trained as scouts for the Park. At least one of the tribes has already come to them to say they are interested in tourism.

In March 2007 they are holding an open day in Addis for tour operators to explain what the APF is doing and future long-term ideas for the Park.

The Park is likely to hand over tourism operations to others to manage eventually.

The Park has been talking to Mark Chapman of the NGO 'Tesfa' about his experience with community-based tourism in the north of Ethiopia and Mark may be asked to give them advice.
Visit to the town of Turmi and the Hamer people

The main field visit during the time in South Omo was to Turmi as our presence in the area coincided with the weekly Monday market in the town. It is on these market days that visitors have most access to the tribes as they tend to congregate there in their traditional costumes. We were able to observe the interaction, although owing to the broken bridge there were less visitors in Turmi than normal.

The market provides visitors with a fascinating and colourful experience. However, the atmosphere is difficult and I experienced a considerable feeling of tension and uncertainty about how to treat the groups of Hamer women and the taking of photographs. Some young people acting as guides did take me round the market and this certainly helped — they were able to interface with the groups.

Around six stalls were selling handicrafts and these were quite well displayed and were being sold for reasonably fair prices. However, when I enquired about the makers of the crafts and how much they were receiving I did not get a satisfactory answer (I was told that they had all been made by the people selling them but I do not think this was actually true — there is no way of telling how much of the retail price is passed back to the maker).

During the journey and we also stopped to talk to and photograph a number of individuals and also briefly stopped at a Turmi village. Here again the haggling over how much we should pay (we were prepared to give them a reasonable amount but always there was a tendency to ask for more) was a problem on both sides and did not lead to a very positive interchange.

We stopped at the Green Land hotel, which is in fact a permanent tented camping site with an open-sided eating area and flush toilets and showers. Standards were simple but reasonable. They are building some new accommodation units. They employ local Hamer.

A number of hotel/ecolodge development sites were pointed out to us and there does seem to be some investment coming into the area.

Meeting with Deputy Area Administrator, Turmi

He sees tourism as a positive activity for the town and the Hamer people. The income from tourists (i.e. photos) is used by the Hamer to purchase food (e.g. sorghum, salt) and other items directly in the market and town.

The Council organised and legalised the boys association to become guides. It was unclear whether they had received any formal training. The Council helps to coordinate them. However, there are some weaknesses of organisation.

Some work is being done to organise cultural dances. Handicrafts are haphazard and there is limited knowledge of the market. In general, the community could benefit more. Community decisions are traditionally taken, through the elders.

Many people ask the Council for land for accommodation, but in the majority of cases no development happens. There is some small basic accommodation in the town.
There are a number of NGOs in the area working on sustainable livelihood and poverty issues — Farm Africa, Refugi Trust, Safety Net programme.

He would be pleased to see a coordinated project addressing tourism here. He said that the community needs to have one agreed entrance fee. The community would benefit from training. Proper returns to the community from different activities, such as film shooting, are needed. Much currently depends on the tour group drivers.

2.4 Inception meeting for the Konso Community Tourism Project

At the end of the mission in Addis Ababa an inception meeting for the Konso Community Tourism Project was held in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Offices. The agenda and minutes of the meeting are provided in Annex 1.

2.5 General assessment and conclusions from the mission

As the above report indicates, this was a full and interesting mission. The following general conclusions can be drawn:

- **Konso has the right, location size and structure for the project**

  The fact that that is a good choice of location for the project was confirmed by:
  - The regular flow of passing visitors, giving us the ability to concentrate on gaining more benefit from them rather than having to generate visits from scratch.
  - The relatively compact size of the area.
  - The fact that the KSW has considerable powers at a local level and the Tourism Desk is integrated with this.
  - The positive response from all stakeholders as demonstrated by the forum.

- **The proposals in the initial scoping study are still relevant**

  The focus on community engagement, capacity building, information delivery, community charges and dissemination, and small capital projects, is still right.

- **Tour operator interest is very positive and of great importance**

  The positive interest of tour operators is most encouraging. A key to success will be to engage them in supporting the project with advice and in how they translate the area to their clients.

- **It is difficult to identify precise poverty targets**

  It was hard to identify very precise needs and beneficiary actions specifically with respect to poverty alleviation. This needs more work. On the other hand, the level of overall poverty in the area is transparently clear and the overall objective of increasing visitor spending that is channelled to communities arguably provides sufficient justification for the project.

- **Capacity building and knowledge sharing will benefit fully the project**

  The Regional Commission, KSW, Tourism Desk and the community will all gain from the learning processes associated with this project and this can only help to make
them more able in the future to gain from sustainable tourism. Although specific targets for tourism growth and income retention should be set, this background capacity and confidence building will bring long term benefits that partly justify the project.

- **Much relevant action has been taken and there is a need to build upon and not duplicate this**
  The work facilitated by SNV in the last 18 months has been very helpful in creating the conditions for this project to be successful. However, it is important that the community moves on from a position of discussing and understanding the issues, to specific action on the ground.

- **The project will require regular professional guidance**
  Although the local staff are enthusiastic they are relatively young and inexperienced. Regular professional guidance will be critically important, underlining the role of SNV.

- **More work is needed on additional funding**
  The lack of a clear line on obtaining additional funds from external sources is a weakness of the mission. Perhaps more work should have been done to identify possible sources in advance. However, the project does not wholly depend on this and there is scope in the ST-EP Foundation budget to cover some capital projects.

- **There is scope for a future project in South Omo but this needs careful planning**
  Many people see Konso entirely in the context of the cultural richness of South Omo, which is as the primary draw for tourism in Southern Ethiopia. The issues of relating tourists to local communities are matched and to some extent magnified there. Konso is the gateway to South Omo and this project could likewise be seen as a precursor to something more sizeable there. The needs and complexities of South Omo have become apparent from the mission. The sheer size of the Zone and the geographical displacement of the Tourism Desk from much of the product adds a dimension of complexity from which Konso is spared. A project in South Omo would need careful planning and although directly relevant to the objectives of ST-EP it may require greater resources than can be provided by the ST-EP programme. It could be seen as an area for concentrating World Bank support as their Ethiopia sustainable tourism programme gets underway.
3 KONSO COMMUNITY TOURISM PROJECT
OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Project context and approach

Konso is the name of a district and an ethnic group located in the far south of Ethiopia, within the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People’s Regional State (SNNPRS). It is administered by the Konso Special Woreda (KWS) which is a District Council with a considerable degree of autonomous authority.

The district is scenically attractive. It is primarily an upland area which is extensively cultivated using a traditional system of stone terracing which is very unusual in Africa. This farmed highland landscape provides part of the visitor appeal but the main draw is the physical structure of the Konso villages, which are densely settled, behind a complex of massive stone walls. The villages contain a number of buildings and artefacts which relate to the Konso tribes’ unique customs and community governance systems. There is a strong tradition of cloth weaving, which forms the basis of colourful clothing worn by many Konso.

The district is strategically located at the meeting point of the routes to south west Ethiopia and the Kenyan border. It is a key point on Ethiopia’s Southern Tourist Circuit and serves as a gateway to South Omo, one of the most culturally diverse and intact areas in the whole of Africa.

Most of the tour groups visiting southern Ethiopia pass through Konso and many, but by no means all, stop there to look at the villages. However, the community is seeing little benefit from this tourism and the proportion of visitor income retained locally is low. There is a considerable amount of hassling of visitors, especially by children seeking money and other items, and this has put some operators off from stopping in Konso. Overnight accommodation in the area is also of poor quality and other services, such as handicraft sales, are poorly organised.

The Konso Special Woreda, in conjunction with the SNNPRS, has been seeking to improve the management of tourism and the benefits gained from it. Following an initial mission to Ethiopia in 2004, which included a visit to Konso, the UNWTO ST-EP Foundation allocated a sum of USD 80,000 over two years to a community-based tourism project there. As a pre-cursor to this project, the KSW established the Konso Tourism Desk and a multi-stakeholder tourism forum. With the technical assistance of the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), a series of capacity building and training initiatives have taken place, which have helped to prepare the stakeholders for the project.

Following a second UNWTO ST-EP mission in December 2006, which included further consultation, the objectives, management arrangements and work programme for the project have been agreed and are set out in the remainder of this report.
**Vision and approach**

The vision is:
*For Konso to be recognised as a major location for culture-based and rural tourism in Ethiopia, where the local community is engaged in providing a range of experiences presented as a set of offers to visitors. The offers range from a short stay of a few hours to a one to four day programme. Income from this activity is providing significant economic benefit to the village communities and other residents of Konso, and has helped to alleviate poverty and support local services. Although the proportion of independent travellers is growing, most of the visitors are brought by tour operators who are keen to include Konso in their programmes owing to the quality of experience offered there. The tour operators feel engaged in working with and supporting the Konso people. Visitors are given a warm welcome and a strong appreciation of the Konso culture, and are keen to support the conservation of the local heritage and the quality of life of local people through the money spent on their visit and any additional support they may wish to give. A range of accommodation is available in the area, from small camp sites and traditional style buildings provided by the local community, to simple hotels (with clean, reliable facilities and service) and higher quality lodges."

The approach of the project is based on strengthening the capacity of the Konso Special Woreda (supported by the SNNPRS) and the Konso Tourism Desk to deliver this vision. Components of the approach include helping them to:

- establish and maintain a structure and process of working with the different tourism stakeholders
- work with the local village communities to improve their relationship with tourists and the benefit they get from them
- establish a physical presence in Karat (the District's main town) as a focal point for visitor orientation and interaction with the different stakeholders
- provide support services and training for the different stakeholders, encouraging and assisting them to improve quality and pursue opportunities
- develop effective communication and promotional activity with tour operators and media
- work with others to conserve the area's unique cultural heritage.

This vision and approach is very much in line with the Ethiopian Government's vision for tourism in Ethiopia and its recent recognition of the potential of tourism to contribute to its poverty reduction strategy. It is picks up on a number of the conclusions recently drawn by the World Bank*, which:

- identifies cultural heritage as the key product;
- appreciates that cultural experience needs to be preserved, making specific reference to tribal cultures and a need for community-level engagement and communication;
- recognises visitor inconveniences, including poor quality accommodation;
- identifies the Southern Cultural Route as one of three foci for destination development plans.

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*Ethiopia: Towards a strategy for pro-poor tourism development. World Bank, June 2006*
3.2 Objectives, targets and indicators

Project objectives

1. To improve the quality of life of the residents of Konso District
2. To generate income and other benefits from tourism for the Konso village communities
3. To increase the number and quality of jobs for local people from tourism
4. To conserve the unique cultural heritage of the Konso villages
5. To increase the proportion of tours on the southern circuit that stop in Konso, and to increase their length of stay
6. To improve the quality of the visitor experience in Konso
7. To secure the future of tourism in Konso, so it is able to deliver increasing benefits in the long term.

Target population and approach to poverty alleviation

The Konso district has a population of 228,000. The general poverty situation in the district is as follows:

- One of the food-insecure districts of Ethiopia. Problems include recurrent drought, depleted top-soils and widespread livestock disease.
- Level of absolute poverty is approximately 70%, and escalating
- Only 34% of the population is provided with clean water.
- No mains electricity – some generators in Karat
- High under-5 mortality rate reported by health officials
- Prevalence of a variety of diseases, including HIV/AIDS
- Shortage of medicines
- Lack of priority given to education, notably for girls
- High population growth rate.

Clearly the project will not be able to reach the majority of this sizeable population. Its impact in terms of poverty alleviation will be targeted at:

- The population of 7 key villages which provide the primary visitor attraction and which will be the focus of the project’s activity. The size of each village, together with its distance from Karat, is given in the table below. The total population is of the villages taken together is 36,022.

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5 Largely taken from a recent study by Save the Children - Finland, 2006
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Distance from Karat</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duraite</td>
<td>1.5 km</td>
<td>4,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dokatu</td>
<td>3 km</td>
<td>5,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dara</td>
<td>3.5 km</td>
<td>3,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jarso</td>
<td>4 km</td>
<td>10,614</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gamole</td>
<td>5 km</td>
<td>2,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecheke</td>
<td>14 km</td>
<td>2,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesergio</td>
<td>17 km</td>
<td>7,219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A key target of the project is to improve the quality of life of the population in each of these villages through:

- Providing income to community projects that can potentially benefit the village as a whole.
- Securing the flow of tourism activity and income for the long term, by making it a more positive experience for visitors and the host communities and something that the latter can build upon themselves.

The poverty situation in the seven villages reflects that of the population as a whole, identified above, although their proximity to Karat may mean that they are better connected to services. The villages do have access to some basic health provision and to schooling. Water is available to most but not all of the villages. Sanitation in the villages is extremely rudimentary.

- Residents of Karat and surroundings who are directly or indirectly involved in providing tourism services. The town itself has a population in the order of 9,000. The total number of known employees working in hotels and pensions is currently 81, but a larger number may be gaining some occasional part-time employment related to tourism or indirect income from the supply of goods and services.
- The wider population of the district, who may benefit from supply chain input and from infrastructure improvement that could partly be related to provision for tourism.

The project has been designed so that it is able to address most of the 7 ways of channelling visitor spending towards poverty alleviation as identified by UNWTO for ST-EP6:

| 1) Employment of the poor in tourism enterprises | Support and training relating to hotel improvement and future investment should lead to improved job quality and security as well as additional jobs over time |
| 2) Supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor | Although supply chain development is not a primary focus of the project, it may be assisted through overall exposure given to sustainable tourism by the KTD. It is seen a clear requirement of future hotel development that could be assisted by the project. |
| 3) Direct sales to tourists by the informal economy | As tourism spending in the area increases, this will strengthen overall level of sales. In particular, three main aspects of the project are relevant here: |

6 Tourism and Poverty Alleviation, Recommendations for Action UNWTO, 2004

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
Tourism performance targets

The income received from tourist charges last year was 54,990 ETB, which at 30 ETB per head indicates a total of 1,833 visitors. This may be an under-estimate as:
- Some visitors who are living in Ethiopia just pay 15 ETB.
- There appears to be significant proportion of non-payment (KTB estimates that the total payment should be in excess of 70,000 ETB).

Taking the latter points into consideration, it may be estimated that the total annual visitors to the villages could be around 2,500.

Looking at tour operator figures, two different operators we spoke to estimated that they were bringing, respectively:
- at least 3,000 visitors through Konso, the majority of whom stop
- 400 visitors through Konso, all of whom stop

Given that these are just two tour operators, it appears that the total number of visitors currently going to the villages may be more than the 2,500 estimate, and certainly the market of people passing through Konso is higher than this.

A study for the World Bank\(^7\) estimated that up to 4,000 foreigners (half incoming and half expatriates in Ethiopia) and 4,000 Ethiopians (one quarter living abroad) follow the Southern Circuit, which includes Konso.

In the light of the above, we suggest that the project should set a minimum target of 3,000 visitors to the villages paying the foreign visitors' fee, with an aspirational target of 4,500 per annum. This will be subject to Ethiopia maintaining a relatively positive world image as a tourism destination. Konso should also seek to exceed the annual

growth rate for cultural tourism to Ethiopia as a whole, which has been predicted at 7.3% per annum over the period 2006 - 2020\(^8\)

**Performance indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Measured by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of village representatives with a positive attitude to tourism and recognising benefits to their community from it</td>
<td>Objective questioning before and after project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of visitors to information centre</td>
<td>Head count recorded by staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of visitors to villages</td>
<td>Count of numbers registered to make visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total charge collected from village visiting</td>
<td>Account of income received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from villages admission charge disbursed to villages</td>
<td>Measurement of income paid to village administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional income to villages from tourist related activities</td>
<td>Record of income achieved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known amount of additional donations to local causes made by visitors</td>
<td>Keeping records of donations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and type of schemes benefiting the community supported by tourism related income</td>
<td>Description and monitoring of schemes supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of jobs in tourism related activity (hotels, restaurants, guides, other services)</td>
<td>Job count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of tour operators visiting Konso, and length of stay</td>
<td>Tour operator survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of tour operators reporting visitors satisfied with the experience</td>
<td>Tour operator survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of handicraft sales</td>
<td>Survey of handicraft producers and retailers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action taken to conserve heritage</td>
<td>Actions reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of cultural and natural environment</td>
<td>Observation of any positive and negative change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 **Roles and responsibilities of participants**

**UNWTO**

- Release the ST-EP Foundation money to the project
- Receive and read the quarterly reports
- Comment on any problems or issues arising from the reports in time for the respective Steering Group meeting.

• Support SNNPRS and KSW with the project management and provide technical inputs on request.
• Keep the Steering Group informed of relevant information relating to ST-EP and other activities of potential use to the project.

**SNNPRS Tourism, Parks and Hotels Commission of Southern Region (TPHC)**

• Overall responsibility for the project, including its conduct and progress.
• Ensure quarterly accounts (prepared by KSW) and reports (prepared by KTO) are submitted to UNWTO.
• General authorisation for spending of resources based on quarterly budget.
• Chair Steering Group, including setting time and venue, calling meetings and circulating papers.
• Take minutes of Steering Group meetings and circulate them.
• Support, and give priority to, the project in their existing programmes.
• Provide additional knowledge, advice and capacity building to the project, as may be required and according to their competence.

**SNV**

• Provide technical support and assistance to the project.
• Strengthen the capacity of stakeholders to implement the project.
• Assist in project coordination, reporting, monitoring and communication.

**Ministry of Culture and Tourism**

• Support, and give priority to, the project in their existing programmes.
• Provide additional knowledge, advice and capacity building to the project, as may be required and according to their competence.
• Keep the project up to date on tourism knowledge, policy etc.

**Konso Special Woreda**

• Oversee local implementation of the project and work of the Konso Tourism Desk.
• Establish and manage project account.
• Coordinate and chair monthly working group meetings.
• Relate the project to work of all departments/units.
• Check quarterly reports and accounts.

**Konso Tourism Desk**

• Primary body responsible for project implementation in Konso.
• Take minutes of working group meetings and circulate.
• Prepare quarterly reports, accounts and budgets, in conjunction with Konso Special Woreda.
**Ethiopian Tour Operators Association and Ecotourism Association**

- Provide advice on project actions and implementation, especially in terms of meeting market needs.
- Facilitate communication with their members and wider tourism sector.
- Seek to strengthen coverage of Konso product in their programmes, including promoting the project and its aims, as appropriate.

### 3.3 Administrative and reporting procedures

**Contractual agreement**

The project will be based on a contractual agreement between:
- UN World Tourism Organization
- SNNPRS Tourism, Parks and Hotels Commission of Southern Region (TPHC)
- Konso Special Woreda
- SNV – Netherlands Development Organization

A draft text of the agreement is contained in Annex 2.

**Steering Group**

A Steering Group will be established, comprising representatives of:
- SNNPRS TPHC – Chair
- SNV
- Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Konso Special Woreda
- Konso Tourism Desk
- Ethiopian Tour Operators Association
- Ethiopian Ecotourism Association
- A representative of local communities in Konso
- UNWTO (*in absentia* – to receive papers)

**Terms of reference of the Steering Group:**

- To oversee the Konso Community Tourism Project throughout its duration
- To meet every three months (quarterly) over the course of the project (8 meetings in total). The meetings will normally take place in Awassa, but may be held from time to time in Konso, Addis Ababa or Arba Minch, as appropriate.
- To hold additional meetings should the group deem them to be necessary.
- To agree the work programme for the project and use this as the basis for project guidance.
- To check on the progress of project implementation and ensure that this is satisfactory.
- To receive and approve quarterly accounts and reports of activity for the previous quarter.
- To receive and approve proposals for activity for the forthcoming quarter, including spending plans against budget.

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*Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project*
• To provide helpful guidance and assistance to the Konso Tourism Desk and others involved in implementation.
• To request support from other organisations, as appropriate and necessary, and direct this towards the project.
• To provide clear and timely minutes of meetings, recording all agreed action points and who is responsible for them.
• To review the results of the project.
• To make and implement plans to enable the benefits of the project to be maintained after the two year period, including seeking further funding as necessary.

Working Group

A local Working Group will be established. The final composition of this Group will be determined locally, but it is recommended that it comprises:
• Konso Special Woreda Finance and Economic Development Office – Chair
• Konso Tourism Desk
• Konso Culture and Information Office
• Representatives from the village communities
• A representative from the hotels
• The Konso Development Association
• The local cultural development NGO – PARKA
• SNV (Largely In absentia*)

It is suggested that Mr Gezahagn Ayledo, head of Finance and Economic Development Office, is asked to chair this meeting.

The Working Group should keep in close touch with all relevant offices of the Woreda, and they may be invited to attend specific meetings as appropriate. Other stakeholders may also be invited to become involved with the working group as appropriate.

Terms of reference of the Working Group:
• To provide regular support and guidance on the day to day running of the project
• To meet every month (24 meetings in total) in Konso
• To hold additional meetings should this be deemed necessary.
• To invite other people to attend meetings, and to form sub-groups, as appropriate.
• To receive a verbal and brief written report on project activities and proposed activities by the KTD and others who may be engaged in activities.
• To comment on and seek to support these activities
• To ensure that reporting of activities and financial matters to the Steering Group is timely and of good quality
• To ensure that the various departments of the KSW, other relevant organisations and the people of Konso are aware of the project and its activities.

*Although it is suggested that SNV would not need to attend meetings as a matter of course, it would be helpful for them to attend the initial meeting(s) to provide guidance, and possibly one or two further meetings as may be considered useful.
• To provide clear and timely minutes of meetings, recording all agreed action points and who is responsible for them.
• To consider and advise on ongoing activities beyond the end of the project.

**Reporting procedures**

Minutes of the Working Group meetings will be prepared by the Konso Tourism Desk (in Amharic) and copies will be sent to all members of the Working Group and of the Steering Group.

A quarterly report will be prepared by the Konso Tourism Desk, checked by the Konso Special Woreda, and with advisory support from SNV. It will contain:

• A report on action taken during the preceding quarter
• An account of all moneys paid during that quarter
• A report of proposed action for the quarter to come
• A budget allocation for the action proposed in the quarter to come.

This quarterly report will be sent by email to UNWTO (in English) and all members of the Steering Group (in Amharic), one week before the quarterly Steering Group meeting. A task of the Steering Group will be to identify and comment on progress, as shown by action taken, and to approve the proposed future action (or recommend amendment to it).

The quarterly statements of accounts, identified above, will be made in ?????USD or EURO?. It will provide details of expenditure incurred on the project in accordance with the breakdown provided in the work programme, showing the date, amount disbursed, amount committed and total expenditure. The statement of expenditure would be supported by corresponding vouchers / receipts with a certificate from the designated official of KSW that the statement of accounts and the corresponding vouchers / receipts are correct to the best of his/her knowledge.

Minutes of the Steering Group meetings will be taken and circulated to members, with a summary of key points in English sent to the UNWTO.

**Payment procedures**

A special account for the Project will be opened at the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia in Arba Minch.

UNWTO will make three stage payments into this account:

• 50% of the total amount, upon the commencement of the project
• 25% after 40% of the funds have been expended (assumed in third or fourth quarter of 2007)
• 25% after 70% of the funds have been expended (assumed mid 2008).

Payments from the account will be handled by the Konso Special Woreda Finance Department, as guided by the reporting procedures outlined above. Following each quarterly Steering Group meeting the meeting chair (from SNNPRS TPHC) will authorise payments from the project to be made in line with the budget as approved by that meeting. Two signatories to the account will be required: The Konso Tourism Desk and the Konso Special Woreda Finance Department.
The two year work programme contains the following 12 elements:

1. Staffing, management and institutional strengthening
2. Office, equipment and general operations
3. Information centre
4. Market research
5. Consultation and awareness raising with village communities
6. Visitor charge and donations
7. Developing and diversifying the visitor offer
8. Guide development and training
9. Communication and promotion
10. Handicraft development and sales
11. Accommodation improvement and development
12. Conserving the heritage and improving infrastructure.

The budget allocation shown against each element, or specific items within them, is based on a consideration of approximate costs with the team during the mission. More detailed costings will need to be undertaken where necessary.

In each case, the budget allocation from the project fund of USD 80,000 (706,484 ET Birr) is shown. Where additional funding for that element or item should be specifically sought from external sources, this is also shown.

A very approximate indication of human resource input from the project team (the Konso Tourism Desk) in terms of person-days is shown, to guide planning.

A critical component of the project is the provision of technical assistance from SNV. SNV have agreed to provide 75 person days of technical assistance in year 1 of the project. It is assumed that this level of input may be repeated in year 2. Possible SNV days input are shown for each relevant action – this is indicative only.

The outline work programme and indicative budget allocation was developed and discussed within the team during the mission. This work programme reflects this closely. However, a greater proportion of external funding to be sought has been built into the budgeting, thereby enabling slightly larger sums to be freed up for some of the other items.

NB The programme and budget shown below is for the whole project, i.e. the two years together, and not for individual years.

Suggested timing of action is shown by indicating the year (1 or 2) followed by the quarter of that year (1, 2, 3, or 4) in the format year:quarter.
4.1 Project activities

1 Staffing, management and institutional strengthening

Objective
To establish a core team to implement the project (and ongoing delivery of tourism service in Konso) and equip them with the necessary skills and project management support

Context and justification
The success of the project depends on having a well motivated team capable of carrying it out. The Konso Tourism Desk is clearly well placed to provide this team. Derese Kochena could undertake a team leader function but is relatively young and inexperienced and will require strong support and management input from the monthly Working Group and its chair. It has been agreed that two additional staff should be recruited to the KTD to join him, in order to have the necessary human resource capacity to fulfil this project, notably in working with the villages. The whole team will need to be provided with more information and skills to help them perform their tasks.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTD Days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a Recruitment of 2 more staff to KTD</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b Staff input to project via KTD</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Derese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dinote, part time in project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 2 new staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c Training in tourism for staff</td>
<td>SNV+others</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer training for staff</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in community consultation techniques for staff</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional training and skills acquisition as required</td>
<td>SNV+others</td>
<td>1:3+</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d Team study visit to Bale mountains with communities – see 5c below</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>See 4c</td>
<td>See 4c</td>
<td>See 4c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible team study visit to other Ethiopian projects – eg Meket</td>
<td>SNV, MCT</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team study visit to East Africa (Tanzania)</td>
<td>SNV E Africa</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e Monthly working group meetings, including preparing papers and minutes</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly Steering Group meetings</td>
<td>SNNPRIS</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing quarterly accounts/reports</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
Guidance on actions

The new recruitment to KTD should not be based on filling the existing unfilled posts as described as these roles are not priorities for the project. Rather the new staff should focus their work on community engagement and information delivery. Potential new staff members should be selected primarily on communication skills and ability to work with communities and gain their confidence. Technical office ability, e.g. in computers etc. would be desirable, as would some knowledge of tourism. The position of Dinoe within the KTD should be clarified.

Basic tourism training should supplement what has been already provided by SNV and may be particularly directed at new staff members. It should focus on understanding tourism communications – markets needs, tour operators, information, promotion.

SNV is well skilled in community capacity building/consultation techniques and should be able to deliver training on this quite easily.

Computer training would be delivered by external technical trainers, probably through an intensive course in Arba Minch, but possibly in situ (to be investigated). SNV could help with sourcing.

There should be flexibility for additional and top up training throughout the project as required. This will also include any further direct, unspecified, advice and institutional strengthening by SNV.

In addition to accompanying a study visit for the community representatives to the Bale mountains, staff would also benefit from gaining knowledge of other community based tourism in Ethiopia. Contact with the NGO ‘TESFA’ should be established, with possibly a visit to their project in Meket near Lalibela – in any event, TESFA representative should be invited to Konso.

A study visit by staff and possibly KWS and SNNPRS representatives to community-based tourism initiatives in East Africa should be established if possible. This might include the cultural tourism projects in Tanzania, including the Usambara mountains. UNWTO could assist with contacts and SNV Tanzania should be approached for assistance.

These study visits should happen early on during the project if possible. External funding should be sought.

An action item is included here for project development. Basically, time should be made available to seek additional support and funding for the project at the outset and as it develops over time. SNV should play a key role here, but with support and input from the Ministry, SNNPRS and UNWTO.
The salary costs are based on:
- Providing an additional 825 ETB (USD 50) per month to Derese on top of his in recognition of the high commitment expected from the project. This would be bring his pay into line with the proposed pay (1565 ETB) for the KTD leader/coordinate position as identified by KWS but not filled.
- Paying the two new staff to be recruited at the rate currently paid to Derese (1040). The project will meet their salary for the first year but KWS has committed to meeting their salary beyond the first year of the project. The budget allocation shown here is therefore for 1 year only.
- 6% cost of employment (tax) has been added to these figures.

Computer training is based on approximate estimates from SNNPRS and SNV. Community consultation training will be covered by SNV's technical assistance input. Tourism and other training will partly be covered by SNV from their technical assistance input but sums have been put in to cover any additional input and related costs.

The additional within Ethiopia study visit budget is just given as a rounded target.

The E Africa study visits costs are mainly related to transport. Round trip air flight costs Addis to Kilimanjaro are USD 642. Allowing additional expenses of 75 USD per day for a 5 day trip would bring costs to approximately 1000 USD per person. Assuming 4 persons gives a budget of 4000. A further 1000 is added for ground transportation in Ethiopia and Tanzania. There could be a good chance of external funding for this trip – it is noted that World Bank support for small enterprises can include study trips.

The budget for meetings is to cover transport costs for KSW and KTD representatives to travel to quarterly steering group meetings in Awassa. The other steering group members will meet their own costs.

Outputs
- Capable team, able to deliver the project and continue to deliver ongoing service afterwards.
- Completed training programmes and study visits, with short reports on what was achieved.
- Well managed project with regular steering and working group meetings and good quality quarterly reports.

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
- Staff evaluation process by steering group
- Staff feedback on training and study visits
- Steering group and UNWTO feedback on accounts and reporting
- Attendance levels at steering group and working group.

Risk management
- Additional local (Konso speaking) staff of sufficient calibre may not be found.

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Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia  42
Response: Go ahead with staff available and continue searching. Pursue secondments from other activity.

- Computer training programmes may not be available to meet requirements.
- Response: Provide introductory training from existing users in KSW/SNV and encourage self-teaching using electronic programmes
- External funding may not be found for study trips.
- Response: Provide written, cd and internet based information on relevant projects
- Stakeholder and members participation in working/steering groups may be low.
- Response: Contact members and discover reason – seek to address. Increase travel support, but only if strictly necessary

2 Office, equipment and general operations

Objective
To provide necessary equipment and resources for efficient and effective operation of the project and for ongoing use by KTD

Context and justification
Currently the KTD is using a small office within the Woreda administration, but this is not permanent. It has one desk and a half-broken chair but no other equipment, although there is some access to phone and a computer within the Woreda administration. It is very difficult for the officers to get out to the villages and they mainly have to walk or rely on KSW vehicles that might happen to be going there. While it is theoretically possible to continue in this way, it is felt that a basic set of equipment is necessary for the project to be effective and efficient, especially in communicating with communities, tour operators and others. A set of requested equipment was presented during the mission and this has been reduced to a minimum (further desk and chairs, shelving, generator, computer, printer (combined with copier/fax), digital camera, motorbike). The necessity for this was confirmed by SNV.

The newly formed guided associates lacks any office base and it is felt that they could also benefit from sharing space and facilities with the KTD.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>KTO days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Acquire office furniture and computer equipment, including a motorbike</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Office general administration and running costs over 2 years</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

It is proposed that the KTD office should be opened in a new building which combines with an information centre and creates a visible presence for the project/KTD in the centre of the town. Actions/costs for the new office are covered under the information centre (3) below. It will be a little while before this new building is completed and so the equipment and office functions should be established in the current office in the interim period.

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Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia

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Note on costs/budget/funding

The following equipment costs were estimated by KTD during the mission (USD equivalent):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>table</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shelving</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computer and printer</td>
<td>1812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td>906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopier</td>
<td>2604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generator</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digital camera</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motorbike</td>
<td>3397</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of these costs appear quite high (with the exception of internet connection which appears low) and should be checked. A saving on the printer/fax/photocopier might be made by selecting a multi-function device. Additional chairs will be needed (but perhaps at a cheaper unit price). Additional cost of 300 USD has been added to cover extended warranty – see below.

Office administrative costs include telephone (including internet and fax), stationery (including printer ink), generator and motorbike fuel, general supplies. The figure given is a broad total estimate for 2 years.

The insurance figure is to cover office and equipment. Insurance of this kind is apparently not particularly common in Ethiopia and UNWTO should confirm that this is needed. The figure should also be reviewed based on a quote.

Outputs
- Well established office with well used equipment.

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
- Utilisation of equipment reported on
- Equipment performance/failures logged
- Office running to budget

Risk management
- Office equipment failure.
  Response: Equipment may come with a warranty – 2 year cover should be obtained if possible.
- Loss of equipment
  Response: Office building and motorbike must be secured. Insurance cover should apply to most common threats.
3 Information centre

Objective
To establish a strong, visible presence for Konso Tourism, combining a project office with tourist information centre, as an orientation and admission point for all groups and individuals coming to Konso.

Context and justification
A key strategy for strengthening the benefit from tourism is:
- to get a higher proportion of visitors of all kinds coming to Konso to stop,
- to improve awareness of the range of experiences and opportunities in the area,
- to provide orientation for visitors so they know more about the heritage, how to relate to communities and how their spending will help.

A highly visible and strategically located information/visitor centre in the town centre and on the Southern Circuit through-route would help in fulfilling this strategy. If combined with the project office, such a centre would also provide a clear visible presence for the project, enabling people from the local community to better engage with the team.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtra</th>
<th>KTD Days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>1,2,3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1,3</td>
<td>25,2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

A suitable site for the information centre has been identified, close to the strategic road junction in the centre of Karat on the main road through town. It has excellent visibility/sight lines along the road. The site is owned by KSW but currently has a short term occupant. Although KSW assure us that there would be no problem with moving this occupant, we must emphasise that this must be undertaken sensitively and with their consent, providing them with alternative accommodation suited to their needs.

The new building constructed on this site should strike a balance between:
- Authentic appearance, using local design and materials
- Good size space and functionality
- Reasonable cost.

The building should include office space at the rear and an information centre at the front, perhaps separated by a counter to enable staff working in the office also to service any people coming into the centre. The front area should contain professionally designed and printed information displays on the walls, including...
photographs and a display map showing what to do in the area. It should also contain a sales outlet with handicrafts on display (see Action 11).

A simple meeting space should be provided in the grounds of the information centre. This should provide sufficient space for small tour groups to sit together in the shade. It would primarily act as a place for them to obtain a welcome and brief orientation from the KTD/teachers. This space may be in the form of an open-sided circular shed. Simple facilities to prepare coffee/tea/ fresh water should be provided. There should also be a clean toilet for visitor use.

It is essential that a really high-quality sign, at right angles to the road and pointing in to the centre, is designed and erected.

NB. An alternative to developing this new information centre could be provided by the Konso Museum project being supported by the French Embassy. This museum project could eventually result in a major building and visitor attraction which might become a sufficient draw to serve as the natural orientation point for visitors to Konso. If this is the case, the whole information/orientation function might move to the museum site. However, the team felt that a dedicated information centre should be provided in the town centre, at least in the short and medium term as:

- A central location is far better for this purpose and for relating to local people, guides etc.
- The various stakeholders appear doubtful about the museum fulfilling this function.
- It was felt that the museum project may take some time to complete and it would be unfortunate for the tourism project to be held back by this and any complications that may arise from it.

Nevertheless, the projects should keep in touch and opportunities for synergy should be maximised.

Note on costs/budget/funding

An engineer from KSW has been asked to supply a costing for a building as specified on this site. For initial budgetary purposes a sum of 100,000 ET Birr (USD 11,324) has been included for the building. It is possible that the costing may come out higher than this, and an additional sum of USD 10,000 has been indicated as a matching contribution from an external source to enable the building and site to be developed to a high specification.

Information and interpretation displays may also be suitable for funding/sponsorship and matching external funding has been indicated here. Some of the external funding figure put against the building cost could also be used on information and displays.

A significant human resources figure has been indicated for running the centre. This would be supplied by team members part time and according to a rota system, with the person concerned also manning the office and undertaking office work (i.e. not sitting around waiting for visitors!).

Outputs

- New information centre and associated displays and orientation/interpretation facilities.
• High profile office location for project and KTD in future
• Base for guides association in conjunction with KTD.

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
• Number of visitors to the centre – recorded
• Percentage of observed/known visitors/groups going to the centre
• Feedback from tour operators and visitors

Risk management
• Building problems and costs exceeding estimates
  Response: Careful cost control throughout building planning and construction period
• External funding not forthcoming
  Response: A basic building should be designed to be achievable within core budget
• Building damage/break in
  Response: Establish strict security policy and implement

4 Market research

Objective
To ensure that the actions of the project are in line with the needs and interests of visitors and result in product offers that will be used.

Context and justification
Consultation undertaken during the mission has identified the considerable importance of the tour operators in determining the level of tourism in Konso – i.e. whether a stop here is included in the itinerary. It is imperative that action taken should evoke a response from them and be seen to be in line with the needs and interests of their clients. The operators have also indicated their interest and support for the project and preparedness to help in shaping it.

In general, a greater understanding is needed of who is coming to Konso and the proportion who stop here. This can be achieved through information from the tour operators and also through observation. This information can be used in monitoring the success of the project.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>KTD days</th>
<th>SNV Days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>KTD (ETO; EEA)</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>KTD (ETO; EEA)</td>
<td>1:1,2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>2:1,4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

The Ethiopian Tour Operators Association and Ecotourism Association should be asked to advise and help with acts 4a and 4b. The Ministry (MCT) should also be asked for support.

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
A comprehensive list of Ethiopian tour operators should be established, with email addresses. A short statement introducing the project (endorsed by ETOA and EEA) should be prepared, together with a short questionnaire to be returned to the project. This should ask questions on:

- Number of tours coming through/past Konso
- Number of tours which stop in Konso – checking also whether for refreshment, attraction visit, overnight stay
- What puts them off from stopping in Konso
- What improvements or product ideas would they like to see (give some ideas and seek reaction).

Tour operators should also be invited to come to one/two day visit to Konso to participate in a workshop at which they would give advice on how to improve the product and communicate with their clients. This should be held near to the beginning of the project before too many decisions on product are taken.

An observational survey could be carried out by a group of local young people. This would involve recording the number of tourist cars/busses/independent travellers coming through the town and whether/where they stopped. This could be run over a week, at different stages during the project. It might also involve asking a small set of questions of groups that stop.

**Note on costs/budget/funding**

The advisory visit could be run without funding – tour operators would pay their own costs. However, better and more positive attendance could be achieved if a financial contribution was available, and so project funds are allocated to this.

The young people undertaking the street survey should be provided with pocket money.

**Outputs**

- Good knowledge of tour operator/market needs and interests.
- A group of tour operators actively interested in the project and keen to support Konso.
- Good knowledge of visitor activity and how this changes between start and finish of project

**Effectiveness indicators and monitoring**

- Tour operator feedback
- Number of tour operators bringing groups to Konso – and activities there

**Risk management**

- Tour operators reluctant to participate

Response: Find out reasons and adjust approach accordingly.
5: Consultation and awareness raising with village communities

Objective
To ensure that the amount and type of tourism activity in the Konso Villages is approved and shaped by the communities themselves and that they are aware of how to maximise benefits from tourism and have a positive and fulfilling relationship with visitors.

Context and justification
A fundamental principle of community-based tourism is that the community receiving visitors should be in a position to determine what level and kind of tourism they want to see as well as receiving direct benefit from it. This can only be achieved through careful consultation and discussion of the opportunities within the community. Up to now this has not really happened in Konso, and there is considerable tension as a result.

It is difficult for the communities to understand the different ways in which they can provide for visitors and what they are looking for, so some exposure to places where community-based tourism facilities have been established will be important for them. The Bale mountain projects (established by GTZ) is relatively accessible to Konso and well known to SNV.

Much visitor harassment is coming from children and this could be overcome to some extent by putting across a different way of behaving within a more formalised education concept. It must be noted, however, that the warm and smiling reception given to visitors by children is part of the special experience of visiting Konso and this should not be lost.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTO days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>Discuss process of community consultation with key elders others</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>Hold a series of consultation and awareness raising meetings with individual villages, looking and visitor handling issues, project options, and schemes to use visitor income to alleviate poverty</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1,2,3,4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c</td>
<td>Conduct an education trip to the Bale mountains with representatives from each village</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d</td>
<td>Provide education to children on relating to tourists</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions
The process of community awareness raising and consultation needs to be very carefully handled. Specific training for the team in this has been built in under Action 1. It is envisaged that a series of meetings may need to be held with each village, also reflecting the traditional decision making processes within Konso communities.
These meetings should cover the following five topics:

- The community’s attitude to tourists, including current problems and benefits sought. Do they want to see any visitors at all? Would they like more visitors? What is the best time for visits? What don’t they like about the visits that take place? What do they want or not want to show visitors? Etc.

- Information to help the communities understand the visitors more – who they are, why they are visiting the villages and taking photographs, how they should be treated.

- The identification by each village of specific ways of using the money raised from visitors. It should be explained that visitors are more likely to give support to specific projects that they can be told about (and in a few cases also observe as part of their visit). Moreover, the ST-EP initiative wishes to see tourism support actions that will alleviate poverty and will benefit communities as a whole rather than just a few individuals. Typically, this might include water supply, sanitation, food security, medical care, education etc., but also could include community buildings and facilities.

- The identification of additional activities that the community may wish to provide, in order to gain more benefit from the visitors. Some possible ideas are given under Action 7 below.

- The importance of conserving the village appearance and heritage. It should be explained that visitors want to see traditional buildings and customs and that these should be conserved if visitors are going to continue to come and spend money here. The communities’ own concerns and priorities for their heritage, and how this relates to their quality of life, should be discussed.

In parallel with this community consultation, the team should develop their own ideas to put to the communities, reflecting:

- Inputs from the tour operators (see Action 4)
- The team’s own initial ideas on diversifying the tourism offer and the different roles of each village (see Action 7)

Consultation with the different villages should be spread over time during the first year, in order to be manageable.

Educational activities with children could be developed in conjunction with the school teachers and with the Sunday schools. Ideally, messages should be put across in ways that are fun and involve the children.

Note on costs/budget/funding
These important activities primarily call on human rather than financial resources. The indicative budget for the Bale mountains trip was suggested by SNV based on an earlier trip taken there.

Outputs
- Communities positively engaged in decision making about tourism
- Successful fact-find visit to Bale mountains
• Specific beneficiary projects identified for each village
• Practical additional visitor services, capable of earning additional money, identified.

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
• Extent of participation in community meetings/discussion
• Community consultation meetings recorded, together with points agreed.
• Community feedback before, during and at end of project

Risk management
• Communities may be very negative about tourism and wish to see less
  Response: Take care to look carefully with the communities about their concerns to ensure that they are making informed decisions, but in the end their wishes should be respected.
• Community reaction and proposals dominated by a few individuals
  Response: Over time, seek broader participation
• Projects identified to benefit from tourist income may not be likely to contribute to poverty alleviation and to benefit the whole community
  Response: Point out the weaknesses, while respecting community ideas and views
• Projects identified for providing additional services to visitors may duplicate ideas in other villages or not be practical, viable or in line with market interests
  Response: The team must be prepared to give good guidance here, with support from SNV, while still keeping the community on board and enthusiastic.

6 Visitor charge and donations

Objective
To establish a clear and fair process of collecting income from visitors and distributing this to the villages, which is understood by all.

Context and justification
The charge made for visiting villages is a key mechanism for gaining income for poverty alleviation from visitor spending. None of it is currently being passed on to the village communities. This must be rectified as a top priority for the project. It is important that the proceeds from the charge are used fairly to benefit poverty alleviation in the community as a whole, through supporting specific projects as identified above.

Some visitors may be keen to make voluntary donations to support the communities in addition to the compulsory charge. This kind of support for host communities is increasingly common, especially in parts of Africa. Success depends on identifying genuine projects and approaching visitors sensitively and with good information.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTD days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>KTD, KSW</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
Guidance on actions

Although agreement has been reached in principle about passing on the charge, there appear to be bureaucratic problems with implementation, partly due to the inability of communities to issue invoices. This problem needs to be looked at urgently, maybe with SNV providing external legal/administrative advice. Aspects of the solution may include:

- KTD acting as intermediary between the KSW and the communities.
- Printing clear admission tickets carrying the Konso Community Tourism brand logo.
- Establishing a separate account (or more formalised trust fund) for receipt of the money on behalf of the communities and for payment out to communities on the basis of recorded visits made.

Tour operators should be consulted and clearly informed about the procedures, and they should also be made known to tourists.

The charge per person has recently been increased from 30 ETB to 40 ETB (4.5 USD) This may be retained in the first year, but it is possible that the market could sustain at least a 50 ETB charge and maybe higher. The level of charge should be reviewed after year one of the project, in consultation with the tour operators.

There should be a formalised voluntary donations scheme. This should involve:

- Production of a simple but well designed hand-out, printed internally and regularly updated, which sets out the details of the causes that will be assisted and explains how even small amounts of money can help (see also Action Bd)
- Making sure that the guides draw attention to the scheme in their briefing of visitors.
- Issuing of receipts for donations.
- Providing further information about the beneficiary projects if requested, including opportunity to look at the projects where appropriate.

Note on costs/budget/funding
Small sums are included in the budget for related printing costs for invoices, information etc.

Outputs

- Efficient charging processes established
- Donation scheme established and related information available

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring

- Number and proportion of groups paying the charge
- Tour operator feedback – satisfaction with the charge making process
- Moneys actually passed on to the beneficiary causes in communities
- Donations made and visitor feedback on the process
Risk management
- Some operators continue to turn up without paying
Response: Encourage village elder (or responsible person) to check that groups have the KTD printed ticket, with the name of the village written on it.
- Operators/groups refuse to pay charge
Response: Access denied and situation reported to ETOA and MCT

7 Developing and diversifying the visitor offer

Objective
To establish a set of different products, experiences and itineraries in Konso from which tour operators and individual tourists can choose, so increasing the appeal of the area and the amount of income received by communities.

Context and justification
The villages each have rather different strengths, and these could be brought out more and made better known. The countryside and tracks also lend themselves well to hiking and potentially mountain biking. There is inherent interest in the area’s agricultural practices and heritage and traditions.

Tour operators are dealing with different types of visitor and itinerary schedules and need to be able to select easily the best timing and combination of activities to meet their needs. There is an increasing interest by visitors in communicating with local people and having authentic experiences, provided that health, safety and security are assured. Some types of visitor are also becoming more physically active. Some tour operators have indicated their interest in using camp sites.

Villages could benefit from providing and selling services in addition to the ordinary entrance.

Some individual people in the area could also be assisted in establishing diversified services to meet the needs and opportunities provided.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTD days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3, 2:1, 3, 4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7d</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3, 2:1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>As identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guidance on actions

Itineraries should be identified according to:

- Length of stay: half day; 1 day; 2-3 days.
- Special interest theme: village life; agriculture; cotton processing and weaving; music/performance etc.
- Special places visited: New York landformation; hot springs; chief's compound etc.
- Activities: walking or mountain biking – different lengths and degree of difficulty

The itinerary set should be kept relatively simple and clear.

The itineraries and products identified will include those that can be made immediately available and those requiring assessment and development.

At an early stage, the work can be done to strengthen the existing basic tours and experiences offered within the villages, involving the communities and guides together on this.

Information (printed and on the website) of the available itineraries should be regularly updated.

A systematic process of working with the individual villages over time to develop further charged-for offers should be undertaken. This will involve:

- Concept development and feasibility assessment, including costing and pricing
- Location, planning and design of any facilities
- Assistance with capital for construction
- Provision of advice and training on delivery of the service

Particular opportunities to consider further, amongst others, include:

- Simple camp site development. This should include:
  - good flat location, with some shade, privacy and security
  - toilet - long drop, with hygienic surfaces etc.
  - shower - well designed bucket construction
  - sheltered area for communal food preparation and eating etc.
- Simple accommodation building(s) in authentic style, similar to what has been provided at Bale Mountains or Merket.
- Catering provision (with well checked hygiene) - from simple coffee ceremony to more substantial traditional meal
- Cultural performances
- Handicraft demonstrations and participation
- Etc.

It is very important that tour operators are asked at the outset to give more specific and detailed advice on the kinds of service and facility they could use and the standards required.

Although it is not seen as a central part of the project, some advice and help could be given to people interested in establishing small businesses outside the village communities, provided that they were not competing with operations that could
deliver direct community benefit. An example might be the establishment of a small cycle hire business.

Note on costs/budget/funding

A significant proportion of the core project fund should be allocated to direct assistance with village projects. However, this is unlikely to be sufficient. Additional funding could be sought from a number of types of source:
- External funding bodies, e.g. the international agencies or embassies
- Tour operators. One international tour operator (Sawadee) has already expressed interest in sponsoring the development of a camp site and also advising on this
- Other money available to the communities. A particular source is the Safety Net programme which will provide financial support for labour input on projects.
- A possibility of establishing a revolving fund, replenished with a proportion of the income coming from the enterprise after it has become established.

Individual enterprises could be directed to local sources of micro credit that exist in the area. Some enterprise assistance (e.g. on feasibility and capacity building) could be available under established assistance schemes (e.g. World Bank scheme for support to MSMEs)

Outputs
- Established set of diversified itineraries and products
- Improved and diversified village visits
- Set of additional village based offers established
- Individual enterprises receiving some basic assistance and contacts

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
- Tour operator/visitor take up of the different itineraries
- External funding secured for additional product development
- Use of the different products and income earned from them

Risk management
- Products developed but tourists do not use them
  Response: Essential to have tour operator input and advice from the start. Adjust quality, price, promotion to attract use.
- External funding not found for product development
  Proceed with some/small projects according to core budget available

8 Guide development and training

Objective
To provide a group of committed and well-trained guides capable of delivering a high quality visitor experience and relating well to the local communities

Context and justification
The quality of the guiding is fundamental to this kind of visitor experience, and to maintaining relationships with communities and reducing hassle for visitors. Only 3 qualified local guides are now available – more are needed. Guiding provides a
source of employment for local people, especially young people, and can give them
good communication skills of value throughout their lives.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>KTD days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8a Provide training for up to 10 additional local guides</td>
<td>SNNPRS with SNV</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b Encourage acquisition of further guiding skills as opportunities arise</td>
<td>Tour operators</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>In kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c Support the Guides Association</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

A further training course should be run by SNNPRS and SNV based on the course run previously which appears to have been well received. Guides completing the course should be certificated. The need for possibly 10 additional guides was identified by the local team – it is important to reaffirm whether this many are needed.

One tour operator spoken to, Sawadee, said they might be interested in providing additional top up training for guides based on their experience. This should be welcomed, provided it is covered by the operators and is of no cost to the project.

A strong guides association should be fostered and they should be encouraged to maintain standards of good practice amongst their members.

Where possible, guides should be recruited from the individual local villages.

Note on costs/budget/funding
The guide training course cost estimate has been provided by SNV.

Outs

- Up to 10 additional guides trained and have joined the association.
- Konso earns a reputation for high quality local guides.

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring

- Number of certificated local guides operating in Konso.
- Income level to guides and to the association
- Tour operator and customer feedback on guiding quality

Risk management

- Some tour operators still not using trained local guides
  Response: seek agreement with operators, backed by ETOA
- People do not go on to work as guides once trained and seek other work
  Response: Careful selection of course candidates and affirmation of commitment; Take care to spread work between the guides.
- Guides do not have enough work to sustain them
  Response: Actively promote Konso to develop more business; Avoid training too many guides.

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project
and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
9 Communication and promotion

Objective
To strengthen awareness of Konso as a special place to visit on the Southern Circuit and ensure that all tour operators and visitors are aware of the range of itineraries and experiences available in the district. Also to provide all stakeholders with information about the project.

Context and justification
If the project is to provide new benefits for poverty alleviation, not only should existing visitors contribute more but also an increased flow of visitors should be sought. Promotional activity is important to deliver this. Positive messages and good information about the project will help to win support from visitors, local people and possible external backers.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>KTD</th>
<th>SNV</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9a Produce a set of high quality photographs of Konso</td>
<td>MCT</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b Prepare and maintain a simple Konso website, linked to other websites</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:2+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9c Design, print and distribute a promotional leaflet and small poster</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9d Produce a 'Konso Welcome' hand out for visitors, updated during the project</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3+</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9e Produce a regular local newsletter to inform people of project activities</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:2+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9f Maintain regular contact with Ethiopian tour operators</td>
<td>KTD, ETOA, EA</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9g Provide information about Konso and the project to guidebook editors</td>
<td>KTD, MCT</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9h MCT to give high profile to Konso in national promotions</td>
<td>MCT</td>
<td>1:3+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9i Mount a familiarisation trip for international tour operators and media</td>
<td>MCT</td>
<td>2:3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

The Konso villages have considerable visual appeal. Really high quality photographs, which can be used by the project in displays (e.g. in the Information Centre) and on the website, but also be made available to tour operators and media to use (provided they are captioned as Konso), can be hugely valuable promotional instruments. MCT has offered to supply their photographer to take a set of photos of Konso, provided his expenses are covered.

A dedicated Konso website should be kept quite simple – with messages about why the area is special, the visit/itinerary options, and the community tourism project. It should be linked to wider Ethiopia websites and those relating to community development etc.

Too often, expensive colour brochures, post cards etc. are produced about projects without proper planning of how they can be used and distributed. This should be
avoided. However, a single promotional brochure and a small poster with a really evocative picture of Konso could be used effectively – distributed to the operators, agents, hotels and other key points in Addis and on the Southern Circuit.

A really key communication tool would be a hand-out for visitors arriving in Konso. This would carry:
- A message of welcome
- Some brief background about the special heritage and culture
- A list of itineraries and what to see
- Information about the tourism project and the community projects that are being assisted
- Information on how to make donations
- Some simply guidance for visitors on how to interact with the community.

It should be very carefully designed to look highly professional, but could be printed in-house by the KTD on their printer and regularly updated to include new aspects of the project.

A simple project newsletter for local people could also be produced on the office printer.

International guidebooks, such as Lonely Planet, Rough Guides, Bradt etc. have a major influence in international travellers – they often use information from them to tell the tour representatives where they want to stop. Konso already has quite good coverage in them – but the guide editors could be encouraged to refer to the information centre and to the new initiatives coming from the community tourism project.

Regular contact should be maintained with Ethiopian tour operators, including regular emails to them on project activities (this could include the newsletters). External promotion should be handled through the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Towards the end of the project, the MCT should consider setting up a dedicated international familiarisation trip for international trade and media, perhaps in conjunction with South Omo.

NB: It is important that English language used in the main communication material – information displays (see 3b), website, print, hand-outs – is clear and accurate. It should be checked by mother tongue English speakers. SNV may advise on this, perhaps in conjunction with English language services in Ethiopia (possibly via British Council).

Note on costs/budget/funding
The budget figures used here need further checking against real costs of websites, print etc. in Ethiopia. They have been based on an understanding of costs incurred by others on similar activity.

The suggested international familiarisation visit would require external funding.

Outputs
- A set of promotional material, as specified above
- Stronger presence of Konso in tour operators programmes and international guidebooks

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project
and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia

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• Considerably improved awareness by trade and visitors of Konso, its products and the project
• Specific trade contacts recorded – including familiarisation visit
• Media coverage on Konso recorded

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
• Feedback from tour operators and visitors
• Recorded visitor numbers and enquiries

Risk management
• Spend on costly promotional material with little result
Response: Keep the material simple and concentrate on direct contact with the market

10 Handicraft development and sales

Objective
To gain greater economic benefit to the local community from handicraft production and sales to tourists, in keeping with the area’s cultural heritage

Context and justification
The sale of handicrafts provides an important way for spreading income from tourism within communities. At the moment, visitors have little exposure to genuine handicrafts from Konso and the amount of sales appears limited. Handicrafts are not designed and made with the tourist market in mind. There is some ad hoc informal street selling of souvenir items by youths in Karat but this is not organised, is inefficient, and the products sold are often of little interest to tourists.

Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>KTD</th>
<th>SNV</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10a</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10b</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>2:2 +</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10d</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

The audit will involve consultation within the 7 villages and possibly others to establish who is producing what kinds of items, volume of production, where they are being sold, etc.

Training should focus on designing items which reflect Konso traditional designs and local materials but which are best suited to foreign visitors (e.g. simple to carry home, etc.). Training would be provided by handicraft specialists, identified by SNV. The KTD could thereafter follow this up with simple additional advice to producers.
The Information Centre should provide a sales outlet (See Action 2). However, this should not take business away from other sellers. Further work may need to be done to improve and coordinate informal selling – perhaps working with the Youth Office on this.

**Note on costs/budget/funding**

A small sum for basic handicraft training is shown from the project budget. Ideally, a more substantial activity is needed, which will require external funding.

**Outcomes**
- Report setting out results of handicraft audit
- New set of handicrafts establishes
- Improved sales outlet(s)

**Effectiveness indicators and monitoring**
- Record of handicraft sales

**Risk management**
- Handicrafts produced fail to sell
  Response: Seek ideas and information from visitors as to what they might buy, and feed this into training.
- Too many handicrafts are produced for the market
  Response: Avoid encouraging too many people to get involved.

### 11 Accommodation improvement and development

**Objective**
To improve the quality of accommodation in Konso to an acceptable international standard

**Context and justification**
Current accommodation in Konso is universally regarded as poor and tour operators report that this is a major reason why they restrict their overnight stays in the area to a minimum. Addressing this is clearly a priority if increased visitor income is to be secured. The existing hotels could be made a little better, and this should be pursued, at least in the short term. However, they will not be able to reach the high standards required by many groups and so new hotel development should be supported where possible, building on existing proposals (by tour operators and others) to undertake development. Some types of tourist group are interested in simple community based accommodation and this should be developed as a further alternative.

**Actions**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>KTD</th>
<th>SNV</th>
<th>Project Budget</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11a</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1700</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b</td>
<td>MCT/SNNPRS</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11c</th>
<th>Help existing hotels to map out and implement simple improvement programmes</th>
<th>KSW, KTD</th>
<th>1:3,4 2:1</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11d</td>
<td>Establish community based campsites and traditional accommodation (see Action 7)</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>See Action 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e</td>
<td>Support new entrepreneurs in hotel development proposals</td>
<td>SNV, KSW, KTD</td>
<td>1:4+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>To pursue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guidance on actions

Hotel owners need basic management training to help them identify priorities for improvement and better management practices, including compliance with legal requirements.

Considerable improvement may be made quite simply through improving staff performance, for example on cleaning, catering and levels of customer service and care. A one week training session in Konso delivered by the hospitality training unit attached to the MCT is proposed.

During and following the two training sessions above, the project should encourage and where possible assist, the hotel managers and staff to map out and implement a programme of simple improvements. The work of the Sanitary Team, established by the KSW with the guidance of SNV before this project started, can provide a useful basis for advising the existing establishments on what is needed to make basic improvements.

It is beyond the scope of the project to assist the new hotel development projects with capital from the budget. However, they could be helped in their quest to raise external finance through associating with the project and, were possible, advice and contacts should be given. For example, a link could be made for them with the IFC and PEP Africa programme referred to by the World Bank. If a hotel development project starts to move towards fruition, the project could help with local Konso staff training and developing the local supply chain of food stuffs and other produce for the hotel. Extra resources would need to be found for this.

Note on costs/budget/funding

Hospitality training costs have been estimated by the MCT. Work relating to new hotel development support would be funded from additional external financial sources.

Outputs

- Training programmes with hotels completed
- Simple improvement programmes at hotels identifiable
- Community accommodation established
- New hotel development happening and supported

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring

- Feedback from tour operators and guests
- Future sanitary inspections

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*Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia*
- Numbers of bedrooms improved
- Number of new hotel bedrooms established
- Number of camping areas and level of use

**Risk management**
- No new hotel investment materialises
  Response: continue small improvements with existing hotels and community facilities

**12 Conserving the heritage and improving infrastructure**

**Objective**
To ensure that the special cultural and natural heritage of Konso is conserved, in its own right as an essential basis for future tourism income, and to encourage improvement in infrastructure to benefit both tourism and the communities.

**Context and justification**
These issues are outside the direct scope of the project but are very important to both tourism and poverty alleviation.

There are signs that physical cultural heritage is being eroded and the appearance of some villages is changing, for example with the replacement of traditional roofs with metal sheeting. Maintenance of traditional structures, such as the mora (communal house) and stone walls, is a priority for some villages.

Improvement of water supply and electricity is needed in Karat and throughout the district. There are programmes for this, but these might be accelerated through association with tourism development.

**Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTD days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12a</td>
<td>Include heritage conservation as an essential component of community consultation/awareness. See Action 5</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>See Action 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12b</td>
<td>Seek support for visitors for conservation activity. See Action 6</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>See Action 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12c</td>
<td>Maintain strong links between the project and local conservation initiatives (e.g. PAKRA programme)</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>All 10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12d</td>
<td>Strengthen and promote the case for more resources and management guidelines for Konso conservation within national and international bodies</td>
<td>MCT, SNNPRS</td>
<td>All 15 3</td>
<td>Separate project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12e</td>
<td>Strengthen and promote the case for accelerated infrastructure improvement for Konso district, linked to tourism</td>
<td>MCT, SNNPRS</td>
<td>All 15 3</td>
<td>Separate project</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guidance on actions

The actions proposed here are essentially about:
- Constantly keeping emphasising the importance of heritage conservation in all local work.
- Inclining, as appropriate, heritage conservation initiatives within the initiatives which are identified for support through the visitor charge and voluntary donations.
- Using the presence of the project, and the tourism argument, to press for more funding for conservation and use of other instruments which will protect the traditional structures. Contact should be made with the relevant culture and conservation protection personnel within the MCT at an early stage. The situation in Konso should be drawn to the attention of international conservation bodies and funds.
- Drawing the tourism argument and issues to the attention of those involved in prioritising infrastructure support.

On the latter point, the World Bank is supporting infrastructure projects and has told us that they have an agreement with the Government of Ethiopia that tourism will be taken into consideration in the prioritising and planning of this support. This should be pursued with the Bank and others.

Konso should be considered, possibly alongside South Omo, for larger scale support from the World Bank within their emerging programme of supporting tourism destination management. As well as relating to conservation and infrastructure, this may more generally provide additional support to supplement the project's funding in year 2 and to carry forward the initiatives started.

Note on costs/budget/funding

No separate project funding is allocated to this area. It requires time and contact making on behalf of the project and the Steering Group.

The approach has implications for sizeable additional funding for conservation and infrastructure, accessed through separate external projects to which this project could be linked.

Outputs
- Future/linked conservation and infrastructure projects
- Agreement on support for Konso within World Bank infrastructure support and tourism destination management programme

Effectiveness indicators and monitoring
- Cultural heritage and structures maintained and degradation stopped
- Identifiable improvements in water, sanitation and other services

Risk management
- Cultural heritage damaged and attractiveness of villages diminishes

Response: Strengthen communication and education; Re-emphasise urgency of securing support and resources for conservation management, as indicated above.
- Konso is seen as too small an area for such support, or, alternatively, loose out in comparison to higher profile areas nearby.

Response: Carefully identify Konso's relationship with cultural tourism and destination management in South Omo, and seek mutual benefit between these two areas.

### 4.2 Work programme summary

The table below reproduces the separate action tables as one composite table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTD Days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Staffing, management and institutional strengthening</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a Recruitment of 2 more staff to KTD</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b Staff input to project via KTD</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
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<td>800</td>
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<td>• Dinote, part time in project</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 2 new staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c Training in tourism for staff</td>
<td>SNV+others</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer training for staff</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in community consultation techniques for staff</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional training and skills acquisition as required</td>
<td>SNV+others</td>
<td>1:3+</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d Team study visit to Bale mountains with communities – see 5c below</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>See 4c</td>
<td>See 4c</td>
<td>See 4c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible team study visit to other Ethiopian projects – eg Meket</td>
<td>SNV, MCT</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team study visit to East Africa (Tanzania)</td>
<td>SNV E Africa</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1e Monthly working group meetings, including preparing papers and minutes</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly Steering Group meetings</td>
<td>SNNPR5</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing quarterly accounts/reports</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1f Input to project development and raising additional funds</td>
<td>SNV (SNNPR5, MCT, UNWTO)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2 Office, equipment and general operations</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a Acquire office furniture and computer equipment, including a motorbike</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b Office general administration and running costs over 2 years</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c Insurance</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Who leads</td>
<td>When</td>
<td>KTD Days</td>
<td>SNV days</td>
<td>Project Budget $</td>
<td>External funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Information centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>3a Build a new information centre, also to incorporate the KTD and</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>1:2,3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>guides office, and simple meeting space</td>
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<tr>
<td>3b Provide high quality signage/posting for the centre</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c Prepare information/interpretation displays</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d Running the information centre</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Market research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4a Email survey of tour operators</td>
<td>KTD (ETO; EEA)</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b Advisory and familiarisation visit and workshop in Konso for</td>
<td>KTD (ETO; EEA)</td>
<td>1:1,2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopian tour operators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4c Street survey/observation of visitor groups</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Consultation and awareness raising with village communities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a Discuss process of community consultation with key elders others</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b Hold a series of consultation and awareness raising meetings with</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:2,3,4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>individual villages, looking and visitor handling issues, project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>options, and schemes to use visitor income to alleviate poverty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c Conduct an education trip to the Bale mountains with representatives</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from each village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d Provide education to children on relating to tourists</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Visitor charge and donations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a Finalise method of implementing the payment of a proportion of the</td>
<td>KTD, KSW</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admission charge to village communities, and put into practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>6b Establish scheme for raising additional voluntary donations from</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3,4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>visitors for specific causes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Developing and diversifying the visitor offer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a Undertake an audit of the different product potential of the area</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and identify a possible set of itineraries and product options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b Work with each village community to strengthen and differentiate</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their normal charged-for visit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c Work with each village over time to establish a further service or</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3,4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facility that can be charged for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7d Provide advice, assistance and contacts to local individuals seeking</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1:3,4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21,2,3,4</td>
<td>As identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to establish micro/small businesses offering tourism services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia 65
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qrts</th>
<th>KTD Days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Guide development and training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a Provide training for up to 10 additional local guides</td>
<td>SNNPRS with SNV</td>
<td>1:2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b Encourage acquisition of further guiding skills as opportunities arise</td>
<td>Tour operators</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>in kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8c Support the Guides Association</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Communication and promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9a Produce a set of high quality photographs of Konso</td>
<td>MCT</td>
<td>1: 1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b Prepare and maintain a simple Konso website, linked to other websites</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1: 2+</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9c Design, print and distribute a promotional leaflet and small poster</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1: 3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9d Produce a ‘Konso Welcome’ hand out for visitors, updated during the project</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1: 3+</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9e Produce a regular local newsletter to inform people of project activities</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>1: 2+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9f Maintain regular contact with Ethiopian tour operators</td>
<td>KTD, ETOA, EA</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9g Provide information about Konso and the project to guidebook editors</td>
<td>KTD, MCT</td>
<td>1: 4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9h MCT to give high profile to Konso in national promotions</td>
<td>MCT</td>
<td>1: 3+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9i Mount a familiarisation trip for international tour operators and media</td>
<td>MCT</td>
<td>2: 3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Handicraft development and sales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10a Prepare an audit of handicraft production and sales outlets</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>2: 1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10b Organise training for handicraft producers</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>2: 2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c Provide basic advice to producers and sellers, following up from training</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>2: 2+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10d Extend handicraft sales outlets, including sales at information centre, and coordinate other selling</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td>2: 2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Accommodation improvement and development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a Provide business/management training to existing hotel owners/managers</td>
<td>SNV</td>
<td>1: 3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b Provide basic hospitality training to existing hotel staff</td>
<td>MCT/ SNNPRS</td>
<td>1: 3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c Help existing hotels to map out and implement simple improvement programmes</td>
<td>KSW, KTD Sanitary team</td>
<td>1:3, 4</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11d Establish community based campsites and traditional accommodation (see Action 7)</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See Action 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e Support new entrepreneurs in hotel development proposals</td>
<td>SNV, KSW, KTD</td>
<td>1: 4+</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>To pursue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Conserving the heritage and improving infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12a Include heritage conservation as an essential component of community consultation/awareness. See Action 5</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See Action 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12b Seek support for visitors for conservation activity. See Action 6</td>
<td>KTD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See Action 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia** 66
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who leads</th>
<th>When Yr-qtrs</th>
<th>KTD Days</th>
<th>SNV days</th>
<th>Project Budget $</th>
<th>External funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12c</td>
<td>Maintain strong links between the project and local conservation initiatives (e.g. PAKRA programme)</td>
<td>KSW</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12d</td>
<td>Strengthen and promote the case for more resources and management guidelines for Konso conservation within national and international bodies</td>
<td>MCT, SNNPRS</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Separate project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12e</td>
<td>Strengthen and promote the case for accelerated infrastructure improvement for Konso district, linked to tourism</td>
<td>MCT, SNNPRS</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Separate project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total sum for KTD days comes to 1350. This is equivalent to three full time staff posts for two years.

The SNV advisory days total 150. 75 days have been committed to year one and similar number has been assumed for year two. However, the scheduling of activity suggests that more of the total will be required in year one than year two, and SNV may wish to look at this allocation.

The project budget total comes to USD 80,000 which is the committed sum. The total for targeted external funding comes to USD 60,000.

**Consolidated budget**

The individual budget items identified in the work programme can be consolidated under the following headings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget: US Dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and study visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information centre and displays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product development - villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running costs and transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication/ promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time scheduling**

The work programme has indicated approximately when each item may happen, by specifying the year and the quarter within that year.

This is shown diagrammatically below. The shaded block show the suggested quarters for the main period of delivery. The plus (+) indicates that an action, started as shown by the block, would continue onwards over a period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Recruit staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td>Staff training – tourism, computer, community wk.</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1c</td>
<td>Additional staff training as required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>Team and community visit to Bale mountains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>Possible team visit to other Ethiopia projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1d</td>
<td>Team visit to E Africa/Tanzania</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Acquire office equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Build new information centre + office</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Create information centre signing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c</td>
<td>Prepare information/interpretation displays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>Survey of tour operators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>Advisory visit and workshop with tour operators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c</td>
<td>Street surveys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>Initial meetings with community elders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>Consultation work with the communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d</td>
<td>Education work with children – schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>Finalise arrangements on community charge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Establish voluntary donations scheme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>Undertake product audit and identify itineraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>Strengthen normal village visits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7c</td>
<td>Develop further village/community products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Run guide training course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8b</td>
<td>Further delivery of guide training skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9a</td>
<td>Produce Konso photographs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b</td>
<td>Develop simple website</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9c</td>
<td>Develop leaflet and poster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9d</td>
<td>Produce ‘Konso Welcome’ hand-out</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9e</td>
<td>Produce project newsletter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9f</td>
<td>Contact guidebook editors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9g</td>
<td>Mount international tour operator/media visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10a</td>
<td>Audit of handicrafts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10b</td>
<td>Training for handicraft producers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10c</td>
<td>Provide advice for handicraft producers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10d</td>
<td>Coordinate handicraft sales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a</td>
<td>Provide business/management training for hotels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11b</td>
<td>Provide hospitality training for hotel staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11c</td>
<td>Support hotels in improvement schemes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11e</td>
<td>Support new hotel projects</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia*
5 SOUTH OMO - POTENTIAL FOR A FUTURE PROJECT

This chapter assesses the potential for a future project in South Omo to contribute to poverty alleviation through tourism. First, the tourism and poverty context is described, secondly some key issues are brought out and thirdly some alternatives for possible projects are outlined, which could be considered for support through ST-EP or in other ways.

5.1 Tourism and poverty in South Omo

South Omo is an area of approximately 200 by 150 kilometres in the far south west of Ethiopia on the border with Kenya and Sudan. In reality, the area feels much larger than this owing to the limited and poor state of the roads and the time required to travel to and within it. It has a deep sense of remoteness. Less densely populated than other parts of Ethiopia, these are largely green lowlands and wetlands, fed by the Omo and other rivers and with a backdrop of highlands.

The most striking feature of South Omo is the cultural richness and diversity of the indigenous peoples. There are 16 different nationalities in the area, each with their own traditions and language. It is often referred to as the richest and most unchanged area in the whole of Africa in terms of the distinctiveness and diversity of living cultural heritage. This colourful richness can be clearly seen in the dress and body adornment of the people and in a variety of traditional practices. Observing this first hand is the main draw for visitors.

The people are largely pastoralists; some are nomadic but many are settled in villages. A number of small towns are scattered across the area, providing a limited range of services and also the venues for weekly markets. These markets, which occur on different days in the week according to the location, are a focal point of visitor interest, as here the tour groups can have easiest access to large numbers of colourful indigenous people. Tourists will also visit local villages.

The iconic status of the South Omo tribes within Ethiopia's overall tourism offer is striking. Photographs of the Hamer and other tribal groups are often to be found on the covers of guide books and tour operators' brochures. Various TV programmes have been made about them. The South Omo tribes are the main reason for the existence of a Southern Tourist Circuit in Ethiopia. The majority of incoming tour operators and handling agents offer itineraries in South Omo.

In addition to the living cultural heritage, the countryside is strikingly beautiful. Furthermore, this area has more potential than other parts of Ethiopia to offer a wildlife experience. There are two national parks and some other protected areas. The area is rich in birdlife and there are programmes to increase the mammal population which had been seriously depleted.

Despite this profile, the volume of visitors is not vast. However, statistical evidence is patchy and figures quoted in different sources often conflict and seem unreliable. The local administration referred to 12,689 tourists recorded in a recent year, of
which 9,659 were foreigners. The World Bank study estimated up to 8,000 tourists per annum on the Southern Circuit\textsuperscript{10}, contrasting with 57,000 on the Northern Circuit (although the latter includes religious festival attendance). Tour operators are generally reporting growth in visitor interest in South Omo.

The total population is 488,000. Although precise figures on the extent of poverty were not made available to us, we were told that this is one of the poorest areas of Ethiopia in terms of the proportion of people below the poverty line. Some manifestations of poverty include:

- Population increase
- Availability and use of water
- Extractive use of natural resources
- Numerous health issues
- Limited attendance at school.

The area appears to be badly affected by the impact of climate change, with unpredictable weather patterns emerging. A greatly extended rainy season caused serious flooding and loss of life and livelihood in parts of South Omo.

Currently, it takes at least two day's continuous driving from Addis Ababa to reach South Omo. There is a small airstrip in the sub-regional capital, Jinka, with around 4 flights per week by small plane, although flight cancellation appears frequent. Accessibility, however, will change dramatically over the next few years, with the development of a tarmac road from Arba Minch, through Konso and onward to Jinka. Work on many stretches of the road was evident during our mission. The road will accelerate change in the indigenous populations and will have a number of consequences for tourism.

South Omo is part of the SNNPRS (Southern Region). There is a Zone Administration covering the whole of South Omo, based in Jinka in the far north of the area. This is an intermediary level administration, under which there are a number of Woredas (Districts) largely based around the pattern of different nationalities. The Zone has recently placed a high priority on tourism development and has established a Tourism Desk with five staff. A number of local young people from South Omo attended the guide training course run last year by SNV and the SNNPRS, and there is an active local guides association.

5.2 Key issues for tourism in South Omo

The state of tourism in South Omo and its impact on communities and poverty is complex. The following key issues emerged during the mission:

Sensitivity to community needs and the meaning of poverty

It would be wrong to believe that simply increasing the amount of income from tourism coming into the communities will alleviate poverty. It is necessary to understand community structures, sensitivities and traditional livelihoods before making assumptions about the effect of change. This was underlined in a discussion

\textsuperscript{10} Ethiopia: Towards a strategy for pro-poor tourism development, World Bank, 2006
with anthropologists at the South Omo Research Centre who have been studying and working with the different tribes for many years and who held a workshop on tourism and social sustainability at the end of 2005. Some interesting examples of the complexity of issues include:

- The threat of new income sources leading to a neglect of traditional agricultural practices and a loss of skills and knowledge in these fields.
- Time spent waiting for income from tourists – e.g. standing around waiting to charge for a photo – can be very wasteful.
- Small injections of cash are often spent unproductively, for example on hard alcohol, rather than on community benefit.

The implications are that it is very important to respect the need for the individual communities to make their own decisions on how to respond to tourism, but that it may also be helpful to work with them to understand the opportunities and effects of tourism and how this can be best used to meet the outcomes that they are looking for. This needs both care and time.

**Community relationships with visitors and sources of income**

The existing relationship between the communities and tourists is not entirely positive or stable. Primarily it revolves around the taking of photographs, with tourists being asked to pay money to the subjects of each picture taken. This leads to a lot of haggling, which can be quite aggressive, leading to a feeling of discomfort on all sides.

Until recently the unwritten standard rate was 1 ETB (0.11 USD) per person-photo. A seminar on sustainable tourism in South Omo earlier in 2006, involving the SNNPRS, looked at this issue and attempted to set out standards. It was agreed that a rate of 1 ETB was too low and should arguably be 10 ETB. However, a new code does not appear to have been clearly formulated or actively promoted to the communities, tour operators and tourists.

Some communities and individuals are involved in obtaining income from visitors in other ways, including handicraft sales and the charging of an admission price to visit villages. Camping sites may be found near some villages, but community engagement in, and income from, such activities is uncertain.

The situation is different between the tribes. We were told that the Hamer have it well sorted out, but our experience there was one of quite intense bargaining over photos. The Karo, apparently, have three main villages to which they charge an entrance. The Mursi tribe, which is one of the most interesting and visited, have found it more difficult to work out how to relate to visitors and tensions are apparently strong here.

**Opportunities presented by the National Parks**

The National Parks could provide a welcome additional dimension to the tourism offer in South Omo and in Ethiopia as a whole. Omo and Margo National Parks are both currently very isolated, but access is improving. There are a number of poverty-related issues here as well, with the added dimension not only of the effect of tourism on community livelihoods but also of the combined impact of this relationship on conservation.

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*Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia*
Omo National Park has recently been taken over by African Parks Foundation. There has been much speculation and press coverage at the time of hand over about the Park's intentions towards indigenous people. Over time, they are keen to work with the 8 community groups in and around the park on the development of community-based tourism. This is still early days and the Park is currently very little visited. The Park is keen to let out tourism operations on a commission basis, which may have implications for planning, standards and community engagement.

We are unclear about the future management of Margo National Park. The Mursi tribe are located in and around the park. There appears to be an issue about the admission charge made to the Park and the benefit received by the Mursi from this and from the visitors who come to see them. There may be confusion in the minds of visitors and others about what they are paying for and where the money is going.

**Investment in tourism infrastructure and services**

The Zone Administration is concerned about the level of standards of tourism services, including accommodation. They would like to see an increase in quality and also some accelerated new investment, which they believe has been slow in materialising even though permission for new development has been granted on various sites.

We stayed in a reasonable hotel in the zone capital, Jinka, which is adding new rooms, and we visited a hotel in Turmi with canvas cabins which is also expanding. At least one new lodge development was also pointed out to us. However, we would accept that the overall quality and standard of currently available accommodation is probably quite low and there is little overall planning of new tourism services and infrastructure in order to meet anticipated demand.

**Capacity and skills at a local level**

The Zone Administration emphasised to us that their capacity and knowledge of tourism issues is extremely limited. This applies to the five people now allocated to the Tourism Desk. They are also hampered by lack of equipment and difficulty in reaching the different tribal areas, many of which are far from Jinka over poor roads which are often impassable. They are very keen to improve their ability to help the communities respond to tourism and to check and influence quality standards. At the moment, however, they do not know how to implement action. They would like to see a new project, which they can work with, and which can supply them with skills and equipment.

The guides association appears to be quite active and the young guides we met have an impressive grasp of the tourism issues and communicate well. They are clearly a resource to work with and build upon.

5.3 **Outline of possible projects**

South Omo is a hugely important area, both in terms of cultural heritage and for the future of tourism in Ethiopia, which has been recognised as being predominantly culture driven. The relationship between tourism and indigenous communities is
complex throughout Ethiopia, but is arguably in highest profile here in South Omo. A project centred on this makes sense and has national level implications.

It should be recognised that tourist-community interaction and benefit is the focus of the current ST-EP project in neighbouring Konso. This project could pave the way for a further and possibly larger project in South Omo, and lessons could be learnt from it.

The difference between Konso and South Omo is the size and inaccessibility of the latter area, the number of different indigenous cultures (16 rather than 1), and the far more complex administrative situation. In South Omo there is both a Zone administration and also a whole set of Woredas, whereas in Konso there is one authority, the Special Woreda, with combined powers.

For these reasons, it would be inappropriate and impractical simply to repeat the Konso project, with the same level of resources, in South Omo as a whole.

During the mission there was debate about whether a future project should seek to work across the whole of South Omo or concentrate on just one or two tribes. The Zone Administration, the guides and a number of others wished to see one project for the whole area, as it was pointed out that the issues are similar throughout. Yet they also recognised the practical difficulties with this.

We understand that the ST-EP Foundation is seeking to spread the benefits of its relatively limited funds, and it may be sensible to assume that it will not support a sizeable additional project in Southern Ethiopia. A substantial and comprehensive project in South Omo would need to be driven forward with funding from another source, yet encouraged and supported by UNWTO and ST-EP.

In the light of the above considerations, we recommend that the following alternative projects are considered:

- A comprehensive destination management project for South Omo, within the programme being introduced by the World Bank.

- One or two possible smaller projects, which could be similar in size to the Konso project and within the budget range of existing ST-EP projects:
  - A project covering the different aspects of tourism and poverty alleviation, but focussing on just one or two tribes.
  - A project focussing on just one theme, the code or agreement between tourists and communities concerning charges made for admission and photographs, across South Omo.

These three alternatives are looked at in more detail below.
1 South Omo Destination Management Project

Location
The whole of South Omo zone

Context
South Omo is a major existing and potential tourism magnet for Southern Ethiopia. The new tarmac road to Arba Minch/ Addis Ababa will bring opportunities and change. Tourism is largely unplanned in the area and the Zone Administration lacks essential skills and capacity. Ideally, a comprehensive approach is needed which is forward looking and addresses tourism infrastructure and services, community/cultural/social tourism issues, skills training, information and promotion, within the context of an agreed strategy and action plan.

Objective
To ensure that South Omo maximises the opportunity presented by tourism, through well planned growth that delivers benefit to local communities while providing services and experiences of a quality sought by international markets.

Description of proposed activities
- Review of current structure of tourism planning and delivery – SNNPRS, Zone Administration, Woredas and private sector groupings – with recommendation for improvement.
- Capacity building and institutional strengthening for the above, focusing on the Zone Administration Tourism Desk.
- Market assessment and engagement of tour operators.
- Product audit and development assessment.
- Community consultation across the 16 nationalities, including development of agreements of tourist charging and handling.
- Preparation of destination management strategy/plan for the area.
- Programme of capacity building for communities and small enterprises.
- Support for infrastructure improvement and new investment.
- Development of information/orientation activity and promotional campaign.

Expected outputs
- Agreed destination management plan.
- Set of training programmes.
- Information and promotion collateral.
- Corps of staff with skills and capacity to continue destination management.

Expected impacts, including impact on poverty
Overall significant change in the profile and performance of tourism, securing general increase in the prosperity of South Omo.
Medium to long term impact on tourism employment opportunities across the zone and levels of income within the sector.
Improved benefits from tourism for the indigenous communities.
Required inputs and costs
Sizeable, comprehensive project, led initially by an international consultancy team working with, and training, the Zone Administration as counterparts. (300 – 500k USD)
Local project team, supported by technical assistance, engaging in consultation and follow-up capacity building across the area (100 – 250k USD)
Budget for spending on information delivery/communication/marketing (50 – 100k USD)
Possible capital and infrastructure costs/budget in addition.

Clients/counterparts
SNNPRS
South Omo Zone administration
Local Woredas

Possible partner organisations
The World Bank would lead on this project as primary funders
UNDP
Ministry of Culture and Tourism
SNV
UNWTO
Other development assistance agencies

Possible timing
Three year project, starting mid 2008

Overall comment on the project
This is a sizeable project, beyond the scope of ST-EP. Its feasibility depends significantly on how the World Bank sees the development of its proposals for destination management in Ethiopia and the resources it will put in to this.

2 Mursi community tourism project and extension to other tribes

Location
Mursi community lands, Margo National Park. Remote area, south and west of Jinka, with poor access roads subject to seasonal closure owing to rain.

Context
The Mursi are a colourful tribe of considerable visitor interest. They are generally reckoned to present the greatest challenge amongst the tribes of South Omo in terms of their relationship with tourism. Experiences working with them could be translated to others.

Objective
To help the Mursi identify and achieve the kind of relationship they want to have with visitors, bringing tangible benefits to the community which can be equated with appropriate concepts of poverty alleviation. An associated objective is to spread the approach and lessons to other tribes, possibly linking to a further one or two tribes towards the end of the project.
Description of proposed activities
- Careful and extensive community work – visioning, identifying objectives, developing alternatives, etc.
- Project development – interpretative tours, events, services, handicraft sales etc.
- Capacity building and training
- Communication activities with tour operators, guides and tourists
- Clarification of relationship with Margo National Park
- Work with selected neighbouring tribe(s).
- Dissemination of results across South Omo.

Expected outputs
- Agreed vision/plan
- Agreed policy on visitor relations, charging etc.
- Set of product offers, with associated facilities
- Good relationship with guides and operators developed

Expected impacts, including impact on poverty
The Mursi tribe numbers only around 5,000. The main impact will be on their ongoing prosperity and quality of life.

Required inputs and costs
Project officer selected, possibly from one of the existing 5 in the Zonal Tourism Desk, thereby enabling continuity and capacity building with colleagues. There will need to be a liaison counterpart who is Mursi and who speaks the tribal language.
Significant technical assistance programme, probably from SNV and based partly on Konso experience.
Costs in range 50k - 80k USD, to cover personnel, training and small capital projects.

Clients/counterparts
SNNPRS
South Omo Zone administration
Mursi Woreda
Margo National Park
Mursi community – tribal structure

Possible partner organisations
South Omo Research Centre. Their knowledge of tribal structure and issues will be invaluable and they have recently been supporting a masters student from and Ethiopian University who has been studying tourism issues relating to the Mursi.
SNV

Possible timing
2 year project, starting January 2008.

Overall comment on the project
This has some similarities to the Konso project. However, it will be more focussed, working with just one small tribe, and costs should be less. It will
also have the special dimensions of the South Omo situation – unique, sensitive, remote tribe with strong tourist-community tension.

3 Tourist code for South Omo

Location
Whole of South Omo Zone

Context
The primary issue for tourism and its relationship with communities in the area is the way visitors are charged for taking photographs and how this does, or might, relate to other charging processes such as an overall admission charge. This really needs sorting out so tourists and communities know where they stand. The current tension is damaging the visitor experience and leads to negative relationships.

A recent meeting in the area paved the way for an agreed code, but this has not been implemented.

Objective
To establish and begin to implement a clear visitor code across South Omo, setting out how visitors should be charged for taking photographs and when and how this charge should be made, and/or establishing alternative mechanisms for equivalent income earning for the communities as a whole.

Description of proposed activities
- Consultations and workshops with groups of communities
- Engagement of tour operators
- Feedback research with tourists (possibly email based after visit, or short meetings with touring groups)
- Drafting and consulting on agreements
- Communication processes within communities and to tour operators, to spread the agreement

Expected outputs
- Established agreement, printed as a simple code in several languages
- Verbal communication of agreement
- Widespread knowledge of agreement locally
- Practices clearly improved on the ground

Expected impacts, including impact on poverty
Medium to long term security of tourism income in South Omo, based on significantly improved visitor experience.
More efficient income earning processes, leading to improved quality of life/livelihood.
Increase community-based income, more equitably shared in communities.

Required inputs and costs
Task team appointed – possibly two local people working over one year.
Steering group with tour operator and community representation.
Extensive transport costs within the area
Research costs
Communication/dissemination costs

Total budget requirement around 40 - 50k USD

Clients/counterparts
SNNPRS
Zone Administration
Communities

Possible partner organisations
Ethiopian Tour Operators Association
Ethiopian Ecotourism Association
South Omo Research Centre

Possible timing
1 year, starting January 2008

Overall comment on the project
This could be a well-focussed project, getting to grips with a universal but difficult issue. There may be difficulties obtaining agreement between the diverse tribes.
ANNEX 1

KONSO COMMUNITY TOURISM PROJECT
INCEPTION MEETING

December 21, 2006
Held in the offices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Addis Ababa

AGENDA

1 Introduction

2 Report on mission December 11 - 21 by Dr Richard Denman, UNWTO expert

3 Background and objectives of the Konso Community Tourism Project

4 Management and administrative procedures

5 Roles and responsibilities of Steering Group members

6 Outline of 2-year work programme

7 Timetable and meetings schedule

8 Any other business
KONSO COMMUNITY TOURISM PROJECT
INCEPTION MEETING

December 21, 2006
Held in the offices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Addis Ababa

MINUTES

Present:
- Almaz Beyero Hirbaye, SNNPRS Regional Commissioner for Tourism (Chair)
- Richard Denman, representing UNWTO
- Tesfa Teshome, Ministry of Culture and Tourism
- Daniel Truneh, SNV
- Abdurahiman Kusa, SNV
- Örrese Kochena, Konso Tourism Desk (also representing Koso Special Woreda).

No representatives of the Ethiopian Tour Operators Association were able to attend owing to prior engagements. This is likely to be due to the short notice in calling the meeting.

Report on mission

Richard gave a brief resume of the mission and thanked all those involved in preparing the programme and accompanying him on the mission. He particularly drew attention to the well attended stakeholders forum in Konso and the interest shown in the project by Konso people. There were no further comments on the mission.

Background and objectives of project

Richard reminded the meeting of the background to ST-EP and the purpose of the project. He circulated a page of objectives and indicators and asked for comments. Abdurahiman pointed out that most of the indicators are about income and felt that we should equally concentrate on aspects of participation vs. non-participation by the community. Almaz pointed out that there needs to be consistency with other sustainability objectives – e.g. handicrafts should not be made if wood if this encourages cutting down trees.

Management and administrative processes

It was agreed that it would be helpful for the Konso Special Woreda to sign the project agreement, together with the Regional Commission and SNV. This will create more local ownership. However, the Regional Commission will retain overall responsibility for the project.

It was agreed that the local monthly Working Group should perhaps include representative from all the villages engaged, rather than just 3 community representatives. The KDA should also be involved in the working group.

The overall reporting processes outlined were agreed.

Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project
and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia
Daniel questioned the idea that financial management should take place at the Woreda level. He felt that the Regional Commission should be able to demonstrate its ability to undertake this without bureaucratic delay, and this should be part of their accountability for the project. One body should be accountable. Almaz repeated her concern about this. Richard agreed to seek the opinion of UNWTO.

**Roles and responsibilities**

A list was circulated. Daniel suggested that the should be community representatives on the quarterly regional steering group. There was some disagreement about the practicality of this, but the principle was agreed and this will be included.

Tesfa asked for the report to include the Terms of Reference for the Steering and Working Groups.

**Outline 2-year work programme**

Richard ran through the outline programme, which was tabled. The meeting was happy with the programme as presented. The following points were raised:

Staffing. Almaz questioned whether KSW would really be able to take the cost on in year 2. Richard said that the KSW representative had committed to this.

Daniel underlined the need to look at benefit sharing within the communities.

Daniel pointed out the size of the proposed budget for ‘village projects’. Richard said that this might be a feature for support from external funding sources, releasing more of the budget for other activities listed. Daniel pointed out the expressed interest of the Netherlands Embassy and the Irish. Richard agreed to indicate project elements for external funding. SNV agreed to pursue these possible external sources.

Richard said that he had asked Derese to look again at possible costs for the office and information centre building.

Tesfa said that his role in the Ministry may limit his personal involvement in the project and that some other staff may be assigned to it. However, he pledged to give the project his support where possible. Daniel said that the Ministry’s input was very important and we needed a focal person there.

**Meetings schedule**

Richard outlined the process of reporting to UNWTO. He suggested that the next meeting of the Steering Group might be scheduled for mid to late February, with the quarterly meeting cycle taking on from then.

**Close of meeting**

Almaz thanked the meeting and all involved in the mission and project. Daniel thanked the participants on behalf of SNV and underlined the need for smooth cooperation and effective management. He was looking for good results from the project.

Tesfa added his thanks on behalf of the Ministry.

Derese thanked all concerned on behalf of the people of Konso.

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*Action plan for Konso Community Tourism Project and scoping study of South Omo, Ethiopia*
ANNEX 2  DRAFT TEXT OF CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT BETWEEN

THE UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (UNWTO),

SOUTHERN NATIONS, NATIONALITIES AND PEOPLE'S REGIONAL
STATE (SNNPRS)

KONSO SPECIAL WOREDA (KSW),

AND

THE NETHERLANDS DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (SNV) IN
ETHIOPIA

This Agreement is entered into,

between

The United Nations World Tourism Organization having its office at Capitán Haya 42, Madrid, Spain (hereinafter referred to as UNWTO), represented by Mr. Francesco Frangialli, Secretary-General;

The Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Regional State having its office in Awassa, Ethiopia (hereinafter referred to as SNNPRS), represented by Ms. Almaz Beyero Hirbaye, Commissioner, Tourism Parks and Hotels Commission;

Konso Special Woreda, having its office in Konso, Ethiopia (hereinafter referred to as KSW), represented by XXXXXXXX;

and

The Netherlands Development Agency (SNV) in Ethiopia, having its office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, (hereinafter referred to as SNV Ethiopia), represented by Rem Neefjes, Country Director SNV Ethiopia;

For the purpose of the implementation of a technical cooperation project in Ethiopia within the overall framework of UNWTO/SNV programme on Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP).
1. Scope of Work

This agreement covers the implementation of UNWTO ST-EP project, namely, Konso Community Tourism Project – Konso, Ethiopia.

1.1. The project aims to establish a successful tourism project within Konso District that generates income and benefits for the Konso community, by:

   i. Building the capacity of the Konso Special Woreda and its partners to organise and manage tourism in the area so as to maximise benefits passed on the local community;

   ii. Creating an information centre and presence for the Konso Tourism Desk in a strategic location, and providing an orientation to visitors

   iii. Building a strong communication and liaison with tour operators and enlisting their support in the improvement and promotion of the Konso experience;

   iv. Working with 7 village communities to: identify how they wish to engage in tourism; improve relationships with visitors; receive and make use of payments from visitors; diversify the visitor experience and establish community-based offers.

   v. Increase the number of well trained local guides;

   vi. Strengthen promotion and information about Konso;

   vii. Improve handicraft production and sales in line with market demand;

   viii. Improve the quality of accommodation in the area and help any new development to benefit the community;

   ix. Encourage action to conserve the cultural and natural heritage and improve the area’s infrastructure.

The work programme is attached as Annex A to this document.

2. Duration of Agreement

2.1. This agreement will be for the period of two years commencing 1 February 2007 to 1 February 2009.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

UNWTO

3.1. UNWTO has initiated the ST-EP programme, the central objective of which is to contribute to the MDG’s of the United Nations, in particular through contributing to the elimination of poverty via sustainable tourism. UNWTO acts as executing agency for the implementation of projects that receive a contribution through the ST-EP Foundation. UNWTO shall support SNNPRS and KSW with the project management and provide technical inputs on request. UNWTO will review the project reports it receives from SNNPRS/KSW, and timely provide approval for money transfers to the project account for project implementation.
SNNPRS
3.2 The SNNPRS shall assume overall responsibility for the progress and implementation of the project, including chairing the project Steering Group, coordination of key stakeholders and ensuring UNWTO receives satisfactory and timely accounts and reports.

KSW
3.3 The KSW shall oversee the local implementation of the project, chair a monthly working group, and provide financial management and accounting.

SNV Ethiopia
3.4 SNV Ethiopia will provide technical support as set out in the work programme (Annex A to this document), which shall include: capacity building and institutional strengthening; advisory support in the planning and implementation of the project and on monitoring and reporting.

4. Payment and Accounting

4.1 The ST-EP Foundation has made an amount of USD 80,000 available as contribution to the Konso Community Tourism Project. In order to accomplish the assignments and ensure successful implementation of project activities, UNWTO will provide this amount to the project account.

4.2 For its part and contribution to the project SNV Ethiopia shall make available in-kind technical assistance of XXXXX advisory days (75 days in year 1 – total to be confirmed for the 2 years).

4.3 The UNWTO funding will be made available to the project account.

- 50% of the total amount, upon the commencement of the project
- 25% after 40% of the funds have been expended (assumed in third or fourth quarter of 2007)
- 25% after 70% of the funds have been expended (assumed mid 2008)

The instalment will be credited on the following separate bank account in ??? US Dollars or Euros (UNWTO to clarify):

Commercial Bank of Ethiopia, Arba Minch..........

IBAN

4.4 The SNNPRS and KSW will ensure that the funds provided by UNWTO are spent strictly on the items detailed in the projects budget (Annex A to this document). Any deviation from these items will be done by SNNPRS and KSW only after obtaining the explicit approval of UNWTO in writing.

4.5 Within 15 days upon completion of all activities relating to the project, SNNPRS will submit to UNWTO a final statement of accounts in US$ providing
details of expenditure incurred on each project activity for UNWTO final approval. The SNNPRS will also add explanatory notes, wherever required.

4.6 Together with the final statement of expenditure specified in 4.5 above, the KSW shall return any unspent balance to UNWTO.

5. Reporting

5.1 A quarterly report will be prepared by the Konso Tourism Desk, and checked by the Konso Special Woreda, and with advisory support from SNV Ethiopia. It will contain:
- A report on action taken during the preceding quarter
- An account of all moneys paid during that quarter
- A report of proposed action for the quarter to come
- A budget allocation for the action proposed in the quarter to come

5.2 This quarterly report will be sent by email to UNWTO (in English) and all members of the Steering Group (in Amharic), one week before the quarterly Steering Group meeting.

5.3 Minutes of the Steering Group meetings will be taken and circulated to members, with a summary of key points in English sent to the UNWTO.

5.4 The quarterly statements of accounts, identified above, will be made in USD or EURO. It will provide details of expenditure incurred on the project in accordance with the breakdown provided in Annex A to this document, showing the date, amount disbursed, amount committed and total expenditure. The statement of expenditure would be supported by corresponding vouchers / receipts with a certificate from the designated official of KSW that the statement of accounts and the corresponding vouchers / receipts are correct to the best of his/her knowledge.

5.5 Upon completion of the project, SNNPRS, with advisory support from SNV Ethiopia, will submit to UNWTO detailed reports detailing the outputs and outcomes of all the project activities.

6. Access to financial information and Auditing

6.1 UNWTO will have right to access financial and program related documents for review and audit purpose.

7. Indemnity/Release of Liability

7.1 All liabilities arising from or in connection with the implementation of this project shall be the responsibility of the SNNPRS and no liability of any nature shall be passed on to the other parties of this agreement. This clause shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any termination or expiry of this agreement.
6. 8. Termination of this Agreement

8.1 *Either party* can terminate this agreement by giving two weeks written notice due to any of the following reasons:

a. lack of cooperation from the either party;
b. lack of progress on project implementation;
c. lack of desired quality in producing project outputs; and
d. misuse of funds.

8.2 Expiry or Termination of this agreement shall not affect any accrued rights or liabilities of either party nor shall it affect the continuation into force of any provision of this agreement. This clause shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding any termination or expiry of this agreement.

8.3 Upon termination of this agreement, the SNNPRS shall promptly send to UNWTO all reporting and accounting documents of any nature made or compiled by them, by KSW or by other persons involved in the activities of project implementation.

9. Confidentiality

9.1 Any information, documents, software, technology, data, manuals and other materials which relate to either parties to this contract its activities, business "confidential information" shall remain the property of the concerned parties. No party shall transfer or divulge any confidential information to any other person or organisation unless:

a. the information is already in the public domain,
b. disclosure is required by law

9.2 This clause shall remain in full force and effect notwithstanding the expiry or termination of this agreement.

10. Non Transferability

10.1 The SNNPRS and KSW may not assign sub-contract, delegate or otherwise transfer or dispose of any of its rights or obligation under this agreement.

11. Amendments

11.1 Any amendment or modification to this agreement shall be in writing and shall be signed by all the parties concerned.
12. **Dispute Settlement**

12.1 Any disputes relating to this agreement, which could not be solved mutually shall be referred for arbitration of two arbitrators, each party nominating one. The two arbitrators shall nominate the Umpire whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

In witness whereof the parties have signed this agreement is entered into on ..., February 2007.

On behalf of UNWTO
Mr. Francesco Frangialli,
Secretary-General

On behalf of SNNPRS
Ms. Almaz Beyero Hirbaye,
Commissioner

On behalf of Konso Special Woreda
Mr. xxxxxxxx

On behalf SNV Ethiopia
Mr Rem Neefjes
Country Director
To the World Heritage Center  
UNESCO  
7, Place de Fontenoy  
75352 Paris 07 SP  
France  
Tel : 33 (O1) 1 45681876  

Reference: Submission of the Revised Konso Cultural Landscape Nomination File based on the decision of the World Heritage Committee (Decision:34 COM 8B.11),

Dear Sir,
The Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) presents its compliments to the World Heritage Center and has the pleasure to present the Nomination File and Management Plan of the Konso Cultural Landscape for evaluation.

Based on the recommendations of the ICOMOS and decision of the Committee (Decision:34 COM 8B.11), we here by submit the revised Nomination File and the required and revised maps of the property.

We have taken note of the recommendations by the Committee and have revised the parts that are addressed based on additional field works in Konso. We would like to thank the WHC for its continuous support and take this opportunity to thank UNESCO and its World Heritage Center for all the support rendered to us.

The ARCCH avails itself of its highest considerations to WHC and look forward to continue working together with the UNESCO.

Beat Regards,
Attachments:
1- Executive Summary
2- Revised Nomination File of the Konso Cultural Landscape
3- Management Plan of the Konso Cultural Landscape
4- Maps
5- Maps on CD
6- Legal document to provide for the protection of the Konso Cultural landscape

ALL DOCUMENTS ARE SUBMITTED IN FOUR COPIES.
## Executive Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Party</th>
<th>Ethiopia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State, Province or Region</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), the Konso administrative district (Special Woreda).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Property</td>
<td>The Konso Cultural Landscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical coordinates to the nearest second</td>
<td>Between 5.173638 and 5.392053 North and 37.191971 and 37.467968 East.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Textual description of the boundary(ies) of the nominated property</strong></td>
<td><strong>To the North</strong> - the low land and the northern limits of the Gocha, Gamole and Dokatu terraces. <strong>To the North East and East</strong> - the lowland and the Arbaminch Konso road; west of the the Bekawle town and south of it; north of Darra town, and follows the Yabello road. <strong>To the South East and South</strong> - the lowland and the Karat Yabelo road; follows the Yabello road to turn south to Aba-Roba just south of Hoy hoy hill. East and South of Aba roba and passes directly to the Segen River and follows it to south west. <strong>To the South West and West</strong> - follows the Segen and the lowlands then turns at the ridge that divides the Woito and Kolme. This boundary defines the terraced Konso settlements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A4 (or &quot;letter&quot;) size map of the nominated property, showing boundaries and buffer zone (if present)</strong></td>
<td>A4 size map attached.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justification Statement of Outstanding Universal Value</strong></td>
<td>- The Konso have a history of at least 500 years old terrace agricultural system and water conservation techniques which they developed as a response for the dry environment. The terraces are very extensive and are made using dry stone techniques contouring the hills. These terraces are culturally maintained. - Their traditional towns are located at strategic locations and surrounded with multiple rings of dry stone walls. - They maintain traditionally protected forests which continue to be used for medicine, rituals and as places of residence and burial for their ritual chiefs. - They erect stones/stelae to commemorate the transfer of generation responsibilities conducted ritually, and as grave markers. This puts them among the last living megalithic people of our planet. Konso is a complex cultural landscape that has an amalgamation of unique architecture, land use, space planning and management, resource mobilization, ritual practices, all combined into one in an otherwise hostile environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria under which property is nominated (itemize criteria)</strong></td>
<td>(iii), (v), (vi).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name and contact information of official local</strong></td>
<td>Organization: Authority for Research and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| institution/agency | Conservation of Cultural Heritages,  
|                    | Address: Po. Box-13247 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.  
|                    | Tel: 251-0115535051  
|                    | Fax: 251-0115510705  
|                    | E-mail: <ARCCH@ethionet.et>  
|                    | Web address: |
1. Identification of property

1. a. Country (and State Party if different)

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

1. b. State, Province or Region

Ethiopia, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), the Konso administrative district (Special Woreda).

1. c. Name of Property

The Konso Cultural Landscape.

1. d. Geographical coordinates to the nearest second

The Core area proposed lies between 5.173638 and 5.392053 North and 37.191971 and 37.467968 East. The coordinates show the farthest extents of the boundary. The actual boundary lies within the indicated coordinates.

1. e. Maps and plans if available, showing boundary of area proposed for inscription and of any buffer zone

List of Annexed Maps (the maps are used in the text in reduced format):

- Map 1(a) - 1(d) topographic map 1:50000 showing the boundary of the area proposed for inscription,
- Map 2 - 3D map of the proposed property and boundary,
- Map 3 - map of terrace intensity within the boundary,
- Map 4 - map showing the old and newly proposed boundaries,
• Specially prepared maps- showing major features of the walled towns within the nominated area. A series of individual maps indicating the twelve stone walled towns and three traditionally protected forests are prepared. These are made to provide additional information on the walled towns and their principal gates, major cultural spaces (Mora), major foot paths, wards (Kanta) organization, burials, new structures outside the traditional towns. Maps of the traditionally protected forests are also presented.

**Statement on Buffer zone:**

The Konso cultural landscape, in spite of its 500 years of existence is still a living and lived landscape that is sustainable and still exhibits these complexities. It is managed to the present through practice and by tradition laws. In addition to this, and in recognition of its importance in the lives of the community, the landscape is protected by the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples decree. It does not thus require a buffer zone.

Furthermore,

In the Northern direction, the terraced homogeneous hills are bordered by the loose late quaternary sediments and the Precambrian basement rocks. In the East, the low lying area between the Karat-Yabelo road and the terraces of Derra, Jarso and Nalya-Segen is clearly demarcated by the road. In the South, the area between the southern limits of the Konso terraces at the foot of the ridges and the Segen River, and at some places the Segen River itself are used as a boundary. To the West and North West, the area between the last terraces in the Eastern slopes beyond the Kolme Ridge and the soil terraced area in the upper Delbena River area are demarcated as boundary. The adjacent zones in all directions are characterized either by the low lying farms in the loose late quaternary silty clay sediments in the valleys, or shrubs and open forests, Precambrian basement rocks and the Basalt.
Within the nominated area, the sacred forests and the ponds are bordered by terrace farms and some times by foot paths.

The actual boundaries of the traditional walled towns (Paletas) and the forests are clearly demarcated on specially prepared maps. Foot paths circle the outer walls of the walled towns leading to farms, water points, other villages, markets, and to ritual occasions. The outer area is sometimes used for planting Dina grooves for use as fire extinguisher and as latrine, and occasionally as burial ground. These actual walled town boundaries may change in the future as the konso people continue to follow their traditional ways of extending their walled towns by making terraces in the adjacent slopes to make more space for the newer generation members and thus more retention walls are in the making.

In order to protect the walled towns, a legislation text is issued by the Regional Government and agreed upon by the community. This legal text states that the 50 meters area outside of the external walls of the 12 Paletas are proclaimed as the Buffer Zone. The interface between the modern administrative town of Karat and the market town near Dokatu is addressed by the same legal text. This provides enough protection for the walled towns.

Fig. 1-Location of Ethiopia in Africa.
Fig. 2- Location of Konso district within Ethiopia and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS).

Fig. 3- Map of the Konso Special district and boundaries between the Peasant Associations (Paletas). The Konso country is bordered to the North by the Special administrative District of Derashe, to the East and South by the Regional State of Oromiya and to the West by South-Omo administrative Zone.
Fig. 4- Boundary of the nominated area (Shown on four 1: 50,000 topographic map of Konso area).
Fig. 5 – Topographic map showing the nominated area. The boundaries/interface between the modern town of Karat and Dokatu market and the nominated property are shown.
Fig. 6 - 3D Map of the area of the proposed boundary. Note: the terrace distribution and intensity, and altitude variations.
Fig. 7 – Map showing terrace intensity within the proposed property.
1. f. Area of nominated property (ha.) and proposed buffer zone (ha.)

The nominated area is approximately 230 square Kms. or 23,000 ha.

2. Description

The Konso People live in Ethiopia about 600 kms. South of Addis Ababa. They speak Afan Konso, one of the Eastern Cushitic languages of Ethiopia and occupy a rugged country formed by Pre-Cambrian basement rocks and early Miocene volcanism which created the basaltic hills. The low lying valleys are filled by middle to late Pleistocene sediments. The Main Ethiopian Rift of the Great East African Rift system ends here at Konso. The Konso hills overlook to the North/NE, towards the low-lying Chamo Basin and Gumayde highlands; to the East, the low-lying volcanic plugs and the Segen Valley; to the South, the Segen valley and Lake Stephanie (Chew- Bahir); and to the West and North West, the Woito Basin and the Gidole highlands.

The Konso country as whole covers 2354 Km. square area and the population is estimated to be 280,000. The country and the people are referred to by the same name, Konso. The Konso country is generally dry and precipitation is between around 500 and 1500 mm. There are two rain seasons: one is between February and March and the other between September and December.

The major features within the boundary

It has been noted that the Konso dry stone terraces occupy a large territory that covers about 230 km² area (Kimura2004). Multiple transects were made from East to West and form North to South in the Konso country to review and check the nature of the landscape, its major features and the techniques used to make the terraces and their intensity. Transects are made through the following directions.
Transect I—NS—along the

1. Bekawle town → Yabelo road → Aba Roba → Segen River
2. Dokatu → Busso → Kormayle → Aba Roba
3. Gamole → Kalla → Fasha → Burjo → Doha → Segen River
4. aderia → Gugnera Kolme
5. Delbena Bridge → Kolme village → Kolmale village (on the ridge)
6. Debena Bridge → Kolme town → Kolmale peasant association office

Transect II-EW direction

1. Following along → Kalie River on the Arba Minch road → Kaile on the Jinka road – on the higher grounds (to define the northern boundary)
2. Between – Karat/lower Dokatu → Gamole → Gocha (Northern edge)
3. Karat → Dokatu → Gamole → Debena Bridge (following the main road)
4. Jarso → Deraa → Olanta → Bamale Forest/upper Dokatu
5. Yabelo road → Nalaya segen → Aba Roba → Kormale → Gera → Saogame → Fasha → Debana (Mershana school).

These transects have permitted to view the whole of Konso terraced country. The intensity of the terraces are recorded based on observations made through the observations made by the above transects. The transects have also permitted to document the rock types used to construct the terraces and have provided some basic geo-morphological information.

The Konso country is located at the Southern terminus of the Main Ethiopian Rift. The area is bounded to the north by the Chamo Graben, to the east by the low lying rugged crystalline basement and old volcanic/basalt rocks; To the west and north west by crystalline basement rocks over laid by quaternary sediments and to the south mostly by crystalline basement.
The nominated area is characterized as follows-

A. The area to the north and the central part, around Dara, Hulme, Dokatu, Gamole, Gocha, Mechelo, Mecheke, Busso, Kala, Saogame, Fasha and part of Burjo Paletas are located on basaltic rocks and their terraces are made using the locally available basalt blocks and boulders. Some flat crystalline basement rocks are used for the construction of the Moras of Gocha and Gamole. Their erected stones (Daga–Diruma and Daga hela) are also on columnar basalt (except in Burjo).

B. Crystalline basement rocks (gneiss, quartz, quartzite) outcrop in the area west of Gocha and towards Mederia. The flat low laying area between these places have reddish silty/sandy clays all the way to Debena River; and at places, Plio-Pleistocene sediments outcrop overlying the crystalline basement around where the Kaile River crosses the main road. There is no much terrace in these areas. The terraces around Kolme and between Kolme and Fasha, across the lower Debena River, are made using crystalline basement rocks. These rocks outcrop also in the whole area south of Fasha/Burjo and the area around Doha is crystalline basement. The area around Aba Roba and beyond towards the Segen has also crystalline basement rocks.

C. The valleys between the catchment divides are filled with either mostly clay and/or sandy silt sediments based on the regional rocks.

The demarcation between the basaltic and crystalline rocks is also to a certain extent demonstrated by the major contours of the 1:50000 topographic map.

D. Lacustrine and fluvial deposits beyond the northern/north western area of the nominated area overlie the crystalline basement which is highly faulted. These sediments are dated to the lower to late
Pleistocene period. They contain sediments that are very rich in prehistoric archeology (Acheulean technology) and fossils (including Homo *erectus* and Australopithecus *boisie*).

The terraces nominated are situated homogeneously across the Konso highlands. They are located in the North between south of the Kaile River, the low lying area west of Maderia and the soil terraces north of Kolme. This is the northern limit of the dry stone terraces. In the East, all the area to the West of the Karat Yabelo road up to the Hoy-hoy hill is included, as it is traditionally owned by the Derra, Jarso and Derra Paletas. To the South, the slopes South of the Aba-Roba and north of the Segen River are included as the terraces extend to this area. To the West, all the dry stone terraces East of the Kolme/Woito ridge(divide) are included as this is the Western limit of the Konso dry stone terraces.

2. a. Description of Property

**A. Stone terraces:**
The Konso are agricultural people growing mainly finger millet and corn. They also cultivate coffee, cotton and soja bean. Banana, chat and papaya are also cultivated in some areas. The Konso have adopted a terrace agricultural system and the core Konso area is characterized by extensive dry stone terraces. The intensively terraced slopes are located between an altitude of 1500 and 2000 meters. These terraces retain the soil from erosion, collect maximum water and discharge the excess, and create terrace saddles that are used for agriculture. The terraces are the main features of the Konso landscape and the hills are contoured by the dry stone terraces that could reach at some places up to 5 meter high (between Kala and Gamole). The terrace retention walls are built with heavier blocks at the base. The saddles that are prepared for agriculture are between four and eight meters wide at most places.
The visitor to Konso is captivated by the view of the landscape witnessing hundreds of years of persistent human struggle to harness the hard, dry and rocky environment, and which at last has resulted in the beautifully outlined rows of dry stone terraces. As Hallpike puts it, “Perhaps nowhere else in traditional Ethiopia has the hand of man so impressed itself on the landscape as in Konso” (Hallpike, C.R. 1972, p 21).

Herman Ambrone (Ambrone, H. 1989) had clearly described the Konso terraces as follows:

...Terrace walls less than a meter high are constructed almost perpendicularly. Where higher, the walls are often sloped at an angle of 80 degrees. Stepping stones may be tailed in...For stability, wall foundations
are sunk in to the ground about 10-25 cm. ...Usually, terrace walls will exceed the level of the fields they retain by 20 to 40 cm in order to avoid fast run-off damaging the wall.

Along the sides of natural gullies special constructions are necessary because of the greater danger of destruction by torrential waters. All together the terrace walls combine into balanced network. Bends in the wall-lines are sometimes reinforced by means of turrets. Such turrets seldom rise more than 2 m above the field level; they serve as platforms from which the fields can be guarded from birds and animals. For further stability where required flanking walls are built to cross the terraces perpendicularly some 50 m apart. These are about 1 1/2 m high and again serve as pathways for both humans and cattle.

Since the humus layer tends to be light and thin (sometimes less than 10cm), terracing is employed on any slopes inclined more than 1:25...

Heights of terrace-walls and the width of the fields which they retain are determined essentially by the angle of slope. With wall heights of 1/2m to 1 1/2m preferred, most fields vary in width between 2 and 8 m, but both wider and narrower examples exist. Walls of 6m height occur, while those surrounding towns, built by the same techniques, are in some instances more than 10m high.

Fields are carefully leveled so that moisture may be held as long as possible... Generally, terrace- walls contain small gaps (about 30 cm wide) somewhat above the field level to allow water to seep downhill from one fielding to the other...These drains require careful construction using specially selected stones in order to resist pressure of water during and after heavy storms. The ideal field system is laid out in such a way that the greatest number of fields are soaked at the same time, but not to the extent that excess water cannot find a way in to drain and gullies.

By planting Morinaga stenopetala on the fields, a meter or so from the terrace wall, the stability of the slopes... can be increased. The roots of these trees scarify the soil and prevent the slips of earth.
It is not known as to when the terraces were built. No living memory could place it in time except the common agreement by the Konso that these great terraces are the works of their long gone ancestors.

No new terraces are constructed today in the old settlements. But, it is not unusual to see, today, the Parka work group organized by the Kanta (ward system) of the individual traditional walled town conserving the old terraces. The Konso administration is also working with the people to further construct new terraces outside of the old settlement areas using both dry stones and soil to mitigate erosion.

**B- The Walled Towns (Paleta)**

In the northern, central and eastern part of the nominated area, the Konso live in dry stone walled towns (Paleta) located on high hills selected for their strategic and defensive advantage. These towns are circled by, between one and six rounds of dry stone defensive walls. As described by Hallpike (1974) “… they crown the summit of a hill, or are built on a spur, so that the terrain falls away steeply on three sides, leaving only the level ground of the fourth to be especially heavily defended”. The three steep sides are usually bordered by terrace farms. Access to the town is possible only through one side. It is only at this fourth side, outside of the walls, that current development pressures as they are presented in the form of schools, clinics, flour mills, churches and modern burials could be observed. There is some times a groove of dense trees of euphorbia and finger-cactus between the walls and the terraces. This groove is known as **Dina**, and every town has **Dina** that is used as a source for fire wood and as a latrine for the community. The euphorbia is used as fire extinguisher when there is fire accident in the town- local environmental adaptation. The **Dina** also serves as burial ground for the paleta’s artisans who do not posses their own farm land.
The walls surrounding the towns are built using locally available rock. Large and small size basalt blocks are interlocked reaching to a height of 3.9 meters and between 2.5 and 0.5 meters wide (in the case of Gamole town).

The towns that are located in the Eastern part of the core Konso land, close to the Segen valley and Borena country, and to the North adjacent to the Chamo basin (e.g., Doketu, Gamole, Derra, Jarso, Olanta, Gamole) are fortified with multiple rings of heavily built stone walls. According to Kimura (2004) these are the earliest settlements. The towns that are located further to the West of here (e.g., Mecheke, Burjo, and Gaho) and which might have been settled latter have relatively relaxed defense system with only one stone wall. As one goes further west towards Doha and Kolme regions, the settlement pattern changes; individual and isolated homesteads are used instead of walled towns.

The walled towns (Paleta) have evolved through time with population increase. The general picture of the multiple walled towns is as follows: Located around the top of the slope, the living space with in the very central high wall is where the settlement first begun. The wall here is usually very high. With the increase of the number of the community members, according to tradition, the elder son of each household would retain ownership of the original homestead and the cadets (Kusia) have to move out to build their own homesteads out side of the central wall. Thus, they dig and level the slope making flat space for their houses, defined by new walls. Through time the new walls make a complete circle around the original central wall. Thus, again after a number of generations, when the population outgrow the space within the second wall, the process of clearing and leveling new living space and building of new walls continue.

The walls have two or more major exits (gates) that bear the name of the ward (Kanta). The gates lead to locations that are essential to the daily life of the town. Some gates lead to common water points while others lead to farms and/or to markets. Few of these exits are used for ritual purposes and/or lead to burial grounds.
The dimension of area the walls encircle is variable from town to town. Bigger Paletas with more population such as Doketu cover 158,293 sq. meter of area; whereas smaller walled towns such as Burjo cover 28,614 sq m. area. Each town has a “ward” (Kanta) system which enables the smooth functioning of the traditional political and socio-economic system. Each individual community member belongs to a certain Kanta. The Kanta system is not bounded by the walls as members of a certain Kanta can be residents of all the walls. Residents of a certain town belong to all the nine Konso clans and as such residents of a certain Kanta are members of all the sub clans living in the walled town. Membership to a certain Kanta is purely a practical socio-economic classification.

Within their walled towns, the Konso live in a compound fenced with wood and dry stones. The individual compound covers around 400 Square meter area planted mainly with morinaga and coffee trees. This area is divided into two halves of higher and lower levels. Humans occupy the higher ground and the lower one, which is located towards the compound gate is reserved for cattle and storage. A typical Konso homestead has 5 to 6 thatched structures made of wood and mud. The homestead is composed of sleeping house, storage house, granary, cattle kraal, and one or more of the above. The residential tukuls are rounded and have low entrance. The lower part of the granary is used as grinding space for millet, corn and sorghum, and thus a stone mortar is permanently present.
Fig. 8 - Plan and section of typical Konso individual homestead (Gamole town).

C. **Mora**

In the traditional walled towns, cultural spaces called **Mora** are located at the center of the main central enclosure and at different locations within the walls, and some times, outside the walls. Paths from the all gates lead to these **Moras**. The individual walled town (**Paleta**) has up to 17 **Moras** which are connected to one other by foot paths.

In the Kolme and Doha areas, where there are no walled towns, the Moras are located in central spaces that are easy to access for all, and sometimes on major trails.

The **Moras** retain an important and central role in the life of the Konso. In the walled towns, they have, in most cases specially designed one story grass thatched houses, called **Pafta**. The **Pafta** are constructed on stone platform...
that attain ~80cm high. They are built on thick poles (number between 8 and 12) of hard wood. The niche is located in the higher section between 100 cm. and 150 cm above the ground and lined with timber from one end to the other. A small opening is left in the middle just near the central pole which also serves as a ladder to access high in to the niche.

![Plan and section of Pafta within Mora (Gamole town).](image)

Depending on the size of the village and the Kantas, one or two central Moras occupy the highest position by the town community. These Moras have high stone walls, bigger Paftas, larger and grouped (some times up to 5) generation trees (Ulahitas), up to 5 and 6 stelae (Daga-Hela) erected periodically representing the success of the generations that were in power, oath taking ritual stones (big rounded boulders) and ritual spear sharpening stones. The major ceremonies common to the community as a whole take place here. Among these rituals, a ceremony known as the Kara marking the transfer of power and responsibility from the older age group to the younger...
age group takes place in the Mora. The Kara is performed through a long ritual process which lasts up to two months. This ritual starts in a certain defined Mora. As the ceremony reaches a certain stage, other the Moras are also used. At the end of the two months period, the ritual is terminated at a Mora designated for that specific performance-the culmination of the Kara. This however is currently practiced only in Doketu and its sister towns of Burkuda and Humie. The practice is being abandoned in the other areas. (for the Kara performances see film Annexed).

Photo. 2 - Mora in Gamole town.

As described by Hallpike (1974), the Moras are

“... often floored with grass, and encircled with low stone platforms on which the numerous trees have been planted for shade. Here
the men sit gossiping and spinning their cotton; the whole effect is strikingly beautiful. They are used for assemblies as well as dances, and lawsuits and religious ceremonies, as well as more practical purposes like drying blankets and hides, or laying out the parts of a new house. Adjoining them are large men’s houses (magana or pafta) with phallic roof-pots, where the men, both married and unmarried sleep at night. House and dancing floor are collectively referred to as mora. The sense of antiquity is heightened by the great monoliths, ‘stones of manhood’, which sometimes stand there, testifying to the bravery of long-dead warriors in victorious battles.” [In addition to the stones of manhood (Daga-Diruma) the Konso also erect, in the main Mora, a columnar basalt, up to 3 meters tall, for a highly successful generation. This erected stone (stela) is called Daga-Hela. Less successful generations have their stones erected outside the Mora, elsewhere in the town or outside the walls]. “In the most sacred moras are tall dead juniper trees (ulahitas), stripped of their branches by the weather of years and soaring in to the air sometimes to a height of forty feet or more.” [Ulahitas are ceremoniously cut from the sacred forests by the Chief Priest (“priest” or “sacrificater”) to mark the transition between the older and younger generations. They are planted ceremoniously every 18 years in the Mora]. “Most striking of all are their memorial statues to the dead, Wagas [or Wakas]. They represent a dead man who has killed one or more enemies in battle and perhaps a lion or leopard. The Hero stands in the center flanked by his wives and victims; they are carved of wood in a bleak and rigid style, and
often line a great mora or the most important paths into town, standing in small, severe groups “.

C. Description of characteristics and physical attributes of the individual walled towns within the nominated area:

Gamole walled town (Paleta) has three dry stone walls covering a total of 86,174 m. square area. The total length of the outer wall is 1298 meters. Main access is from the South.

![Gamole walled town (Paleta) map](image)

The first wall is the innermost/oldest wall and covers an area of 8109 meters square area and has a length of 363 meters. The second wall, which is between the external and the innermost walls has a length of 774 meters.
The inner wall is the earliest settlement in Gamole and has a very high wall. At **Mora** Shilale, this innermost wall is 2.2m wide, and has 2.7m and 5.7m external and internal heights respectively.

Gamole walled town, is spatially organized into six ward divisions called Kanta: Kanta Shilale, Kanta Lehayte, Kanta Porgela, Kanta Otaya, Kanta Galgalaya, and Kanta Ayana. Gamole has eight **Moras**.

A small strip of **Dina** stands between the external wall and the agricultural terraces. This **Dina** serves as toilet place for the community. Most of the vegetation that constitutes the **Dina** is **Euphorbia**, used to control fire which sometimes arise in the town.

The **Dina** surrounding Gamole is mostly destroyed due to population increase and development pressures.

Currently there are five standing and many fallen and broken **Daga -dirumas** outside the wall located to the south of the town.

**Gocha** walled town (Paleta) has one dry stone wall covering a total of 88,715 m. square area. The total length of the wall is 1745 meters and has five main gates. Main access to the town is from the SW.
The walls of Gocha are mostly destroyed and very few families live in the town. Though Gocha is a big town, it has only two Kantas (wards) named Kanta Lehayte and Kanta Kartohayta.

There are six Moras, five within and one out side, at the western vicinity of the town.

All major rituals including generation initiation ritual are performed at Mora Gurbita. Three generation trees were erected recently, on the 21st January 2008. These three trees were erected for the three generations who were unable to erect their generation trees on time because the ritual was prohibited by the Military regime. This Mora is also used for oath making. The spacious dancing floor is surrounded by Daga-diruma, Daga-hela, and wooden statues (Waka) witnessing that there was a practice of burying heroes in the Mora.

There is a small Dina (groove) on the western side of this Mora. There are many erected stones and decaying Wakas in the Dina. Formerly the whole
Gocha community used to take care of this burial site but the communal conservation was weakened in the recent times.

**Mechelo** is one of the oldest walled towns in Konso. Like Gamole and Gocha, its establishment is related to the coming to the region of the local ritual chief, the *Kala* family.

Mechelo has three walls. The external wall has a length of 1746.5 meters and covers an area of 116,893 meters square area. The middle wall has a length of 432 meters and the inner wall, which is the smallest, has a length of 187 meters and covers an area of 13,015 meter square.

The inner most wall is the highest compared to the middle and the external walls. Though at one point the height of this same wall reaches to 4.15 meter (measured from outside), its average height is 1.94 meters. From within, the wall reaches to 3 meters high. The average thickness of the main wall is 1.37 meters and varies between 34 cm and 3.54 meters.

![Mechelo walled town](image)

**Fig. 12 - Mechelo walled town (Paleta).**
The external wall has four main gates.
Mechelo Paleta is divided into four **Kanta** (wards) divisions and has seventeen **Moras**. Some these **Moras** have **Paftas** and some do not. The **Moras** of Mechelo have **Daga-dirumas** and **Olayta** trees.
The organization and function of these **Moras** are more or less similar with the other **Moras** of Konso.
In spite of their social and cultural functions, the **Dinas** (grooves) have been deforested in many of the Konso Paletas. Currently only few walled towns still preserve their **Dina**, of which Mechelo is the one.
Local informants say that formerly a dense **Dina** had surrounded the Mechelo walled town. Currently only 2500 square meter area of **Dina** with **Wakas** and **Daga-dirumas** (erected stones) in it used as grave markers. Here, a total of thirteen **Wakas**, of which twelve were erected to commemorate heroes and one erected to commemorate a clan leader, and thirty-eight erected stones are observed.
At the entrance of the Karkara gate, an ancient burial site with thirteen **Daga-dirumas** and five decaying **wakas**, belonging to ancient heroes are located.

**Dokatu walled town clusters**

Dokatu is a collective name for the three sister walled towns named lower Dokatu, Burquda and Hulme. These walled towns were amongst the first walled towns in Konso.
Fig. 13 - Dokatu walled town (Paleta)

Lower Dokatu walled town is located a few hundred meters west of Karat town, the administrative center of Konso district (Special Woreda), and north of Konso-Jinka road. Both Burquda and Hulme walled towns are located to the southwest of lower Dokatu. The Konso-Jinka road passes between Burquda and Hulme. There is market place called Omboko between the last two.

Fig.14 - Burkuda walled town is one of the sister towns of Dokatu. (Taken from the previous Nomination file).
Fig. 15 - Hulmie walled town is the second sister town of Dokatu. (taken from the previous Nomination File)

Generally the towns of the Dokatu cluster collaborate during rituals and fire accidents. They also have common swearing and ritual performance spaces called **Mora**. The three sister towns have the same ritual leader, **Poquola** called Bamalle.

Lower Dokatu has six rings of dry stone walls showing that it is among the most fortified towns in Konso. The outer wall has a length of 1667 meters and covers an area of 158,293 meter square. Its walls are high. The walls’ external and internal height and thickness vary at different points according to the position of the wall. The external height of the innermost wall reaches up to 3 meters, while the outermost/external wall’s maximum height is 3.6 meters. The maximum thickness of the external wall is 3.8 meters while the maximum thickness of innermost wall is 2 meters. Generally, the outermost wall is higher and thicker than the inner walls.

Lower Dokatu has 6 main gates and nineteen **Moras**. Its two sister towns have their own **Moras** too. Nevertheless, some of the **Moras** in the three towns
provide services to all three communities during common rituals such as the Kara ceremony.

**Dara and Olanta walled towns:** These are amongst the oldest Konso walled towns in Karate region together with lower Dokatu, Burquda, Gandima and Hulme, according to Kimura (2004:87).

Dara covers 68,587 meters square area and its outer most wall has a length of 1048 meters. It has six rings of walls that reach a height of 4.5 meters at some places. As Dara is located in the eastern edge of Karate region, it is believed that these walls were made to deter attacks from their neighbors. Dara has four main gates and 9 Moras; 8 Moras within and one ritual Mora out side the walls.

![Fig.16 - Dara walled town (Paleta).](image)

Olanta has 4 rings of walls. The maximum external height and thickness of walls is 320 and 200 cm. respectively. The length of the outer most wall is 1176 meters and surrounds 85,556 meter square area. Olanta town has 3 main gates in its outermost external wall. Olanta has 15 Moras. Nine of these
have **Paftas**, men’s sleeping houses and the other six are open **Moras** (without **Pafta**).

**Mechke walled town:** The time of its establishment is not clear. Mechke has only one east-northwest oriented wall which has a length of 1322 meters delineating an area of 68,841 meters square. The western part Mechke is flat and the wall is high, whereas on the eastern side it is hilly and the wall is shorter. Mechke has five main gates and eleven **Moras**.

![Fig. 17 - Mecheke walled town (Paleta).](image)

**Burjo and Gaho walled towns** are small towns with a single wall each. Burjo’s wall measures 872.5 meters long and covers an area of 28,614 meters square. On the other side Gaho’s wall measures 799.5 meters and the town covers 40,145 meter square area.
Compared to the walls of the other Konso towns, Burjo’s and Gaho’s walls are shorter. This may be because there was minimal enemy threat as they are located in the center of the Konso core land. The maximum external wall height of Burjo is 2.55 meters.

Burjo has two wards, four Moras and four gates. Located outside the wall, Mora Gugna is the main public Mora of Burjo. There are 3 Daga-helas at the center and a generation tree near a big ritual tree located at the northern corner of the Mora.

Gaho has nine Moras with Paftas and six main gates.

There is a tradition of constructing houses on a single log of tree in these towns. These houses are called Lokutatokide. They often serve to store precious items such as butter, honey, and important cultural and ritual objects.
**Busso walled town** is not fully encircled by a wall. Busso is located around a conical hill called Pola. Pola hill is steep on its southern and northern sides and has an altitude of 1520 meters asl. There are no walls in most parts of the town as it is protected by the natural vertical terrain.

The circumference of the town including the walls is 1859 meters long and the town has an area of 116,398 meter square.

The walls of Busso were constructed at areas where the ground has relative flatness. At the northwestern side of the town, a 45.8 meters long wall was constructed. Currently only 27.8 meters of this wall is preserved. This wall is 1.90 meters high and 3.50m. thick. Other walls were constructed blocking the gap between gullies. A 34.80 meters long wall which has 3.0 meters height and 1.20 meter thickness was constructed at one gully.

![Busso walled town](image)

**Fig. 19 - Busso walled town (Paleta).**

Busso has three main sections with five **Kantas** (wards). It also has six main gates and sixteen **Moras**.
The main gate, Morguto gate, is 1.60 meter wide and 2.40 meter high. There are 31 erected stones outside this gate. Formerly there were wakas but they are all decayed or have been stolen.

D. **Daga-hela (generation transfer marking stones/stele)**

The Konso people have an age grading system through which every generation takes responsibility to protect the well being of its community. This system is linked with a tradition of erecting a generation marking stone called **Daga-hela.** Daga-hela is a freshly quarried columnar basalt reaching three meters tall, transported and erected through a ritual process. Generations who have well served the community (for example, protecting their town from fire and enemies, conserving the walls and the Moras), based on the evaluation of the elders could have the honor of having their generation marker stone **Daga-Hela** erected for them near the most prestigious Mora, as witness for their good deed and inspiration for younger generations. Less successful generations have their stones erected elsewhere in the town or outside the walls. The latter are usually smaller in size. The erection of the **Daga-hela** is done following a two months ritual ceremony called the **Kara.**
The **Kara** involves a long process of rituals which begin with the blessing of the elders, initiation of the young and the **Haima** ritual dances; then the hunt expedition, the ritual dances after the hunt, the elders meetings to evaluate the performances of the generation, the selection, quarrying and transport of the stela and its erection. All generation groups (the out going, the in-coming and the older generations) gather at last at a large **Mora** and perform the special **Haima** ritual dances in front of the community members. The next week, after another ritual gathering and dances, by the out going generation members (at the end their wives join them in the dance), the Kara ceremony officially termite and they can go to their home, with their wives after two months.
E. Sacred forests

The Konso traditional forests are located mainly near the residences of the ritual priests known as Poquola. There are three main Poquola forests in the Konso core land. These are, the Kala, Bamale and Kufa.

The Poquolas are buried, at death, at the center of the forests after a lengthy ritual. The various rituals that take place in the Konso culture are centered around these forests. The generation trees, Ulahitas of every walled town (Paleta) are cut ceremoniously from these forests by the Chief Priests (Poqola).

Kala forest is the best preserved and very actively used sacred forest. It covers an area of 196,430 meter square area.

The center of the Kala is located at 05. 1953.2 North and 37.2404.1 East and at an altitude of 1708 meters asl. The ritual chief, the Kala himself live in this forest with his immediate family members. The forest also contains the burials of his 20 predecessor Kalas (Poqolas) located at 05.19 43.2 North and 37.2350.5 East, at 1746 meters asl. The wives of the Kalas, the Poqoltita, are also buried in this forest but in a different location at 05. 1950.1 North and 37.2403 East. Another burial area is reserved, outside of the forest, for other members of the Poqola family.

The most beautifully sculpted Wakas of the last two Poqolas are still to be seen under their original shelters made of wood and thatched grass. The older Wakas are weathered as they are left to decay naturally. In addition to the Wakas, specially carved batons are placed on the graves depicting the number of bygone generations. Rituals take place in the Kala forest and the adjacent area. These ritual locations are presented below as they are mapped with and described by the Kala Gezahagn (the current Poqola) himself.
There is a pond dug within the forest used for cattle. The map below shows in detail the characteristics of the Kala forest.

Key to location numbers in the map

1= Kala forest 16= Shila Duda-Tuta (grain sacrificial boulder)
2= Poqola (Kala) burial 17= Shila Gedena (ritual boulder of women
during mourning)
3= Poqoltita burial 18= Tiga Kenota (young male ritual place)
4= Harda (pond) 19= Mura-Tuta (point of grain sacrificial
ceremony)
5= track to Kala compound 20= Shila Saga (ritual boulder for conflict
resolution)
6= isolated burial 21= Shila Saga (ritual boulder for victory)
7= burial for non-first born kala family members 22= Kiloda (sacrificial point against pests)
8= water spring 23= sacrificial point for fertility
9= newly planted Juniper 24= sacrificial point for the Gamole community
10= Gocha community entry point 25= first public appearance point of the Poqola
11= Kala compound 26= animal (goat) sacrificial boulder
12= funerary ritual space 27= grain sacrificial boulder
13= Kala residence
14= Kala residence gate
15= Ulahita (generation tree)

Fig. 20 - The Kala traditional forest is the best preserved and very actively used sacred forest. It covers an area of 196, 430 m. square area. It is located within in the Gamole Paleta.
The Kala forest contains ritual spots. In the Northern flank of the forest, the **Shila Genda** is a ritual mourning stone. It is a huge basalt block. Next to it, there are two open spaces. One, **Kenota** is where young males stay for two months during the initiation before they go back in to the **Gamole** walled town to get married. The other space called **Koltoma** is reserved for young females. The festival (initiation) takes place only once every 18 years.

Not far from here, there is another huge block of basalt called **Shila Saga**. The Kala provides benediction to the **Gamole** people from this spot and the “Fora”, the ritual fight dance takes place. The scarification for the harvest and conflicts are also arbitrated at **Shila Saga**. Next to **Shila Saga**, there is another big block of basalt serving the same purpose, but for the people of Karat, Jarso, Segen and Aba Roba.

In addition to the above, other ritual spots include **Mora Kabarto** (05.1913.2N and 037.2412.5 E) which is the main ritual mora of the Kala, **Katani** (05.1951.4 N and 037.2424.7E) where scarification is made for the harvest, **Orkama Mura** (05.1948.9N and 037.2430E) the gate of the heroes coming to visit the Kala, and **Arho** (05.1944.9 N and 037.2418 E) where the lion head is placed.

**The Bamale** sacred forest is located at 05.1929 North and 37.2532 East. It covers an area of 105,338 metres square area. It is located within the Dokatu Paleta. The ritual leader holds the same name, **Bamale** and lives near the forest with his family. The graves of the earlier **Bamales** are located at the center of the forest. Unlike the **Kala**, there are no **Waka**s placed in the forest. They are placed in **Bamale**’s compound for fear of theft. Formerly, the trees in the forests were mainly junipers. About 30 years ago during the socialist government in Ethiopia, the old indigenous trees were cut for timber and eucalyptus was planted in the Bamale and **Kufa** forests. With change of government in 1991 we see regeneration of the indigenous trees and return to the old environment, although the eucalyptus is still present.
Fig. 21 - The Bamale sacred forest covers an area of 105,338m. square area. It is located within the Dokatu Paleta.

**The Kufa** is a traditionally protected ritual forest located at 5.1744 north and 37.23 East, within the Mecheke Paleta. The **Kufa** sacred forest covers an area of 45,066 m. square area.

Like the Bamale and **Kala, Kufa** is the name of the ritual leader and the forest. The **Poqola** (ritual leader) live near the forest. There are ancient graves of ancestors of the present **Poqola** at the center of the forest. The grave marker **Wakas** are decayed due to age. The dirt road leading to Mecheke cuts through the forest. There are two **Hardas** (ponds) located in the forest.
Fig. 22 - The Kufa sacred forest covers an area of 45,066 m. square area. It is located within the Mecheke Paleta.

F. **Waka (wooden statue) and Daga-diruma (erected stone)**

Most of the burial grounds for respected members of the community who have performed heroic deeds are located near the gates—visible to all, so as to inspire the generation. A wooden anthropomorphic statue called **Waka**, carved out of a hard wood, preferably juniper, mimicking the deceased is erected as a grave marker. **Waka** has well marked head, eyes, ears, mouth, genital organs, upper and lower members (some times with bracelets), at times it carry a shield and a spear (when it represent male). Women also have **Waka** carved for them. **Waka** is erected by the family members of the deceased.

The locations of the stated burial markers have changed through time. Formerly, they were placed near the **Mora** (cultural space) and at the main entrance of the walled towns (**Paletas**). Latter, they were moved out of the walled towns and were located on both sides of the major paths. These burials are grouped together and in addition to the **Wakas**, a columnar basalt
stele (Daga-diruma) are erected on them. Some times, smaller blocks are erected next to the Waka and Daga-diruma to show the number of plots of land the deceased had acquired during his life time. Occasionally, wild animals, such as leopards are carved and placed along with the Wakas testifying that he was a hunter.

The common community members are buried in their farms and Wakas are erected for them by members of their family. One can observe old Wakas in state of decay in the farms around the walled towns.

In one instance it is observed that a Waka is carved and erected for a still living chief priest called the Bamale and his living wife. (Bamale is the ritual chief of Dokatu area). The Bamale Waka is placed in his compound together with a carved leopard.

Photo 4- Waka depicting the ritual chief called the Bamale and his wife. The leopard is meant to show his bravery (Dec. 2007).
The best carved Waka erected for the late chief priest (Kalla) Wolde Dawit is described as follows.


This **Waka** was erected in 2002. It has a head and eyes inlayed with ostrich egg shell and with defined facial features. Both hands show bracelets representing his position as chief. The umbel is in place and the male genital is well pronounced. The statue has a phallic metallic emblem, the mark of leadership on its forehead. It bears in its left hand the traditional shield, spear and sword. The statue *(Waka)* is in a good condition along with that of
his father the former great chief priest (Poquola) Kalla Kayote who died 15 years earlier.

**The intangible meets the tangible heritage**

The intangible aspect of the Konso culture is imbedded in their every day life. The Kara ceremony clearly shows the importance of the generation grading system and the social bondage needed to maintain the tradition of harmony with nature and commitment to harness the difficult environment. In addition to the Kara, the Konso do also observe other ritual (in certain areas) related to harvest. The Tuta is a ritual in which mother earth is prayed for and grain sacrifices are offered to. It takes place among other places, in the Kala traditional forest performed by the ritual chief, the Kala.

Disputes between clans and among individuals are settled by the ritual chief aided by his council of elders.

Transfers of social responsibility between successive generations is done using the traditional lunar calendar, every nine and eleven years and a full generation cycle is ritually performed every 18 years. These rituals are marked by various successive events such as initiation period, purification, ritual hunt, sacrifices, selection of stone to be erected, its transport and erection and the ritual dances that accompany the rituals at each stage.

The Konso also maintain the tradition of venerating the sprits of their ancestors. They maintain mummification tradition in which the ritual chief, up on his death is treated by local elders for a number of years. In former times this process used to take longer period (up to nine years) depending on the good harvest. The late ritual chief Kala Wolde Dawit’s body was maintained for nine months where as his father’s, Kala Kayote’s body was treated for 9 years in the 1980s and 1990s.
Photo 6 - **Kala** Kayote’s mummified body presented to mourners just before his burial (eight years after his death) in the **Kala** forest (Photo is taken from an old photo in the possession of his grand son, the current **Kala** Gezahegne).

The burial process is associated with various stages of rituals in which when the dead ritual leader is followed to his grave, the new is initiated.

The Konso **Wakas** are among the last of ritually erected grave markers in use. Their uniqueness has led, in recent years, for their demand in the world art markets as ‘Art premier’. The alarming illicit traffic is currently being addressed through legal measures and by creating a specialized museum for their conservation and presentation.
G. **Harda (pond)**

The oldest traditionally maintained water reservoirs (Harda) are located within or near the Kalla and Kuffa the forests. Hardas are also located in the landscape where the rain water could easily be trapped, at locations where the water can not easily sink. These Hardas are made by the community to contain the rain water for cattle. These Hardas have walls that reach as high as 13m and attain a length of 60 meters length. There are also smaller Hardas. They are constructed using carefully selected stones and lined with expert builders. Harda construction and conservation is done collectively by all members of the community (Paleta) and some times by the active age group (Hela). The galleys that are leading to the Harda are carefully cleaned and sometimes lined with stones to reduce the silt form getting in to the reservoir.

![Photo 7- Community conservation of Harda in Busso Paleta.](image)

Photo 7- Community conservation of Harda in Busso Paleta.
The **Dokatu Harda** located at 37N0326703 UTM 0592096 at an altitude of 1420 meters is among the oldest water reservoir still in use. There are **Hardas** in the **Kufa** and **Kalla** forests. They are also found close to every walled town and in the general landscape and dispersed. Currently they are used for cattle, as water wells and pipes provide clean potable water.

### 2. b History and Development

The history of the Konso can be reconstructed from oral traditions and linguistic studies and could be dated through the generation counts and archaeological data.

Unfortunately, archaeological work done is limited to few Konso settlements and towns and they are not conclusive as there may be other older settlements.

Bender, based on linguistic studies attribute the Konso language as belonging to the Eastern Cushitic linguistic group and thus apparent them with the Oromo.

Based on the oral traditions, the Konso attest their arrival in to the present day Konso area from the East and Northern directions.

As depicted by the number of incised rings on the generation batons erected on the tombs of the ritual chief (**Poquola**) of the **Kala**, the earliest ritual chief, the first **Kala** lived 21 generations ago.

There is no living memory as to when the stone terraces of the Konso were constructed. The Konso people agree that their great, great grandfathers have constructed them and the latter generations just kept on using and conserving them.
Hallpike (1972:192) based on the generation counts suggested that the Konso had started moving stones in the area by 1604 AD. This is close to the current Konso elders calculation of their arrival time in to the area. If we estimate a generation’s average lifespan to be about 20 years, this may be in accordance with the rings marked on the baton erected on the burial of the last Kala showing that he was the 21st. Poquola of the same line.

Based on her excavations in Konso, Brigitta Kimura (2004) had indicated that the pre 1897 record of the Konso clearly show trading relations with the eastern people perhaps the Borena as glass beads and shell from the Indian ocean were used in Konso area. These commodities must have been introduced by Somali traders who were actively engaged in the area. Although the charcoal samples that Kimura had collected did not give reliable dates, she suggests, based on the population increase, the Konso must have been there at least since the 16th. Century. The 20th. Century Konso history is viewed as part of the central Ethiopian history as coins and fire arms are found from Kimura’s excavations.

The Konso say that their towns were fenced for fear of wild beasts and as protection from neighboring Konso villages and from the others, neighboring Oromo Guji groups living to the East of Konso.

The defensive importance of the stone walls is evident and the Konso must have taken that very seriously as the periodic skirmish between the two is still prevalent.

Before the integration wars of Emperor Menilik II around the end of the 19th century, the Konso have enjoyed a history of local leadership, and limited confrontations which they have easily managed through their traditional systems. Emperor Menilik’s war have burnet the walled town of Gocha because of the Konso resistance. At the end of the 19th Century, a new administrative system was introduced with a new taxation system and
Christianity. Despite these facts the traditional way of the Konso life remained unchanged until in 1974 when the socialist regime took over the modest Haile-Sellasie I government in Ethiopia.

During the Italian occupation of Ethiopia, between 1936 and 1941, some of the Konso walled towns were shelled by heavy artillery for resisting the Italian occupation. There is no other record of destruction due to aggression.

Through all these times the Konso lively-hood was and still is based on the terrace agriculture. The Konso have maintained their traditions of age grading system that they share with their Oromo neighbors in the East.

A thorough research on the origin of the Konso and their cultures is needed to understand these exceptionally industrious people. So far, the ethno-historical research conducted there shy from touching the history and development of the Konso cultural landscape.

3. Justification for inscription

3.a Criteria under which inscription is proposed (and justification for inscription under these criteria)

The Konso cultural landscape is presented for inscription in the World Heritage List under the following criterion:

**Criteria (iii)**

The Konso people have repeatedly been referred to by various scholars as megalithic for their intensive and systematic use of stone.

The Konso cultural landscape is mainly constituted by the most spectacularly executed dry stone terrace works in the world which is still actively in use by the people who created it. This extraordinary terrace work is a witness of the
struggle of man to harness its environment in an otherwise hostile environment in an area that covers over 230 Square Km. and which stands today as an example of major human achievement.

The Cultural landscape is also includes a living tradition of stele erection. The Konso erect stones/stele (Daga-Hela) to commemorate and mark the transfer of responsibility from members of the older generation to the younger generation. This transfer of responsibility takes place every 11 and 7 years. They also erect generation trees to commemorate a full cycle generation transfer every 18 years. In addition to the erection of Daga-Hela, they also erect man-hood stones called Daga-Diruma on tombs. The Konso are perhaps among the last stele erecting people in the world: and thus they “bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or a civilization which is living or which has disappeared”.

The Konso funerary system involves the tradition of mummification of their ritual leaders (Poqolas). This and the carving and erection of anthropomorphic wooden statuette (Waka) representing the dead is an exceptional living testimony to traditions which are on the verge of disappearance.

Members of the Konso communities respect the traditional code of respect to the culture and adherence to the age group (Hela) and the ward (Kanta) which is responsible for the protection and conservation of the walled towns, the ponds, Mora, the dry stone terraces.

The Konso cultural landscape is also proposed under Criteria (v):

As “… an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change”. This is justified by the Konso settlement pattern, harness
of hostile environment and their highly organized towns which have multiple rings of high wall defense systems. The Konso cultural landscape is forged by a strong tradition which is based on common values that have resulted in the creation of the Konso cultural and socio-economic fabrics.

The dry stone terraces which are the dominant feature of the Konso country side show the adaptive strategy that the Konso followed in dry environment.

The labor needed to construct terraces must have necessitated a strong cohesion and unified bond among all the clans. The social organization that enabled the work forces to execute the terrace construction and the indigenous engineering knowledge applied have required certain work divisions which still exist in today’s Konso traditional system.

Although there are no new terrace construction works undertaken, the Konso consistently perform maintenance and conservation works.

The Konso still maintain their strong traditions of harnessing their environment following an effective indigenous knowledge of water and soil conservation techniques. This has served as a lesson in environmental protection to people of similar environments in Ethiopia; and visits to Konso by farmers and students of agriculture from all corners of the country are common.

**Criteria (vi):**

The Konso cultural landscape fits this criteria as it is “... *directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic... works of outstanding universal significance*”.

The Konso have a living tradition of erecting stones/stelae (Daga-hela) for the commemoration of important events, such as transfer of responsibilities between two different generations, which is a living witness, in the
understanding of long gone megalithic cultures elsewhere in the world. A series of important rituals that takes up to three months are performed in the process of the erection of these stones/stelae. The generation transfer rituals are still maintained and the rituals are performed in defined Moras based on the lunar calendar following an age old process. The transfer marking stones (Daga-hela) are quarried from the traditionally defined places, transported and erected by the outgoing generation.

The erection of the Daga-hela is a highly regarded event in the Konso society as it is linked with the generation members that perform the dry stone construction and conservation works, the force that maintains the defensive walls of the walled towns, the force that maintains the ponds and insures the total security of the Konso communities.

The Konso obligation codes in the various rituals and communal works, the ideals of the Kara and transfer of power from generation to generations which culminate in the erection of stelae/Daga-hela are all directly and tangibly associated with properties that constitute the cultural landscape.

3.b Proposed Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

The Konso Cultural landscape located in the southern part of Ethiopia demonstrates 500 years of man / environment relationship and has been referred to by ICOMOS as “extraordinary landscape”. Konso is a complex cultural landscape that has and continues to attract attention of world scholars due to its amalgamation of unique architecture, land use, space planning and management, resource mobilization, ritual practices, all combined into one in an otherwise hostile environment.

The compact walled towns with their multi-layered defensive systems, maintained terraced fields as demonstrated by hundreds of thousands of kilometers of long dry stone terraces that are engineered to manage rain
water and control soil erosion and that extend over virtually the whole landscape of the Konso hills, bear a striking witness to an intense resilient land use forged by very specific communal social and cultural systems that were an extraordinary response to the area’s aridity and unpredictable rainfall.

The Konso traditional towns are fortifications of multiple rings of high dry stone walling that are exceptional in their conception and execution. Within these towns are organized common spaces where all major cultural activities take place and also accommodate representatives of all the nine Konso clans, a well thought and practiced conflict resolution and social cohesive strategy.

Within the Konso landscape are traditionally protected forests and ritual spots that clearly demonstrate association of places with events that are still maintained to the present. The forest contain conflict resolution blocks of stone, the sacrificial points for the good harvest and good health, the ritual benediction location of the ritual chiefs, defined foot paths for community members when visiting the ritual chief, the defined sacrificial points of the various communities, all protected by the ritual chief and continue to contribute to the ecological balance and preserve the floral diversity for use as medicinal plants by the Konso community.

In this restricted landscape of rugged mountains and hostile environment for 500 years the people of Konso have come to learn, understand, appreciate and utilize the available resources to a maximum degree but within a sustainable way and manner. The Konso Cultural landscape is therefore, an outstanding example of human urge to understand and appreciate his environment, whatever constraints it may pose and to use it to the best of his knowledge and capacity applying good practice.
The practice of erecting columnar stones/stelae as grave markers of important personalities as well commemoration of values of active generations with the view to setting standards for future generations in Konso land has potential to contribute to understanding the long gone megalithic tradition in many parts of Africa as well as the world over.

From technological/engineering point of view of innovation in terraces, stone walls and architecture to indigenous knowledge in plant biodiversity and medicinal use, ritual practices and spiritual representation, Konso represents an amalgam of all these features in one single place.

Despite the various challenges, the innovative technologies that has led to the sculpturing of this landscape, the practices surrounding its evolution and development is still more or less intact. The Konso cultural landscape is a living and lived landscape that is sustainable and still exhibits all its complexities. It is managed to the present through practice and by traditional laws. The strong and cohesive social bond including the mandatory body of the young towards the community and the use of Parka (work groups) based on the Kanta (wards) system to maintain and conserve the hundreds of thousands of kilometers of terraces, town walls, common houses, and ponds has and continue to insure the survival integrity authenticity and protection of this extraordinary landscape.

In recognition of its importance in the lives of the community as a national heritage, a management plan based on community participation has been developed and is in place, as well as a Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples decree and a Federal Law No. 209/2000 for its protection.

3.c- Comparative analysis (including state of conservation of similar properties)
The Konso cultural landscape is a rich and complex landscape that is dotted with cultural properties some of which exhibit characters that are known in various sites worldwide. While many of these features found in Konso may be found in some of these sites it is rare that they are concentrated in one single place as exhibited in Konso. The present nomination dossier compares Konso with more similar sites in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Philippines, Senegal and Gambia and Ethiopia.

The Kayas of Kenya:

The Kayas of Kenya are located in the coastal regions of Kenya and are the remnants of the original fortified settlements of the nine Mijikenda tribes/clans found in the country. According to historical records, these were the primary settlements of the various groups when they moved to their present location from the north.

The settlements are organized in a forested area with a gate, ritual burial, and settlement areas including the place where the protective charm (fingo) is buried. The settlements were abandoned at the turn of the century but remained the cultural and spiritual/ritual places of the Mijikenda. They are the spaces where the elders are buried and where the protective charm of the clan is located.

Today, the Kayas serve both as biodiversity hotspots as well as sacred forests where Mijikenda rituals takes place. The Kayas were declared World Heritage site in 2008.

The Konso cultural landscape can be compared to the Mijikenda Kayas in Kenya. Like the Mijikenda, the Konso also have nine clans who live together and owe their success to their belief system and culture. Despite their environmental adaptation (costal area Vs. dry mountain) which separated
them, they both share elements that are related to their attachment to their forests, and the protection of the biodiversity within them.

Like the Kayas the Konso traditional forests are regarded as sacred places from which cutting of trees is prohibited. Trees are cut only for ceremonial purposes, and only by the ritual leader. The Konso traditional forests also serve as sacred burial ground of the ritual leaders like in the Kayas; and the ancestral spirits are prayed for by the ritual leader in office. In addition to cultural elements, these two people perhaps share a common history. The period that their respective oral traditions attribute to their migrations are more or less the same; and their movement to their present respective territories could be attributed to the great peoples movement that took place in southern Ethiopia and northern Kenya around the 16th Century.

However while the two can be compared, there are also differences. Unlike the Mijikenda kayas, Konso cultural landscape has in addition to the sacred forests, the ritual practices, the space organizations and the near common history, agricultural terraces, dry stone walling for their towns are extensive in size. Thus while the two can be compared, Konso is an amalgam of many things than the Kayas.

The Great Zimbabwe:

The ruins Great Zimbabwe are dry stone structures located in Zimbabwe. They testify a great African civilization of the Shona people that flourished between the 11th and 15th century AD. They are beautifully built stone enclosures. Great Zimbabwe covers 1,779 acres and comprises three main structures: the Hill Complex, the Great Enclosure and the smaller Valley Ruins. The economy that supported this civilization was cattle and ivory and gold trade with Kilwa, in the Coast. The Great Enclosure, dated to the 14th Century AD is marked by granite blocks and has demarcated homesteads within the enclosure with walls built around them. The Hill Ruins were
inhabited from the 11th to 15th centuries, and show traces of human settlements. Research suggests that the space included residences for the chiefs and ritual posts.

The Konso walled towns can be compared with the Great Zimbabwe in that they are dry stone towns built on hill tops. Although the environmental adaptations of the Shona of the medieval period and the Konso are different, they both responded to security issues by building defensive systems on higher grounds.

Whereas the walls in Great Zimbabwe are single enclosures, the Konso towns are surrounded by between one and six rings of dry stone walls using the available local rocks. Like in the Great Zimbabwe the Konso build individual homesteads separated by dry stone walls within the main walls. These individual quarters have between 4 and 6 tukul structures built for sleeping, cattle, kitchen and grainry.

The Konso walled towns differ from The Great Zimbabwe in that, the multiple rings of stone walls of Konso show hundreds of years old tradition of local fortification techniques continuing in still operational and dynamic social organization based on age-grade and ward systems bringing together all clan members around common values in their cultural spaces, Mora. The multiple stone walled towns of the Konso are thus unique in their conception, execution and testimonies of the African settlement history.

The existence of the Konso fortified towns is highly linked with the terrace agriculture system which is actively practiced in Konso. The Great Zimbabwe are today sites of mainly archaeological importance where as Konso is a very living and lived landscape.

Sukur Cultural Landscape in Nigeria:
The Sukur Cultural landscape is situated on a plateau in north-eastern Nigeria, near the frontier with Cameroon, covers about 760ha. It has been occupied for centuries, and its inhabitants have left abundant traces on the present-day landscape. The Sukur is characterized by the extensive terracing that has mainly agricultural importance with spiritual significance. The terraces are made to level the ground for agriculture and have sacred trees and ritual sites. In addition to agriculture, the economy was based also on iron smelting and iron production which might have involved rituals associated with it. Shrines and altars are found in and around the Hidi Palace and the pathways are paved using granite.

The chiefs called the Hidi have their palaces and harems built using dry stones on the higher grounds with defensive enclosures, overlooking the mass of the people in their low-lying villages.

The Hidi, were buried within their own palace complexes, whereas the local people were buried in the mountains.

Today, the Sukur can mainly be considered as historical site with some living elements, although it continues to maintain its integrity.

The Konso agricultural terraces can be compared with the Sukur agricultural terraces. The Konso terraces cover, however a more extensive area. It has been suggested that strong social organization and an extended period of time was necessitated for the construction of the Sukur terraces. This is true of Konso. In Konso, the social organization that enabled the work forces to execute the terrace construction and the indigenous engineering knowledge applied have necessitated certain work divisions which still are in practice.

Like the Hidi in Sukur, the traditional Konso ritual chiefs named Kala, Bamale and Kuffa live isolated from the common people. In Konso they live in secluded forests, on the hills and away from the rest of the people, performing
ritual services and resolving conflicts that may arise among the people. They are regarded as saints. Like the Hidi, they are also buried in their traditionally protected forests which are also used for ritual purposes.

The Konso walled towns do not have paved ways like Sukurur but the well marked narrow paths in Konso towns are defined by stone walls of the individual home-stead and sometimes lined using local volcanic rocks.

Unlike in the Sukur where the economy involved metallurgy, the Konso economy is based on agriculture. Unlike in the Sukur where people live in isolated settlements, most of the Konso reside in dry stone walled towns following the traditional social system which led to cohesive ties and economic bonds among them.

The rice-terraces of the Philippines:

The rice terraces of the Philippines Cordilleras are believed to have their beginning about 2000 years ago. Situated at altitudes between 700 m and 1,500 m above sea level the cultural landscape is living and used to plant rice, which is the staple food of the people. The rice-terraces “preserve traditional techniques and forms dating back many centuries, still viable today. These rice terraces illustrate a remarkable degree of harmony between humankind and the natural environment of great aesthetic appeal, as well as demonstrating sustainable farming systems in mountainous terrain, based on a careful use of natural resources.” The terraces are made with stone or mud wall. These terraces are made as an environmental response to control and manage water flow in a wet environment.

The Konso terraces can be compared to the rice-terraces of the Philippines. Like in the cultural landscape of rice-terraces of the Philippines, the Konso terraces are made and conserved using traditional methods passed from old generations. Both landscapes are forged as response for environmental
pressure. The Konso landscape is forged as response for dry environment where as the Philippines Cordilleras are forged in wet environment. The indigenous engineering techniques of both landscapes permit soil conservation and efficient water management/irrigation in semi-vertical and rolling landscapes. The terraces in both cultural landscapes cover the hills from bottom to the top and dotted with traditionally protected forests. The communities in both landscapes follow indigenous knowledge in preserving nature.

Although the Philippines Cordilleras and Konso are separated by several thousands of kilometers and historical and cultural contact is virtually impossible, human adaptation to local environment is evidenced across oceans and continents.

In both landscapes the terraces are maintained following the traditional knowledge and ways supported by rituals. As in the Philippines Cordilleras, in Konso sacred groves/forests on the hills and away from the villages, are inhabited by ritual chief/holy men who carryout traditional rites.

As in the Philippines Cordilleras where portions of consecrated sacrifices from all agricultural ceremonial rites are kept, the Konso perform ritual ‘thanks giving’ ceremony called the TUTA in which grains from the first harvest of the year are sacrificed. This sacrifice is performed by the ritual chief in his forest.

Whereas there are four clusters of the best preserved terraces in the Philippines Cordilleras which have private forests and sacred groove, the Konso terraces are continuous and cover a much larger territory. Unlike in the Cordilleras where the terraces are made using mud and stone, the Konso terraces are constructed using mainly locally available dry stone.

As there are many similarities between the two cultural landscapes, there are differences in their settlement patterns. The Konso have preferred to live on
the hills in fortified traditional towns encircled with multiple dry stone walls, where as in the Philippines Cordilleras people live in villages with close relatives.

Stone Circles of Senegambia:

The Konso Cultural landscape can be compared to the Stone Circles of Senegambia inscribed on the World Heritage List.

The stone Circles of Senegambia are found along the River Gambia and stretches over 350 km distance. Four groups of large concentrations consisting of more than 1000 stone circle monuments in a total area of 9,85 ha. are documented. Excavations conducted in the stone circles, tumuli, burial mounds revealed archaeological materials that suggest dates between 3rd century BC and 16th century AD. The Senegambia Stone Circles thus represent 1500 years long history of a megalithic culture. The stone works show skilful stone working practices. The Senegambia megalithic complex represent necropolis, or vast cemeteries for a distinct cultural group over a long period.

In Konso, stones are erected for two reasons. They are erected as grave markers on the graves of heroes. These erected stones (stelae) are called Daga Diruma. The second kind of erected stones (stelae) are erected to commemorate the transfer of power and responsibility from the older generation to the younger generation; these stelae are called Daga-Hella. Thus they serve two purposes.

As in Sene Gambia complex where the stone circles are associated with necropolis, the Konso Daga-diruma stones are associated with group of burials of important individuals. Although the circular placement of erect stones observed in Senegambia is absent in Konso. The generation marker stones (Daga-hela) of Konso are erected in common central cultural space,
usually lined up and according to chronology. The stones in Konso are not
dressed or carved as observed in Sene Gambian complexes; rather tall
columnar basalts freshly extracted from a defined quarry site are used
without any modification.

The Daga-Hella is quarried from a sacred location following a ritual and are
brought to the place of its erection ceremoniously and erected in public place.

Whereas the Senegambia and Konso are separated by a distance of more than
3000 km and 1500 years, the Konso megalithic tradition is a still living
tradition which is in active practice.

The Tiya megalithic site:

The Tiya World Heritage site is located in the central part of Ethiopia at about
500km distance north of Konso. Although the main stalae concentration is at
the town of Tiya, the stelae are widely distributed in the general region and
extend beyond 400 km to the south (150 kms north of Konso) in to the
Sidama country and 200 km to the west in to Yem country. The main
concentration of the Tiya stelae are placed in an area of about 1200 msq. area
and show decorations depicting daggers and enigmatic vegetal and other
symbols. Archaeological research in Tiya has demonstrated that the stelae
were used for funerary purposes and are dated to around the 14th Century
A.D.

The Konso megalithic differnt from that of Tiya. The stones in konso are not
decorated where as they show varied symbols in Tiya. The Stelae in Konos are
used for as burial markers and as event markers not associated with burials;
where as in Tiya they are always burial markers. The Tiya megalithic site is
an archaeological site where as Konso is a still living tradition of megalithic
culture of a mainly agricultural society.
The Konso Cultural landscape is distinguished from the above mentioned World Heritage properties by the fact that it provides a complete picture and possesses more features in one place, in Konso. The walled towns and their organization, the elaborated terrace agriculture, culturally regulated organized work groups, the traditional forests and the rituals associated, the funerary statues and erected stones associated with hero burials and/or with generation transfer rituals make the Konso cultural landscape unique.

The Konso cultural landscape is an amalgamation of all the sites mentioned above put together in one space.

As noted by ICOMOS, “…the combination of extensive terraces and fortified towns is not otherwise represented on the World Heritage List”, and no other cultural landscape “…exhibits the visual impact offered by Konso, nor particularly the combination of terraces and fortified towns that reflect a very specific response to environmental and social constructs.”

Other sites located in Ethiopia, not far from Konso and not on the list:

Burji and Amaro regions are located further to the east of Konso and the Derashe are located to the north of Konso. This places are inhabited by ethnic groups different from the Konso and exercise the tradition of terrace farming using soil and dry stones. An important cultural landscape with an indigenous terrace system and related authentic cultural values is known further north of the Konso, among the Zala in the Gamo country in Ethiopia. The Gamo country has a tradition of both dry stone and soil terraces based on the local availability of terracing materials. Again, further north, in the Dawro country (north Omo valley), medieval stone walls that were built using dry stone techniques are believed to have been used for defensive purposes. These stone walls are built in multiple rows and are reported to attain a length of >176 Km.
It is to be noted that southern Ethiopia has one of the highest concentration of stelae dated to between 12th. and 15th. Centuries. All the above megalithic sites were identified as burials; except in Konso where the tradition include use of stele as generation markers. Thus the Konso megalithic living tradition could shed more light in the understanding of long gone cultures.

3. d. Integrity and /or Authenticity

The Konso cultural landscape still largely retain its original form and design; and the cultural properties continue their original use and function. The terrace agriculture is still the surest way of the Konso lively hood as it insures proper soil and water conservation. The walled towns are inhabited by the communities and organized following the traditional system. The traditionally protected forests are still protected and used for ritual and burial. The ponds are still in use and periodically conserved.

The materials used for the original construction of the terraces and the town walls are local and the conservation of these is done by the community members using the same locally available material.

The tradition of conservation of the terraces, the walled towns, the forests and the ponds is still maintained through the Parka work group organized through the traditional Kanta (ward) system.

The tradition of the ritual erection of generation and man-hood stones and generation trees following the generations old “age-grading system” is actively practiced. The active age group still sleep in the collective cultural houses (Moras). Wooden funerary statues are still erected on the graves.

The traditional code of management of the cultural landscape is practiced side by side with the modern administrative system. The local communities elect their leaders from within the community members and these together
with elders ensure the protection and management of the properties within their Paletas.

The Konso are repeatedly rewarded at national and international levels for their exemplary water and soil conservation techniques. Their national award includes “GREEN AWARD -2007 in CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS CATEGORY OUTSTANDING WINNER-KONSO COMMUNITY” -signed by Girma Wolde-Giorgis, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

Photo. 8 - National Green Award Certificate signed by the president of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.

The Konso international award include the F.U.N. (Friends of the United Nations) (1995) - *We the peoples : 50 Communities Program.*
Photo 9 and 10- Award received from F.U.N. (Friends of the United Nations) (1995) - *We the peoples : 50 Communities Program*.

Photos (11, 12, 13 and 14 above) are stamps made by the Ethiopian Postal Agency( 2003) to commemorate the Konso Cultural Landscape.
Although the general picture is as indicated above, the Konso could not escape modernization impacts.

Constructions of roads have since the 1970’s affected the cultural landscape as the roads had to cut through terraces. The most recent activity to upgrade the major road is now finished. The community leaders, the local administration and the constructors have tried to limit the damage. This has to a limited extent affected the landscape.

The apparent expansion of the Konso administrative center, the town of Karat, has threatened the nearby walled towns of Dokatu, Dara and Olanta. This threat is now prevented by the declaration of the new legislation by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Government. The legislation has placed posts which are defined as the limits of the traditional towns, and no construction is to be conducted within the 50 meters space outside the external walls of the traditional towns.

**E. State of Conservation and factors affecting the Property**

**4.a- Present state of conservation**

All cultural properties constituting the Konso cultural landscape are generally in a very good state of conservation. Occasional damage to terraces and dry stone built structures such as ponds and walls is caused by tectonics, torrential rains or age. These are conserved as the need arise. Conservation work is mainly done by the Parka work group of members of a certain ward from the same town. The labor force is working in turns on the farms of the same ward members. The ponds (Harda) are conserved following the traditional way by all community members.
It is to be noted that development pressure caused by road constructions and town expansions is claiming some portions of terrace farms. These terraces are stabilized by the owner and his ward members.

The stone walls of the traditional towns are also in good condition. When ever the walls are damaged, the community elders assign members of the generation in power to do the maintenance and conservation work. The common houses (Paftas) that serve as a “men’s house” and guest house are also maintained by the age group in power. Pafta conservation require new grass for the roofs. This is currently becoming difficult as the price of grass is rising considerably.

The Konso do not restore their wooden funerary statues (Waka). These funerary objects are carved, form the start, to decay on the graveyard of the deceased. Even the shelters of the Wakas of the ritual chiefs (Poqolas) are not to be restored, according to the tradition. Nevertheless, recently it has become a custom to construct a small corrugated sheet shade on the Wakas by members of the family of the deceased. The need to conserve the Wakas on the graves and in a museum is now accepted by all; and a museum is under construction to support the conservation needs of these movable properties.

To sum-up, conservation in Konso is done by the community on regular basis regulated by the traditional laws and customs. The cultural properties are generally in good state of conservation and continue to be used by the community.

4.b Factors affecting the property

The current multi-dimensional global change is reaching areas that previously were thought to be remote. National development schemes and changes that are brought through contact with other cultures and market
and service driven economy are impacting the traditional ways of lives and the integrity of the cultural landscape.

(i) Development pressures (e.g., encroachment, adaptation, agriculture, mining)

The Konso country is located at the junction that connects the central part of the country with the Southern Omo administrative zone and the South Eastern region of Borena and its surroundings. Thus the road connecting these areas passes through Konso. When the mentioned road was constructed, it had transformed the traditional road net work systems within Konso. In due course, terraces were lost to the roads and quarries were exploited at areas that had old terraces. The recent road up-grading activity had not affected the cultural landscape less. In addition to terraces, ritual spots that were formerly protected were impacted. The damage was controlled through intervention from various informed stake holders including the regional government.

There have been threats of new commercial centers mushrooming in some peasant associations, close to the walled towns. Such pressures are being monitored currently by the community, the Konso Special Woreda (administrative district) Administration and the Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism. The new legislation declared by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State and which is relative to the Konso cultural landscape has defined the distance of such future structures from the external walls of the towns.

The expansion of the town of Bekawle (the Konso administrative center), had also threatened the terraces that lie in Dokatu, Hulmie, Olanta, and Dara territories. But it is now accepted that the town can only expand toward NE and E directions, outside of the nominated area.
Changing life styles in the traditional walled town are demonstrated, among others, by the beginning of the appearance of houses with corrugated iron sheet roofs. Piped water is brought to the center of the walled towns. Need for healthy and appropriate latrine system is growing. These are issues that are to be monitored by the management committees.

(ii) **Environmental pressures (e.g., pollution, climate change, desertification)**

There is no major environmental pressure in view to be addressed at this stage.

(iii) **Natural disasters and risk preparedness (earthquakes, floods, fires, etc.)**

The Konso country is located at the terminus of the Main Ethiopian Rift and it is susceptible to earthquakes. Although there is no any official record of impacts of earthquakes in the area, terraces, ponds and dry stone walls are observed crumbling at certain places. It some times rains very heavily during the short rainy season and this result in destruction of terraces.

There is no modern system of Natural disasters and risk preparedness system at Konso. Nevertheless, the Konso traditional system has its way of dealing with natural disasters. The terraces, ponds, walls and communally owned properties are conserved by the community **Parka** work groups.

The community members of the generation in power are alert and sleep together, at night, in the **Pafta** within the **Mora** space to putout fire. Every walled town plants euphorbia and finger cactus in the **Dina** that they use as fire extinguisher.
The traditional system is responding appropriately so far to natural disasters.

(iv) **Visitor/tourism pressure**

Visitors to Konso are usually passers-by who stop for a few hours on their way to the Southern Omo region. It is expected that, in the future this will change and more visitors may stay longer; as the landscape is open and the properties are diverse. There is no any problem accommodating tourists. Nevertheless, tourists visiting the traditional walled towns put a certain amount of psychological pressure on the elderly community members.

From the current experience, the walled towns can accommodate up to four groups of 10 to 15 guided visitors at a time. This number could be accommodated without adverse effects provided that the tourist experience is aided by trained local guides.

(v) **Number of inhabitants within property, buffer zone**

Estimated population located within

Area of nominated property = 200,000.

Buffer zone ______

Total ______

Year - 2007.
5. Protection and Management of the property

5. a. Ownership

Land in Ethiopia is owned by the state as stipulated by government decree of 1975 (annexed). Thus by definition all Konso land is owned by the government. The terraces on the land are owned by individual members of the community. Terrace ownership is transferred from father to son and it can also be bought and sold by members of the same community. Thus the government law and the traditional ownership system are practiced at the same time.

This Ownership confusion “dilemma” is clearly expressed by Elizabeth E. Watson (Watson E.E., 1998, pp 22, 23) as follows. “...Some said the traditional form of land tenure was still the case; others said that the traditions had “been left”, that the traditional leaders and landowners were no longer important, and since land reform (1975) all the land was in the hands of the tiller. Which account was true? The answer, which seems obvious retrospectively, was that they were both true: Both kinds of land tenure system exist in practice, and are legitimized by different discourses”.

The water ponds (Harda) are owned collectively by the residents of the Peasant Association members living in a walled town (Paleta). And thus their conservation is assured through them.

The traditionally protected forests serve as residence and burial for the ritual chiefs (Poqola). Traditionally they are owned by the Poqola. After the land reform proclamation indicated above, technically they belong to the government to be administered by the Peasant Associations. But in practice, now, they are “owned” and managed by the Poqola and members of their family. Their ownership status seems to be defined by the traditional law. The
customary law and the traditional ownership rights are practiced at the same time and without conflict.

The walled towns are collectively owned by the community members. The walls are the responsibility of the whole community as organized under the local Peasant Association. The individual homestead is owned by the individual family. The common cultural spaces (*Mora*) are owned by the community members who live in a given ward (*Kanta*). The ritually important *Mora* and the cultural objects and manifestations therein are owned by the whole town community.

The *Waka* and the burial marker stone (*Daga- diruma*) are owned privately by the family members of the deceased, who have carved the statuettes or erected the stone. The grooves (*Dina*) are owned by the individual *Kanta* and yet they are open for use by all members of the town when ever there is a need.

It is to be noted that the federal and the regional governments are tolerant of the practice of the traditional laws as far as they do not create inconveniences and they are followed as agreed by the communities.

**5. b. protective designation**

The Konso Special Woreda (district) is divided in to various (44) Peasant Associations called Kebeles, organized within its territory. The boundaries of these Peasant Associations are defined following the traditional and original settlement patterns. The associations are the legal bodies responsible for the administration at the community level. Jurisdiction is based on these boundaries that are established between the individual Peasant Associations/*Paletas*. These boundaries are accepted at the district (Woreda) level and approved by the Regional Government.
The Individual terrace owner has the right to use his land as stipulated by the land proclamation. He also has the right to maintain his terrace and plant it with crops which he deems correct based on the traditionally acquired knowledge.

People who pay their dues to the government are entitled to use of their land and are the legal owners of their individual farms.

The individual Peasant Associations/Paletas that have walled towns have management committees formed through election and assignments. For the Peasant Associations that do not have walled towns, the Peasant Associations Chairmen are represented in the District Management committee. In the former case, the elders, women and youth representatives are nominated through election, where as the other members of the management committee are assigned through selection from members of the Peasant Association administration. Thus both the traditional and municipal administration viewpoints work in the protection and conservation of the cultural properties. These management committees are responsible for the day-to-day follow up of the property and are accountable to the Management Committee that is formed at the district (Special Woreda) level.

The following paragraphs clearly show the general legal trends.

A. *The Constitution* (annexed):

The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No. 1/1995, issued on 21st August 1995 in Article 39-2 declares that “Every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has the right to speak, to write and develop its own language; to express, to develop and to promote its culture; and to preserve its history.” And further on Article 91-2 it is stated that “Government and all Ethiopian citizens shall have the duty to protect the country’s natural endowment, historical sites and objects.” In view
of the importance of the views of the people with regard to development impact and environment protection, the Constitution, on Article 92 No. 2 and 3, further states that “The design and implication of programs and projects of development shall not damage or destroy the environment”; and “People have the right to full consultation and to the expression of views in the planning and implementation of environmental policies and projects that affect them directly”. The above declarations clearly show the commitment of the government to protect the cultures and cultural properties of the country.

B. The Cultural Policy (annexed):

Based on the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), a Cultural Policy was prepared by the Ministry of Information and Culture (this is latter re-organized and named as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism) and adopted by the House of Representatives (Parliament) of the FDRE in October 1997. This Cultural Policy has clearly outlined the direction that the country has to follow with regard to culture and cultural properties. In its contents and strategies for its implementation, it is stated that “Creating awareness that the conservation and preservation of cultural, historical and natural heritage are the duties and responsibilities of governmental and non-governmental organizations, religious institutions and all Ethiopian nationals” (p.27) in addition to “Facilitating the necessary conditions to conserve and preserve the heritage of the country; to protect these from illicit trafficking and extortion…” (p.27)

The policy further underlines that “ensuring” the cultures of the country “receive equal recognition, respect and chance to development”. And “favorable situation” will be created “…to carry out scientific research and inventory...” on the cultural heritages. Further again the Policy stipulates that, “An appropriate precondition shall be arranged to protect sites of heritage from damages caused by construction works and other development activities” (p.33). With regard to culture in Education, the Policy further
states that “Cultural themes shall be included in to the educational curricula with the aim of integrating education with culture and thereby to shape the youth with a sense of cultural identity;”(p36).

C. The Proclamation issued to provide for research and conservation of cultural heritage (annexed):

Based on the Cultural policy, the Proclamation No. 209/2000 “To provide for Research and Conservation of cultural Heritage” was issued by the FDRE. In its definition, it’s noted that, heritage properties that are protected by law are, “... any thing tangible or intangible which is the product of creativity and labor of man in the pre-history and history times, that describes and witnesses to the evolution of nature and which has a major value in its scientific, historical, cultural, artistic and handicraft content.” (Part 1 Article 3 No. 4). This same proclamation in its Preamble acknowledges that cultural heritage “...plays a major role...and hence the protection and preservation of cultural heritage has been made the responsibility of each citizen, the society and the state”.

D. Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No.53/2003,(annexed):

This proclamation is issued by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State, SNNPRS on March 1st 2003. Its relevance to the Konso cultural landscape is obvious from its contents. On ownership and use rights of the communities, it states that “The right of getting land for communal use of both peasant and pastoralist, that is for grazing, social and cultural affairs and religion is reserved” (Article 6 no. 4); and the use right equally include the right of “Protecting wild animals, plants, birds, and other natural and artificial resources and heritages, which are harbored under his possession” (Article 6 no. 7).
The customary laws that are practiced by the community are accepted by this same proclamation, as it is stated in Article 16 no. 3 and no.4 that, “...local laws issued by the society, and customary practices...” are to be respected and communal users “...shall be responsible for protecting wild animals, plants, birds, and other natural and artificial resources and heritages found on the communally possessed land.”. Further, Article 19 no. 1 insures the sustainable preservation and use of “lands demarcated for forest, wild life, soil conservation...and historical use...”; and the “Right of the local community to share from the benefits gained from protected and preserved areas are reserved” (Article 19 no. 3).

As shown above, the proclamation has laid the necessary ground for a further legislation that insures the protection of the Konso cultural landscape. This legislation “Proclamation to provide for the protection of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage” is now passed by the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State SNNPRS, the Regional Government under which Konso is administered. (See Attached).

Based on this proclamation,

The Konso Cultural Landscape heritage management is organized as follows:

1. Communal Heritage Management Committees of the 12 Paleta / Kebeles at community level and Chairmen of the Peasant associations outside of the walled towns.

2. Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage Management Office at Konso Special Woreda level.

Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office will be accountable to the Culture and Tourism Bureau of the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State and consisting of 9 members from governmental and non-governmental bodies is formed. The Office implement and supervise the
efficient execution of the Konso World Heritage Management; takes part in the design of development and infrastructural project that may impact the Konso Cultural Landscape, and shall check that their execution is compatible with the protection and conservation of the heritage; execute the protection and conservation of the heritage and apply the rules thereof according to traditional and governmental laws. It cooperate with concerned local administrative bodies and government organs in order that the local traditional administration and traditional land, culture and nature protection rule and customs be compatible with governmental laws and put into practice to contribute to the general development of the society; prepare and submit budgetary request and plan for the conservation of heritage in Kebeles to the Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism, and implement same when approved; work, in coordination with the local people, for the traditional execution of the cultural heritage protection and conservation works, and where conditions lie beyond local capacity, bring same to the notice of the Woreda Administration and apply decision there-from; and perform additional duties assigned by South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State Culture and Tourism Bureau.

The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall be responsible for the follow-up of the planning and activities of the Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office and device capacity building strategy for Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office, and enforce its implementation, create favorable ground for the allocation of the necessary budget, and prepare project proposals to raise funds, for the conservation and sustainable use of the Konso Cultural Landscape. The Federal Government Ministry of Culture and Tourism and its Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) supervise the performances of the above and provide national protection with regard to legislations and the necessary technical assistances and fund for the protection of the Konso Cultural Landscape.
5.c. Means of implementing protecting measures.

How?

According to the current Management Plan (annexed) the following has been proposed.

As the community management committee members live in the Paletas, monitoring at the community level is a continuous process. Thus no damage can happen to heritage property unobserved. Any irregularity is reported to the district Management Office.

Based on the above, the Konso District Culture and Tourism Office and the Cultural Management Office with support of the Konso Administrative Council conduct physical inspection of the areas that need inspection, on quarterly basis following the Ethiopian budget year calendar. This is done at the end of September, December, March and June. In the case of any development that affects the properties, the Office and the Committees enforce legal measures to mitigate the problems. In the case of any natural disaster affecting the properties, action is taken by involving the community and promptly reported to the Regional government Bureau of Culture and Tourism and to the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The regional government Bureau of Culture and Tourism conduct annually, two monitoring visits to Konso, one at the end of December and another one at the end of May. Based on this physical inspection, direct contact between the local communities and review of the reports filed, the Bureau presents its report including its recommendations to the Regional Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (S.N.N.P.R.S.). A copy of the annual report and recommendations are sent to the ARCCH for further assistance as needed.
NGOs working to support, protect and conserve the cultural heritage are obliged to report to the district Management Office, of any issue that they may encounter affecting the property. The latter conduct prompt physical inspection at the area affected or threatened.

Other stakeholders such as tour operators, agricultural or development agents, law enforcement organs, etc... report to the Management Office and the Konso District Administration of any harm suspected or materialized that may endanger the cultural property. It is to be noted that, in addition to the management links at various levels, the traditional heritage, protection and conservation practice continue as agreed by the community members.

5. d. Existing plans related to municipality and region in which the proposed property is located (e.g., regional or local plan, conservation plan, tourism development plan)

The country is pursuing a policy directed at using its resources for poverty alleviation. The Konso cultural properties are by definition subject to development plans.

- With regard to infrastructural development plan, the new paved road has already crossed the Konso ‘core area” proposed for nomination. This development is meant, among other things, to facilitate visitor access to heritage sites in the region.
- There is an agreed plan with the UNWTO and a document relative to the use of the cultural properties has been developed (December 2006) and is under implementation by the Regional Tourism Bureau, the Konso Culture and Tourism Office and the individual communities. This Tourism Plan directly influence the way the cultural landscape is protected, conserved and used. (annexed)
- A local Non-Government Office (NGO) named Parka had developed a plan to conserve the resources of the landscape based on community
based participatory approaches with support from the Christensen Fund, a USA based foundation with interest in natural and landscape protection. This had begun to bear fruit. Parka is no more functional but other NGOs are expected to follow suit.

- With support from the Embassy of the French Republic in Ethiopia and the Quai-Branly Museum, Paris and UNESCO, the Konso Special Woreda administration has constructed a Konso Museum where all heritage objects, including the Wakas are conserved and presented for tourists. In addition, this museum provides services to researchers and students.

- An Italian NGO (CISS), with support from the Italian government is currently based in Konso and has begun a two years project planned at promoting and training the Konso artisans to produce cultural objects for the tourist market.

- A local development Association named Konso Development Association with support from the local administration is working at community level in development programs that directly influence the conservation and use of the cultural landscape.

5.e. Property management plan or other management system

Management plan annexed.

The management plan focus on maximizing the effectiveness of the existing institutions and traditional conservation techniques and approaches. The individual Paleta communities have vowed to insure the continuous and traditionally performed practices of conservation of their cultural properties with in their territories. This however has its own set backs. Finance is lacking and materials for conservation do not come cheap as the old days. The Regional government has decided to share the tourism revenues with the communities to help support their traditional conservation efforts.
The communities have agreed to preserve the integrity and authenticity of their vernacular architectural techniques within the individual walled towns and should the need for modern corrugated sheet houses arise, it is agreed that this should be done in a new area outside of the walls of the traditional towns. Facility construction such as latrines, water pipes and electricity within the walled towns will be conducted with consultations and prior approval of the management committees and the Management Office.

Local government and community-led natural and environmental protection and conservation efforts have started to bear fruit. Thus the protection of the grooves (Dina) is insured and the maintenance and conservation of the terraces is partly supported.

With regard to the tourism plans, the UNWTO action plan and its implementation program through the SNV (Netherland’s NGO) and the direct involvement of the community through the Konso Culture and Tourism Office is bearing fruit.

The key issues identified by the management committees and the stakeholders are taken into consideration to integrate and harmonize modernization pressures with the protection of the heritage properties.

Should the Konso cultural landscape be registered as World Heritage, UNESCO’s support at various fronts is expected to fill in the gaps and for its leadership.

5. f. Sources and levels of finance

The various agencies, both governmental and NGO working in Konso are trying to provide support in the form of funds, skills and training. But the support acquired so-far is far from enough.
The Regional government is providing funds for salaries of culture and tourism experts working in Konso. The government had recently raised a sum of about 100,000 USD from the UNWTO to create an office, hire and train the staff and organize the community to make the heritage properties ready for tourism. Nevertheless, the current capacity is not sufficient vis-à-vis the vast heritage properties in the Konso country.

The various supporting organizations indicated above provide the opportunity for funds to be used in training. It is evident that the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture, the Authority of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism have direct stake in the cultural landscape and are sources for funds.

A joint program between an Italian NGO on one part, and the Konso Administration and the Konso Development Association on the other, has put in place a program in artisan training to produce cultural products for sale.

The skills in the traditional conservation techniques will have to be supported with modern knowledge. The Government of South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State has vowed to support the conservation efforts of the Konso people as their traditional methods of natural and environmental protection are vivid.

5. g. Sources of expertise and training in conservation and management techniques

It is to be noted that there are young Konso scholars who graduated from universities and who are aware of, and ready to take part in conservation and management of their heritage. Although the will to support the documentation, protection and conservation of the Konso heritage property is evident at various levels, it remains that the necessary coordination and follow up has to be done. Recently, two European (French and Spanish)
experts were based in Konso and trained the local experts about conservation techniques of cultural objects including **Waka**. The National Museum of Ethiopia is also engaged in training Konso experts.

The Regional Government and its Bureau of Culture and the Federal Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) are also obliged to support the training and conservation efforts.

Capacity building in the various management areas is needed for the local community members and the “Scientific Committee” which is constituted from Konso scholars is supporting these efforts. Resources for the training will be available from both the Regional and the Federal concerned institutions; and international institutions such as the UNESCO will be approached.

### 5. h. Visitor facilities and statistics

The number of visitors to Konso has shown a tendency of increase in the last five years. The tourists coming to Konso are visitors who are included in the package that visits the Southern Omo indigenous people.

According to the information from the Konso Tourism Office, the total number of tourists who visited the Konso traditional towns and the **Kala** burial site in the last five years is 9105. (In 2002/3, 1163 visitors; in 2003/4, 1635 visitors; in 2004/05, 2510 visitors; in 2005/06, 1833 visitors and in 2006/2007, 1956 visitors have visited Konso). Thus 229,677 Birr was collected from tickets (1 USD= 9.7 Birr). More than 90 % of the visitors are foreigners. According to the year 2007 statistics, Spanish (174), French (27), American (33), British (27), German (22), Australian (25), Italian (61), Belgian (20) and Japanese (20) tourists are among the tourists who visited Konso.

There are five hotels in Konso whose bed rooms need to be upgraded. Restaurant service in these hotels is below modest for an European Visitor.
However, the Konso administration is striving to better the situation and upgrade the services.

Recently, two modest loges were constructed by a tour operator and a foreign investor and begun providing modest services. Based on the UN WTO Tourism Plan, trainings were provided to people in the service sector.

With support from the French Embassy in Ethiopia and the Quai-Branly Museum, Paris, UNESCO and the direct involvement and collaboration of the Konso communities and administration, a Konso Museum destined to conserve, preserve and present the Konso Waka is has been realized. This Museum is inaugurated in 2009.

Based on the Tourism Plan prepared by the UN WTO for Konso, it is planned to build an Information Center to introduce the Konso culture to visitors.

Discussions with the community members have permitted to look in to the issues of the direct involvement of community members in insuring better tourist experience. Thus, traditional houses (Pafta) are to be constructed and there is a plan to create the necessary conditions to make tourists stay longer and experience more of the Konso culture.

The Italian NGO stationed in Konso with an objective of training the community members on the traditional artisan craft for market, and the already existing Protestant Church supported craft development program will serve as source of souvenirs for visitors and generate income for the community members.

Roads leading to major tourist attractions are available. The main road leading to Konso is now paved and the Arba-Minch Air Port is only 80 Kms. (an hour and half drive) away.
The visits in konso are guided by tour guides from the various tour operators mostly based in Addis Ababa. Learned Konso community members are taking the lead whenever tourists with interest in knowing deeply about the culture appear.

5. i. Policies and programs related to the presentation and promotion of the property

As indicated in 5.b above, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Cultural Policy, the Proclamation no. 209/2000, the Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No.53/2003 are all in agreement about the use and promotion of cultural properties in general. There is a new Tourism Policy at a draft stage which has provisions with regard to presentation and promotion. In addition to that, the Management Objectives that were developed by the community and the Konso administrative council have indicated the need for, and their commitment to work towards the presentation and promotion of the property. The need for and action plan for presentation and promotion are clearly elaborated in the Management Plan (annexed).

5. j. Staffing levels (professional, technical, maintenance)

The Konso cultural landscape is being used, protected and conserved by the community. Knowledgeable community members skilled in the various techniques are the main players in the conservation of the cultural properties. The Heritage Management Office and the Konso District Office of Culture and Tourism are directly mandated for the follow up of the cultural landscape and its use. The Heritage management Office is more directly concerned with the property and will have the necessary employees to perform its duties. The Culture and Tourism Office has 6 employees who could provide professional support. The Regional Bureau of Information and Culture and the ARCCH are engaged in the capacity building of the existing staff.
6. Monitoring

Monitoring is done at various levels. The local community management committees of the individual **Paletas** (peasant associations) perform a periodic monitoring of changes within their own territory and report, monthly, to the Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office who periodically inspect the property, call a quarterly meeting of the district Management Committee and present the findings. The Office based on the management committee recommendations (and stakeholders reports), present its report and recommendations to the Bureau of Culture and Tourism of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. The Bureau then reports, bi-annually, to the Government of the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State. The Bureau equally sends a copy of its report and requests for additional support from the Federal Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the tourism plan, the UN WTO prepared and approved document is being implemented. The Konso Tourism Desk, SNV, Regional Bureau of Tourism and the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism are responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the tourism aspects.

6. a. Key indicators for measuring state of conservation

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<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Periodicity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Terraces that need maintenance</td>
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<td>annually</td>
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<td>Degradation of Wakas</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator</strong></td>
<td><strong>Periodicity</strong></td>
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<td>Rate of theft of Wakas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of common houses (Pafta) and Mora that need conservation</td>
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<td>Number of Ponds that need maintenance</td>
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<td>Condition of the sacred forests</td>
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<td>Each Paleta, Konso Office of Agriculture and Culture and Tourism Office and Konso Cultural landscape Management Office</td>
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<td>Encroachment of markets and new settlements</td>
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<td>The Konso District Administration and Konso Cultural landscape Management Office</td>
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<td>Population increase and walled town expansion</td>
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<td>Monitoring development impacts</td>
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<td>Continuity of ritual practices</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>The Individual Paleta Peasant Association, Offices and the Konso Office of Culture and Tourism and Konso Cultural landscape Management Office</td>
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</table>

**6. b. Administrative arrangements for monitoring property**

Monitoring is done at various levels. The local community management committee of the individual Paleta (peasant associations) is to perform a periodic monitoring of changes within its own territory and report, monthly, to the Special Woreda Cultural landscape Management Office who call a quarterly meeting of the district Management Committee and present the report. The latter, based on the community management committees (and stakeholders reports), conduct a quarterly verification and monitoring visit of all activities on the landscape and present its report and recommendations bi-annually, to the regional government Bureau of Culture and Tourism, who in turn presents its annual report to the Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and peoples Regional State. The Bureau equally sends a copy of its report and requests for additional support to the Federal Center for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism.
With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the tourism plan, the UNWTO prepared document is being applied. The Konso Tourism Desk, SNV, Regional Bureau of Tourism and the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism are responsible for the follow-up and monitoring of the tourism aspects (see annexed UN WTO document).

As the community management committee members live in the individual Paletas, monitoring at the community level is a continuous process. Thus no change can happen unobserved and this is reported to the Special Woreda Management Committee.

Based on the above, the Konso Special Woreda (district) Office of Culture and Tourism, the Konso Cultural landscape Management Office Management Committee with support of the Konso Administrative Council conduct physical inspection of the areas that need inspection, on quarterly basis following the Ethiopian budget year calendar. This is done at the end of September, December, March and June. (It is to be noted that the Konso Chief Administrator is the chairman of the Management Committee where as the Head of the Culture and Tourism Office is its Secretary.) In the case of any development that affects the properties, the Office and the Committee enforce legal measures to mitigate the problems. In the case of any natural hazard affecting the properties, action is taken by involving the community and promptly reported to the regional government Bureau of Culture and Tourism. The regional government Bureau of Culture and Tourism conduct two monitoring visits to Konso, one at the end of December and another one at the end of May. Based on this physical inspection, direct contact between the local communities and review of the reports filed, the Bureau presents its report including its recommendations to the Regional Government of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (S.N.N.P.R.S.). A copy of the annual report and recommendations are sent to the ARCCH for further assistance as needed.
Contact agencies-

At the Special Woreda (District level):

a. Office of Chief Administrator of Konso Special Woreda, Karat, Konso, SNNPRS, Ethiopia, Tel.: (251)467730041.

b. Office of Information and Culture, Konso Special Woreda, Karat, Konso, SNNPRS, Ethiopia. Tel.: (251) 064-773 0343.

At community level:

c. The Peasant Association of the Gamole Paleta, Konso.
d. The Peasant Association of the Gocha Paleta, Konso.
e. The Peasant Association of the Mechelo Paleta, Konso.
f. The Peasant Association of the Doketu Paleta, Konso.
g. The Peasant Association of the Olanta Paleta, Konso.
h. The Peasant Association of the Dara Paleta, Konso.
i. The Peasant Association of the Gaho Paleta, Konso.
j. The Peasant Association of the Mecheke Paleta, Konso.
k. The Peasant Association of the Fasha Paleta for Burjo, Konso.

(Note: all listed in (d) above are accessed through the Konso Special Woreda (district) administration office indicated in (a).)

At regional level:


At National level:
The Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH), Po Box 13247 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Telephone No. (251)01115152741. e-mail= crcch@ethionet.et

6. c. Results of previous reporting exercises

There were no previous formal reporting activities.

7. Documentation

7.a. Photographs, slides, image inventory and authorization table and other audiovisual materials (photos including those used in the text are on CD Rom).

**IMAGE INVENTORY AND PHOTOGRAPH AND AUDIOVISUAL AUTHORIZATION FORM**

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<td>ARCCIK CL</td>
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</table>
7.b. **Texts relating to protective designation, Copies of property management plans or documented management systems and extracts of other plans relevant to the property**

i. Management Plan is attached. Revised and submitted

ii. extracts of The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia - already submitted

iii. The Cultural Policy of the FDRE - already submitted

iv. The Proclamation issued to provide for research and conservation of cultural heritage - already submitted

v. Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No. 53/2003 - already submitted

vi. The legal document to protect the Konso Cultural Landscape, attached

vii. Extracts of UN WTO Tourism Plan for Konso - already submitted

---

**7. c. Form and date of most recent records of property**

The most recent records of the cultural properties were made between October 2007 and January 2008.

These records include:

For the walled towns-

- Relevant quantitative and qualitative data relative to the stone walls of traditional towns: height, thickness, rock type, rock dimensions at certain intervals; gates and their cultural purpose; state of condition of the walls are documented using GPS and data sheet prepared for these purpose.

- The cultural spaces (Mora) and cultural objects within the walls such as the Pafta (common houses), the generation trees (ulahita), and other objects of cultural significance are equally documented.

- All the paths that connect the cultural spaces within the towns are tracked.
➢ Burial spaces, location of heritage properties outside the walls, Dina grooves, and structures brought by development pressure are plotted.

Most of the above data are used to map the individual walled towns.

For the terraces:

➢ Car and foot transects were made to document the coverage of the terraces. This data is used in the map as indicated by percentage.
➢ One terrace section was selected and qualitative and quantitative data are gathered.

Ponds:

➢ Major ponds are located using GPS and data is collected.

Traditionally protected forests:

➢ Qualitative and quantitative data are collected. At one instance the ritual chief, Kala guided survey has identified all the major ritual spots within and adjacent to the forest.

Rituals:

➢ A ritual ceremony called the Kara that took 3 months was followed and documented through direct participatory approach when ever possible.

All the above were documented using digital photos; some using slide films and using video tapes.

7. d. Address where inventory, records and archives are held

The above records are held at the ARCCIKCL (Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscape), an indigenous Association based in Awassa, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.
7. e. Bibliography


BLACK Paul & SHAKO OTTO, 1973, Konso Dictionary, non published manuscript.


97


JENSEN A. E., 1954, Das Gada-system der Konso und die Alterklassen-Syteme der Niloten. Ethnos XIX.


MESSERET LEJEBO, 1990, *A Study of the Technological, Social, Socio-economic and environmental Contrainst affecting the Performance of Ethiopian Agriculture, with special Reference to Drought and Famine Crisis*


POISSONNIER Nicole, 2007, ***, PhD. Dissertation, Germany.


8. Contact Information of responsible authorities

8. a. Preparer

Yonas Beyene Gebre-Michael,

Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ARCCH) Ministry of Culture and Tourism,
Po. Box-13247, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
E-mail: yonasbeyene.gm@gmail.com and arcch@ethionet.et
Tel: (251)115513176 Office
Mobile: (251)0913544593.

Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Landscapes (ARCCIKCL), P. O. Box 984 Awassa, Ethiopia.

Telephone: 251 462205349

E-mail: crcch@ethionet.et

8. b. Official Local Institution/ Agency

➢ Chief Administrator of Konso Special Woreda, Karat, Konso, SNNPRS, Ethiopia, Tel.: (251)467730041.
➢ Office of Information and Culture, Konso Special Woreda, Karat, Konso, SNNPRS, Ethiopia. Tel.: (251) 064-773 0343.

At regional level:

➢ Bureau of Culture and Information of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPRS), Awassa, Ethiopia. Telephone (251) 01462201. Fax – (251)462206139.
At National level:

- The Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural heritage (ARCCH), Po Box 13247 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Telephone No. (251)01115152741.
  e-mail= crcch@ethionet.et

8. c. Other Local Institutions

At Local level:

Chairpersons of the respective Paleta management committees who are by definition the Chairman of the local Peasant Association. Their addresses are through the Konso Special Woreda (administrative district)

8. d. Official web address

There is no official web address for the moment.

9. Signature on behalf of the State Party

__________________________
H.E. Mr. Jara Haile-Mariam,

General Director of the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH),
Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ethiopia.
10. Data relevant to walled towns

Appendixes

1. NAME OF WALLED TOWN: **BURJO**
   GPS: \(05^\circ17' 27.6''\) \(E 037^\circ21' 06.7''\)

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<th>Function</th>
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<td>Soge</td>
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<td>M-4</td>
<td>Horba</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>Gugla</td>
<td>(05^\circ17' 27.6'') (E 037^\circ21' 06.7'')* ALT</td>
<td>Main Mora to be used for all rituales</td>
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<td>Morento</td>
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Erected Stones

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<td>(05^\circ17' 27.6'') (E 037^\circ21' 06.7'')* ALT</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>197 cms</td>
<td>Generation Representation man hood stone</td>
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2. NAME OF WALLED TOWN: **BURKUDA**
   GPS: \(05^\circ19' 53.4''\) \(E 37^\circ25' 23.4''\)

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<th>Function</th>
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<td>M-1</td>
<td>Nalydo</td>
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<td>17.1 x 6.8 m</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Chamote</td>
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<td>Main mora as most sacred</td>
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<td>M-3</td>
<td>Mole</td>
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<td>11.2 x 3 m</td>
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<td>M-4</td>
<td>Kembelo</td>
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<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>19.5 x 10.4 m</td>
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<td>M-5</td>
<td>Kudameto</td>
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<td>M-6</td>
<td>Hamale</td>
<td>(05^\circ19' 50.6'') (E 37^\circ25' 23.1'')</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-7</td>
<td>Mashelo</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>Otiree</td>
<td>(05^\circ19' 50.9'') (E 37^\circ25' 19.8'')</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>5.2 x 2.9 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-9</td>
<td>Datto</td>
<td>(05^\circ19' 51.9'') (E 37^\circ25' 19.1'')</td>
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<td>4.6 x 2.6 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-10</td>
<td>Kalkalya</td>
<td>(05^\circ19' 52.5'') (E 37^\circ25' 17.3'')</td>
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<td>7.1 x 5.3 m</td>
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PAFTA

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<th>Width</th>
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<td>9.22m</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7 metres</td>
<td>8.6 metres</td>
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Erected Stones

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<td>150x13cm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>125x20cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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<td>Mora-chemote</td>
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<td>119 x 7 cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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<td></td>
<td>133x26cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>112x24cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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<td></td>
<td>100x20cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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3. NAME OF WALLED TOWN: _______BURJO______ GPS: N 05° 17' 27.6" E 037° 21' 06.7"

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Moyle</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Mondaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>Soge</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>Horba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>Gugla</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 27.6&quot; E 037° 21' 06.7&quot; ALT</td>
<td>Main Mora to be used for all rituales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>Moreno</td>
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### Erected Stones

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Daga-Hela</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 27.6&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>197 cms</td>
<td>Generation Representation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E 037° 21' 06.7&quot;</td>
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#### 4. NAME OF WALLED TOWN: Burkuda

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Nalydo</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 55&quot; E 37° 25' 24.2&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>17.1 x 6.8 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Chamote</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 53.4&quot; E 37° 25' 23.4&quot;</td>
<td>Main mora as most sacred</td>
<td>11.5 x 4.2 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>Mole</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 54&quot; E 37° 25' 21.5&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>11.2 x 3 m</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>Kembelo</td>
<td>N 05° 15' 94.4&quot; E 37° 25' 19.5&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>19.5 x 10.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>Kudameto</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 52.3&quot; E 37° 25' 21.5&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>Hamale</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 50.6&quot; E 37° 25' 23.1&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>6.7 x 4.5 m</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-7</td>
<td>Mashelo</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 49.2&quot; E 37° 25' 22.3&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
<td>10.2 x 3.77 m</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>Otiree</td>
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<td>M-9</td>
<td>Datto</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-10</td>
<td>Kalkalya</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 52.5&quot; E 37° 25' 17.3&quot;</td>
<td>Meeting place</td>
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#### PAFTA

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>9.22m</td>
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<td>M-2</td>
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<td>M-3</td>
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<td>M-4</td>
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Erected Stones

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<th>Significance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hara-mechke</td>
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<td>176x17cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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<td>96x20cm</td>
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<td>125x20cm</td>
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<td>Mora-chemote</td>
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<td>156 x 30cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>100 x 20 cm</td>
<td>Dage-hela</td>
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5. **NAME OF WALLED TOWN:** DERRA  
**GPS:** N 05° 19' 57.8"  
E 37° 26' 44.3"

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<th>Height</th>
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<th>Gates</th>
<th>Thickness Of Wall</th>
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**Mora**

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<th>Ulahita</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Afrano</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 56.1&quot; E 37° 26' 44.9&quot; ALT 1475</td>
<td>Meeting Ground and other cultural center</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Shirto</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 57.8&quot; E 37° 26' 44.93&quot; ALT 1468</td>
<td>Main mora and most sacred</td>
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<td>Dekesaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>Ayane</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>Olamta</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 54.9&quot; E 37° 26' 47.6&quot;</td>
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<td>Ulahita</td>
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<td>Cherbefo</td>
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<td>Meeting Ground and cultural Activities</td>
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<td>E 37° 26' 44.3 ''</td>
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<td>M-7</td>
<td>Chirata</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 55.3''</td>
<td>Meeting Ground and cultural Activities</td>
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<td>E 37° 26' 44.9 ''</td>
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**Erected Stones**

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<th>Significance</th>
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<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 33.6'' E 037° 22' 39.0''</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Daga-Diruma and Daga-Hela</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 33.6'' E 037° 22' 39.0''</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Daga-Diruma</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 33.6'' E 037° 22' 39.0''</td>
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6. **NAME OF WALLED TOWN:** GAHO  
**GPS:** N 05° 17' 33.6'' E 037° 22 39.0''

**Mora**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Function</th>
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<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Kuhite</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 33.6'' E 037° 22' 39.0''</td>
<td>One of the three paletas for the preservation of Mura Kufa, a sacred forest.</td>
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7. **NAME OF WALLED TOWN:** GAMOLE  
**GPS:** N 05° 20' 9.6'' E 037° 24' 26.2''  
**ALT** 1617m

**Wall**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Wall</th>
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<th>Rock Dimencshen</th>
<th>Gates</th>
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Mora

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<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Mora Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| M-1       | Segele        | N 05° 20' 14.1"  E 37° 24' 26.1" ALT 1625M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Dispute arbitation.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 4.30 x 14 m | 8       |
| M-2       | Shilale       | N 05° 20' 09.6"  E 37° 24' 26.2" ALT 1617M | • Main Mora (most sacred) | 20 x 8.8 m | 11      |
| M-3       | Kilankalto    | N 05° 20' 10.0"  E 37° 24' 24.2" ALT 1637M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Dispute arbitation.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 10.20x5.10 m | 3       |
| M-4       | Mora Ayana    | N 05° 20' 10.2"  E 37° 24' 21.9" ALT 1639M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Conflict resolution.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 12 x 9 m | 5       |
| M-5       | Orkumata      | N 05° 20' 06.7"  E 37° 24' 23.8" ALT 1627M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Conflict resolution.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 14.5 x 9 m | 2       |
| M-6       | Galgalaya     | N 05° 20' 08.3"  E 37° 24' 27.6" ALT 1609M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Conflict resolution.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 14 x 9 m | 1       |
<p>| M-7       | Otaya         | N 05° 20'                     | • Meeting                                      |              |         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora Code</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|           | Ulahita    | 15.6" E 37° 24' 28.1" ALT | ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Conflict resolution.  
• Dancing and Watch tower |            | 1 |
| M-8       | Kulkulaya  | N 05° 20' 16.4" E 37° 24' 26.6" ALT 1607 | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Dispute arbitratation.  
• Dancing and Watch tower |            | |
| M-9       | Alayto     | N 05° 20' 14.0" E 37° 24' 23.3" ALT 1616M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Dispute arbitratation.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 10 x 10.5 m | |
| M-10      | Keltoya    | N 05° 20' 16.7" E 37° 24' 29.1" ALT 1600M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• dispute arbitratation.  
• Dancing and Watch tower | 13 x 11 m  | |
| M-11      | Furgola    | N 05° 20' 14.4" E 37° 24' 29.5" ALT 1697M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Dispute arbitration.  
• Dancing and Watch tower |            | |
| M-12      | Tarate     | N 05° 20' 11.7" E 37° 24' 20.00" ALT 1600M | • Meeting ground.  
• Sleeping Space.  
• Dispute arbitration.  
• Dancing and Watch tower |            | |
### PAFTA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pafta In Moras</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>No. Of Poles</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Width</th>
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<tr>
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<td>200 cm</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>710 cm</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>166 cm</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>620 cm</td>
<td>700 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>168 cm</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>545 cm</td>
<td>1300 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-7</td>
<td>140 cm</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>500 cm</td>
<td>900 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>140 cm</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1000 cm</td>
<td>640 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-9</td>
<td>180 cm</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>560 cm</td>
<td>930 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-11</td>
<td>160 cm</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>750 cm</td>
<td>780 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-12</td>
<td>87 cm</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>680 cm</td>
<td>660 cm</td>
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</table>

### Erected Stones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Erected Stones</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No of stons</th>
<th>Average L x W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N 05° 10' 07.6&quot; E 37° 24' 34.0&quot; ALT 1597m</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 x 35 cm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N 05° 24' 33.0&quot; ALT 1605m</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59 x 39 cm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N 05° 20' 08.2&quot; E 37° 24' 32.8&quot; ALT 1632m</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N 05° 24'23.0&quot; ALT 1632m</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32 x 145 cm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N 05° 20' 02.7&quot; E 37° 24' 23.0&quot; ALT 1637m</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>165 x 108 cm</td>
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8. **NAME OF WALLED TOWN: JARSO**

GPS: N 050 19' 46.1" E 037 26' 58.7"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wall</th>
<th>Height Max</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Av</th>
<th>Gates No</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Thickness Of Wall Max</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Av</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Space Size</td>
<td>Ulahita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| M-1  | Tarate   | N05° 19' 49" E37 26' 58.3" | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing | 7.9 x 6.8m |         |
| M-2  | Kayto    | N05° 19' 47.8" E37 26' 59.5" | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing | 5.32 x 7.32 m |         |
| M-3  | Haro Hoybo | N05° 19' 467" E37 26' 59.8" ALT | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing | 17.5 x 13.30m |         |
| M-4  | Haregela | N05° 19' 46.1" E37 26' 58.7" ALT | Main Mora  
• Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing | 27.60 x 8 m | 13      |
| M-5  | Alale    | N05° 19' 44.8" E37 26' 59.1" ALT | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing |         |         |
| M-6  | Hirile   | N05° 19' 42.7" E37 26' 57.4" ALT | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing | 7.5 x 14.70 m |         |
| M-7  | Hirile   | N05° 19' 42.7" E37 26' 58.1" ALT | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution  
• Playing Ground and Dancing | 35.80 x 19.20 m |         |
| M-8  | Harelgo  | N05° 19' 44.5" E37 27' 01.5" ALT | • Assembling Ground  
• Sleeping Space  
• Conflict Resolution | 7.90 x 9.80 m |         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Playing Ground and Dancing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**PAFTA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pafta in Moras</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>No Of Poles</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Width</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>347 cms</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>72 cms</td>
<td>118 cms</td>
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<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>130 cms</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100 cms</td>
<td>465 cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>120 cms</td>
<td>434 cms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>134 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>126 cms</td>
<td>457 cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>180 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100 cms</td>
<td>546 cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>110 cms</td>
<td>439 cms</td>
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**Erected Stones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Erected Stones</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daga-Diruma and Daga-hela</td>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Burrial markers and generation stones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daga-Diruma and Daga-hela</td>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Burrial markers and generation stones</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NAME OF WALLED TOWN: - LEHAITE  GPS: N 05° 19' 42" E 037° 27' 06.3"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Kobta</td>
<td>N 05 19'42&quot;  E 037 27' 06.3&quot;</td>
<td>Most sacred site for rituals made by Dawras where they make consultations ,blessings as they may a priestly and consolatory role for the whole of Konso</td>
<td>19 x 7 m</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erected Stones</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Significance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Daga-Diruma(Collective)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NAME OF WALLED TOWN:** **MECHEKE**

**GPS:** N 05° 17' 25.4"
E 037° 23' 53.9"
ALT 1773m

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wall</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Rock Dimention</th>
<th>Gates</th>
<th>Thickness Of Wall</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cms</td>
<td>cms</td>
<td>cms</td>
<td>cms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>240</td>
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<td>126</td>
<td>6</td>
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**Mora**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| M-1   | Otire      | N 05° 17' 26.7"
E 37° 23' 46.7"
ALT 1777m | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 18.7x13m   | 2       |
| M-2   | Chamate    |                           | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 10.7x4.8m  | 1       |
| M-3   | Kutye      |                           | • Dancing,Justice and Playground             | 11.4x5.9m  | 9       |
| M-4   | Koreya/Kotore | N 05° 17' 28.6"
E 37° 23' 50.7"
ALT 1775m | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 26.7x32m   | 11      |
| M-5   | Panna      | N 05° 17' 28.6"
E 37° 23' 59.7"
ALT 1731m | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 16.5x8.7m  | 1       |
| M-6   | Kerero     | N 05° 17' 24.2"
E 37° 23' 59.7"
ALT 1725m | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 14.45x13.6m |        |
| M-7   | Dakay Sato | N 05° 17' 28.6"          | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 16.6x8.1m  | 2       |
| M-8   | Orbakeshe  |                           | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 26.3x16.4m | 9       |
| M-9   | Jlika      |                           | • Sleeping
• Meeting and other cultural activities. | 21.6x4.2m  |         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Space Size</th>
<th>Ulahita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-10</td>
<td>Harka</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 25.4'' 37° 23' 53.9'' 1762m</td>
<td>• Main Mora</td>
<td>18.5x14.1m</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-11</td>
<td>Olanta</td>
<td>N 05° 17' 25.5'' 37° 23' 52.1'' 1773m</td>
<td>• Sleeping Meeting and other cultural activities.</td>
<td>18.6x7.9m</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pafta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Height</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>No Of Poles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>5.8.1 cms</td>
<td>6.4 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>1.85 cms</td>
<td>6.5 cms</td>
<td>5.5 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>1.10 cms</td>
<td>7.2 cms</td>
<td>6.8 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>1.55 cms</td>
<td>6.6 cms</td>
<td>7.4 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>2.2 cms</td>
<td>7.1 cms</td>
<td>6.5 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>4.1 cms</td>
<td>5.8 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-7</td>
<td>1.47 cms</td>
<td>6.3 cms</td>
<td>5.8 cms</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>2.25 cms</td>
<td>6.4 cms</td>
<td>5.5 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-9</td>
<td>1.7 cms</td>
<td>6.5 cms</td>
<td>5.3 cms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-10</td>
<td>1.7 cms</td>
<td>6.5 cms</td>
<td>5.3 cms</td>
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Erected Stones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Erected Stones</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daga-diruma</td>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Burrial Marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daga-diruma</td>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Burrial Marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daga-diruma</td>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>135cm</td>
<td>Burrial Marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daga-hela</td>
<td>M-10</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Generation stone</td>
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Wooden Statuse (Waka)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Location</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monuments in memory of heros</td>
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NAME OF WALLED TOWN: **MECHELO**  GPS: N 5.1844  E 37.24

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Height</th>
<th>Rock Type</th>
<th>Gates</th>
<th>Thickness Of Wall</th>
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<td>Max</td>
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<td>195</td>
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**Mora**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Ayana</td>
<td>Main Mora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>Hangala</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Conflict Resolution -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>Kahatela</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Conflict Resolution -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>Cherbeka</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Conflict Resolution -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>Patola</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Conflict Resolution -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-6</td>
<td>SHEBELE</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Conflict Resolution -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-7</td>
<td>ORTHOHE</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-8</td>
<td>HARALA</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-9</td>
<td>DAHILE</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space - Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-10</td>
<td>KETARE</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-11</td>
<td>Kalala</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-12</td>
<td>Kolalta</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-13</td>
<td>Ormohoe</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-14</td>
<td>Palakumse</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-15</td>
<td>Shiakala</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-16</td>
<td>Pala</td>
<td>-Meeting Ground, -Sleeping Space -Justice -Dancing Ground and Watch Tower.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NAME OF WALLED TOWN:** OLANTA

**GPS:** N 05° 19' 46.1"
E 37° 26' 00.21"

**ALT 1575 m**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wall</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Gates</th>
<th>Thickness Of Wall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Av</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
<td>240</td>
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**Mora**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mora</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>MORA-GALO</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 49.8&quot; E 37° 26'03.2&quot; ALT</td>
<td>-Meeting ground -Sleeping Space -Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mora</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N 05° 19' 49.2&quot;</td>
<td>-Dancing and Watch tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E 37° 26'05.1&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-2</td>
<td>LAGDA</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 48.0&quot;</td>
<td>-Meeting ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E 37° 26' 06.0&quot;</td>
<td>-Sleeping Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Dancing and Watch tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-3</td>
<td>SILAGA</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 49.0&quot;</td>
<td>-Meeting ground</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E 37° 26' 06.5&quot;</td>
<td>-Sleeping Space</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Dancing and Watch tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-4</td>
<td>KODHO</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 45.9&quot;</td>
<td>-Meeting ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E 37° 26' 06.4&quot;</td>
<td>-Sleeping Space</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>-Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Dancing and Watch tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M-5</td>
<td>KOYRA</td>
<td>N 05° 19' 43.3&quot;</td>
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**Erected Stones**

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The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE)

The Konso Cultural Landscape

ETHIOPIA

Management Plan

2008-2012

PRESENTED TO

World Heritage Council (WHC), UNESCO

Presented in January 20, 2009; and
Revised in January 2011

Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia
The Konso Cultural Landscape
ETHIOPIA

Management Plan
2008-2012

Prepared by the Association for Research and Conservation of Culture, Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Landscapes (ARCCIKCL)
AWASSA, ETHIOPIA

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- The Bureau of Information and Culture, Awassa, (SNNPRS).

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Forward

Ethiopia occupies a key position in the world as home of some of the planet’s invaluable heritage sites. This is made possible through the support and recognition of the UNESCO. So far, the World Heritage properties recognized in Ethiopia were historical, archaeological, paleontological and natural sites. Ethiopia is now proposing a Cultural Landscape, a new heritage category to the country, for inscription by the WHC.

The Konso Cultural Landscape has been recognized by various foreign and local scholars as an example of man-nature inter-relationship and was made subject of various research topics.

The Konso communities living within the proposed area for nomination, the local administration and the Regional Government together with the various stake holders have agreed to continue to insure the preservation and the integrity of the Konso Cultural Landscape. This Management Plan is prepared with the participation of all concerned bodies. We thank all those who have taken part in its preparation.

The Ethiopian Government as the State Party, through its Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism insures the continuous protection of the Konso Cultural Landscape.
We will continue working together with the Regional Government’s Bureau of Culture and the Konso Culture Office and related institutions. We would like to seize this opportunity to underline that we are planning to prepare management plans for our major sites. Special attention will be given to sites recognized by the WHC, UNESCO. We thank the UNESCO for its support in our joint and continuous collaborative undertakings in the Axum and Lalibela World Heritage sites. We will continue our efforts to bring more sites for recognition and inscription on the World Heritage List.

H.E. Mr. Jara Haile-Mariam,
Director of the Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritages (ARCCH), Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ethiopia.
Addis Ababa, January 15, 2009
Proclamation No.___________/2010
Proclamation to provide for the conservation of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritages.

Introduction

Whereas Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage is the product of age-old modes of existence and traditions as well as both natural process and the labour of man;
Whereas it has become necessary to protect and conserve this World Heritage for posterity;
Whereas it is imperative to provide legal demarcation for the Heritage and its environs to safeguard them against man-made and natural damages;
Whereas viable protection and uses of the Heritage can be made compatible by ascertaining the protection of and benefits to get from the Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage by the society;
Whereas it is necessary to study, protect, develop, manage and put to social and economic uses the Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage by applying the regional and national public laws regarding heritage;

Now, therefore, in accordance with sub-article 3.a of article 51 of the revised constitution of South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region, it is hereby proclaimed as follows:

Part One
General

1) Short Title
This proclamation may be cited as: South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State “Proclamation to provide for the protection of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage No,___ 2010”.

2) **Definitions**

Unless the context requires otherwise

2. “Liyu Woreda” means Konso Special Woreda or Konso District.
4. “Cultural Landscape” means landscape which is the common product of both the labour of man and natural process.
5. “Heritage” means any tangible or intangible item that is the product of the creativity and labour of man during prehistoric and historical periods, is the reflection of and testimony to natural modifications and is of high scientific, historical, cultural, artistic and artisan values.
6. “Demarcated Heritage Sites” means heritage sites that, for their cultural, historical and biological features, are important enough to be demarcated and protected in order to safeguard and develop heritage and sites for lasting use.
7. “Heritage Management Plan” means strategy based on making better and practical choices among alternative heritages or demarcated heritage sites in order to register, study, protect, conserve and promote them.
8. “Heritage Management Committee” means heritage management committee established in Konso Special Woreda and Kebeles.
9. “Paleta or Kebele” means Konso traditional town encircled by stone walls, or Kebele administration.
10. “Waka” means memorial wooden statue with varied engravings that is placed on graves of heroes.
11. “Erected Stone or Dhaka Diruma /Dhaga Hela” means stone monument erected in Mora or outside Mora to commemorate the heroism and success of a generation or an individual.
12. “Mora” means cultural venue for public meetings and cultural events that may be with or without a large house or Pafta and may be inside or outside traditional towns /Paletas.
13. “Olayta” means a tall piece of conifer wood erected in Moras as a memorial to a generation.
14. “Protected Cultural Forest” means cultural forest entrusted to and protected by tribal chiefs for communal and cultural use and preservation of biodiversity and land.
15. “Protective Demarcation” means a demarcated area that lies as a buffer between cultural towns and land used for agricultural or other purposes in order to stop housing and other construction and development activities from trespassing on the towns encircled by stone walls.

16. “Harda or Cultural Water Pond” means traditional water pond made by the Konso people by using earth and stone piles with the aim of collecting and using rain water over a long period of time.

17. “Dina” means naturally grown forest or planted groove found around Paletas or walled towns and that is traditionally protected for purposes of cemetery, fire control, defense and waste disposal.

18. “Person” means a natural or juridical person.

19. "Post" means a boundary post made from stone or metal or other stationary object to mark a boundary.

3. **Effective Area**

This proclamation shall enter into force in all demarcated heritage sites of Konso Special Woreda, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.
Part Two
Demarcations and Boundaries

4. The Cultural Landscape of Konso located within the following boundary limits is, as per this proclamation, declared demarcated

4.1- General description
Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage site located in Konso Special Woreda and covering an area of 230 square Kilometers or 23000 hectares consists of heritage and heritage sites demarcated between 5.173638 and 5.392053 North and 37.191971 and 37.467968 East.

4.2- Legally demarcated cultural properties
All heritage properties located with in the above demarcated geographical coordinates and properties specifically listed below are all protected by law.

1. Traditional agricultural terraces within the demarcated area.
2. Traditional walled towns of Lower Dokat Paleta.
3. Traditional walled town of Hulme Paleta
4. Traditional walled town of Burquda Paleta.
5. Traditional walled town of Dara Paleta.
6. Traditional walled town of Olanta Paleta.
7. Traditional walled town of Gamole Paleta.
8. Traditional walled town of Gocha Paleta
9. Traditional walled town of Mecheke Paleta.
10. Traditional walled town of Mechello Paleta.
11. Traditional walled town of Busso Paleta.
12. Traditional walled town of Burjo Paleta.
13. Protected traditional forest of Kala.
14. Protected traditional forest of Qufa.
15. Protected traditional forest of Bamale.
17. Traditional Pond /Harda of Mecheke.

4.3- The twelve traditional towns mentioned under sub-article 4.2 above include cultural spaces called Moras, and Olayta trees, hero and generation memorial stelae (Daga- Diruma and Daga-Hela), Waka, ancient cemeteries and Dina (forests) around them.
4.4- Traditional towns mentioned below and located near the administrative town of Karat and Dokatu Marke receive special protective provisions as follows:

4.4.1- The Dara traditional town- The town is bounded as follows:
- To the North- The Koroko River running from north towards east ("Post" No. 1).
- To the East- The traditional boundary defined by the foot trail between Dara and Jarso communities ("Post" No. 2).
- To the South- The current Karat- Jarso dry weather road ("Post No. 3).
- To the West- The Porpuraité sacred groove (05.1950.5 N and 37.2634.3 E) and Dina ("Post No. 4).

4.4.2- The Olanta traditional town- The town is bounded as follows:
- To the North- The Kilkilo River at coordinates North 05.1952.8 and East 37.2602.6, ("Post" No. 1).
- To the East- The road between Olanta and Bekawle towns at coordinates 05.1941.2 North and 37.2604.7 East, ("Post No. 2).
- To the South- The Kawushe river running from the Bamale sacred forest and running towards East (200 metres south of Olanta), ("Post No. 3).
- To the West- There is no need for buffer as it is bounded by the terraces and Dina ("Post No. 4) all the way towards the Bamale sacred forest; and to continue the current use.

4.4.3- The Lower Dokatu traditional town- The town is bounded as follows:
- To the North- There is no need for buffer as it is bounded by traditional terrace farms ("Post" No.1) to continue the current use;
- To the East- The Moyite River ("Post" No. 2).
- To the South- the current boundary of the Hess Travel “Eco-Lodge” and the Karat- Jinka Road ("Post" No. 3).
- To the West- The Kutinu River running from south to north ("Post" No. 4).

4.4.4- The Upper Dokatu traditional town- The town is bounded as follows:
- To the North- The current Karat-Jinka road ("Post" No. 1).
- To the East- The terraces- whose current use will be maintained ("Post" No. 2).
- To the South- The Bamale sacred forest and terraces whose current use will be maintained ("Post" No. 3).
- To the West- The current dry weather road between Dokatu market and the Busso town; and the current boundary of the Dokatu market. ("Post" No. 4).
4.4.5- The Kara traditional ceremony and the cultural elements associated with it are declared protected.

Part three
Management and Organization of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage

5. Konso Cultural Landscape heritage management is organized as follows:
1. Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage Management Office, at Konso Special Woreda level;
2. Communal Heritage Management Committees of the 12 Paleta / Kebeles at community level.
3. Heads of the Peasant Associations of the area nominated.

6. Establishment
1. Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office that shall be accountable to the Culture and Tourism Bureau of the South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State and consisting of the following 9 members from governmental and non-governmental bodies is hereby formed.

7. Organization of the Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office
1. The Office shall be based in Karat town, the administrative capital of Konso Special Woreda, South Nations Nationalities and Peoples Regional State.
2. The Office shall have branch offices in the 12 Paleta administrations, at community level.

8. Organizational structure of the Office
The Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office shall be composed of:
1. Inspector’s Office
2. Main Office
3. Head Administrator of the Special Woreda/District
4. Peasant Associations Chairman
5. Heritage Management Committees of the 12 Paleta /Kebeles communities,
6. General Manager, and
7. Other personnel necessary for the work

9. The Inspector’s Office
Power and duty of the Inspector’s Office
1. The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall be the Inspection Authority of the Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office.

2. The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall issue directives pursuant to the protection and management of the Konso Cultural Landscape.

3. The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall be responsible for the follow-up of the planning and activities of the Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office. It shall also provide technical assistances to the latter.

4. The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall device capacity building strategy for Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office, and enforce its implementation.

5. The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall create favorable ground for the allocation of the necessary budget, and prepare project proposals to raise funds, for the conservation and sustainable use of the Konso Cultural Landscape heritages.

6. The Bureau of Culture and Tourism, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State shall follow research that may be conducted with in the Konso Cultural Landscape.

7. The Bureau shall promote the Konso Cultural Landscape.

8. The Bureau shall perform additional duties relevant to the purpose.

10- Main Office
Powers and Duties of the Main office
1. The Office shall have the full protection / Haut patronage of the Executive committee of Konso Special Woreda.

2. Shall implement and supervise the efficient execution of the Konso World Heritage Management;

3. Shall take part in the design of development and infrastructural project that may have positive or negative bearing on Konso Cultural Landscape heritage, and shall check that their execution is compatible with the protection and conservation of the heritage;

4. Shall check on conditions which bear risk to Konso cultural landscape heritages and sites and provide solutions where necessary;
5. Shall devise, submit to concerned governmental bodies and, when approved, execute projects that consider the benefit, needs and development of the society around the heritage to be compatible with Konso Cultural Landscape heritage protection and development;

6. Shall, by making sure its compatibility with local conditions, implement the directive to be issued by the Culture and Tourism Bureau;

7. Shall cooperate with concerned local administrative bodies and government organs in order that the local traditional administration and traditional land, culture and nature protection rule and customs be compatible with governmental laws and put into practice to contribute to the general development of the society;

8. Shall execute the protection and conservation of the heritage and apply the rules thereof according to traditional and governmental laws;

9. Shall prepare and submit budgetary request and plan for the conservation of heritage in Kebeles to the Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism, and implement same when approved;

10. Shall work, in coordination with the local people, for the traditional execution of the cultural heritage protection and conservation works, and where conditions lie beyond local capacity, bring same to the notice of the Woreda Administration and apply decision there-from;


11. **Powers and duties of the Offices of respective Paleta Management Committees:**

   1. The 12 Paletas/Peasant Associations shall have their respective heritage committees which shall answer to the Konso Special Woreda Heritage Management Office. These committees
   
   2. Shall follow the every day conditions of the heritage properties within their Paleta;
   
   3. Shall report to the Konso Special Woreda Heritage Management Office, of any damage or suspected danger to the heritage properties within their respective Paleta;
   
   4. Shall periodically supervise the conservation condition of the properties and call meetings of the local people for updates;
   
   5. Shall follow the cultural use of, and conservation activities within the cultural landscape;
   
   6. Shall work closely with the Konso Special Woreda Heritage Management Office.
12. General Manager

Power and duties

1. The General manager of the Office shall answer to the Bureau of Culture and Tourism of the South Nations, nationalities and Peoples Regional State; and shall be responsible for the precise implementation of duties and management of the Office.

2. The General Director shall implement the power and duties of the Office as stipulated in article 10 of this same Proclamation.

3. In addition to Article 12 Sub article 2 above, The General manager shall perform the following: He/She shall:
   3.1. organize, direct and administer the work of the Office;
   3.2. represent the Office in its dealings with third parties and legal matters;
   3.3. open bank accounts and effect expenditure together with the Head of the Finance section of the Office;
   3.4. prepare the work plan, budget and internal guidelines of the Office and present it to the Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism; and implement same upon approval;
   3.5. effect expenditure on the basis of approved work program and budget, keeps the books of accounts and shall be audited when ordered by the Office;
   3.6. prepare periodic report on overall activities and financial performances of the Office.
   3.7. perform duties entrusted by the Regional Bureau of Culture and Tourism;
   3.8. perform such other activities of the Office.

13. Heritage Management Committee of the Konso Special Woreda

The Konso Special Woreda Heritage Management Committee shall be composed of the following members:

1. Administrator of Konso Special Woreda, Chair Person;
2. Head of Konso Special Woreda Culture and Tourism Office, Vice Chair Person and Secretary;
3. Head of Konso Special Woreda Agriculture and Rural Development Office, Member;
4. Head of Konso Special Woreda Youth Office, Member;
5. Head of Konso Special Woreda Justice and Security Office, Member;
6. Head of Konso Special Woreda Police, Member;
7. Manager of Konso Development Association, Member;
8. Spokesperson of Konso Special Woreda Assembly, Member;
9. Head of Konso Special Woreda Women and Children Affairs Office, Member.

14. Paleta/Peasant association/ Communities heritage management committee

Heritage Management Committee of the Paletas /Peasant Associations shall be composed of the following members:
1. Kebele Administrator, Chairperson;
2. Kebele Natural Property Development Office worker, Vice Chairperson and Secretary;
3. Head of Kebele Agriculture and Rural Development Office, Member;
4. Head of Kebele Justice and Security Office, Member;
5. Three to five people representing tribal chiefs, elders and Heletas, Members;
6. Representative of Kebele Women, Member;
7. Representative of the Kebele Youth, Member.

Part Four

Registration, Study and Revitalization of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage

15. Registration, Study, Research and Promotion of Heritage

1. The Konso Cultural Landscape shall, for purposes of identification, inspection, study, research and tourism, be registered and documented.
2. Details of operation shall be according to directives to be issued by the Information and Culture Bureau/ Culture and Tourism Bureau.
3. Ethiopian and foreign research teams shall carry out in-depth, progressive research on Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage based on permits issued by the concerned offices.
4. Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage are promoted, visited and used for building the image of the country.
16. Revitalization of heritage

1. People living within protected Konso Cultural Landscape shall have the right to benefit from advantages from the protected heritages or heritage sites. Details of procedure shall be given in directive to be issued.

2. People living within the protected Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage sites shall, in a way not tampering with the geological, cultural and historical assets, contents and forms of the cultural landscape and heritage, be entitled to get common benefit there from.

3. A person with a certificate book of tenure to hold property within the protected Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage site shall, in a manner not detrimental to the cultural, historical, scientific and artistic values and the safety of the heritage, use the heritage or site holdings for customary cultural, historical and ritual activities. However, for uses other than the customary, cultural, social and religious practices, the person shall notify and get the permit from the Paleta/Kebele Community Heritage Management Committee.

4. Barring legal decision, a person holding a heritage shall have the guarantee of using and keeping the heritage.

17. Protection and conservation of privately held heritages and heritage sites

A person holding a heritage and heritage site shall have the following duties;

1. Shall pay for the expenses of protecting and conserving the heritage or heritage site in his possession and wild animals, birds and plants therein.

2. Shall, when regulated by the concerned governmental organ, give permit for the educational, informational and scientific uses of the heritage and heritage site.

18. Protection, conservation and utilization of heritage and heritage sites held in common

The community

1. Shall jointly protect and conserve heritage and heritage sites held in common and the wild animals, birds and plants therein;
2. Shall have the duty to make sure that local cultural rules and activities accepted by the society and in accordance with is Proclamation are observed in relation to heritage or heritage sited held in common;
3. Shall maintain and protect present and future soil and water preservation works;
4. Shall conserve and protect enclosure of stone or other material built to mark private land holdings within terraced agricultural lands;
5. Shall, with the participation of the governmental institutions, work out an integrated protection, possession and revitalization plan to properly preserve and utilize protected heritage and heritage sites held in common;

19. Revitalization plan and study for protected heritage and heritage sites
   1. Revitalization of Konso Cultural Heritage and protected heritage sites shall be planned in detail. The plan for the utilization of heritage and heritage site shall be made according to capacity and in phases and, with respect to revitalization of heritage and protected heritage sites for a limited purpose, the following points shall be considered. The Plan
      1.1. Shall, according to recognized cultural, historical and social values and environmental, economic and technical criteria, be found to produce cultural, historical, social and economic advantages.
      1.2. Shall have little or no negative impact on heritage, heritage sites and surroundings.
      1.3. Shall be acceptable to the local population.
   2. Any change in utilization of heritage or heritage sites shall be the result of a well studied plan and have the approval of the concerned body.

20. Limits to heritage revitalization
   1. No one, having ownership certificate shall be entitled to change the cultural and historical content, form and place of the heritage and heritage place he is holding.
   2. No modern construction work that may obstruct the view and change and obliterate the cultural contents symmetry, style and form of the Konso traditional towns/ Paletas and heritages, shall be allowed.
   3. No new modern construction is allowed within 50 meters of the external walls of the Paletas.
4. Approval of the Culture and Tourism Bureau, Konso Special Woreda Administration, Konso Special Woreda Heritage Management Office and concerned Paleta/Kebele Heritage Management Committee shall be required before road construction and quarry works that may affect the cultural splendor, history, content and value of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage or works that create land tremors affecting cultural landscape features are to be undertaken.

5. Any agricultural activity or other construction works that may damage the cultural, artistic, scientific and historical contents of heritage shall for the sustainable protection of the Paletas/walled towns, be prohibited from being undertaken inside the protected area.

21. **Source of income**

   The budget of the Office shall be drawn from the following sources

   1. The Regional Government
   2. The Konso Special Woreda Administration
   3. Miscellaneous income of the Office
   4. Authority for Research and Conservation of Cultural Heritage
   5. Other sources.

22. **Fiscal year**

   The Office works on the Ethiopian calendar; thus its fiscal year starts on July 8 and ends on July 7 the next year.

23. **Books of Account**

   1. The Office shall keep complete and accurate books of accounts.
   2. The books of accounts of the Office shall be audited at least once a year by an external auditor.

**Part Five**

**Miscellaneous provisions**

24. **Duty to cooperate**

   Every person shall cooperate with the Office in its activities to carryout duties entrusted to it by this proclamation.

25. **Power to issue Regulations**
The Council of the Regional Administration has the power to issue Regulations for the implementation of this proclamation.

26. **Applicable Laws**

The Ethiopian Federal laws and regulations and the UNESCO directives for the protection and use of World Heritage properties shall be applied.

27. **Inapplicable laws**

Any proclamation, regulation, directive and practice inconsistent with the provisions of this proclamation shall not enter into force.

28. **Effective Date**

This proclamation shall enter into force as of the date approval by the Regional State Parliament

Awassa_______Month ____________Day _________Year

**Shiferaw Shigute**

President Executive of South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples’ Regional State.
Legend

- New Proposed Boundary
The Culture Sector

H. E. Mr Teshome Toga
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to
France,
Permanent Delegate of Ethiopia to
UNESCO
UNESCO House

Ref: CLT/WHC/74/ETH/11/Nom/AFR 29 July 2011

Subject: Inscription of Konso Cultural Landscape (C 1333rev) Ethiopia,
on the World Heritage List

Sir,

I have the pleasure to inform you that the World Heritage Committee, at its 35th
session (UNESCO, 19 – 29 June 2011), examined the nomination of the Konso
Cultural Landscape and decided to inscribe the property on the World Heritage
List. The decision of the Committee concerning the inscription is attached below.

I am confident that your Government will take the necessary measures for the
proper conservation of this new World Heritage property. The World Heritage
Committee and its Secretariat, the World Heritage Centre, will do everything
possible to collaborate with you in these efforts.

The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage
Convention (paragraph 168), request the Secretariat to send to each State Party
with a newly inscribed property a map of the area(s) inscribed. Please examine
the attached map and inform us of any discrepancies in the information by
1 December 2011.

The inscription of the property on the World Heritage List is an excellent
opportunity to draw the attention of visitors to, and remind local residents of, the
World Heritage Convention and the outstanding universal value of the property.
To this effect, you may wish to place a plaque displaying the World Heritage and
the UNESCO emblems at the property. You will find suggestions on this subject
in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage
Convention.

In many cases States Parties decide to hold a ceremony to commemorate the
inscription of a property on the World Heritage List. Upon request to the World
Heritage Centre by the State Party, a World Heritage Certificate can be prepared
for such an occasion.

I would be grateful if you could provide me with the name, address, telephone
and fax numbers and e-mail address of the person or institution responsible for
the management of the property so that we may send them World Heritage
publications.
Please find attached the brief descriptions of your site, prepared by ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, in both English and French. As these brief descriptions will be used in later publications, as well as on the World Heritage website, we would like to have your full concurrence with their wording. Please examine these descriptions and inform us, by 1 December 2011 at the latest, if there are changes that should be made. If we do not hear from you by this date, we will assume that you are in agreement with the text as prepared.

Furthermore, as you may know, the World Heritage Centre maintains a website at http://whc.unesco.org/, where standard information about each property on the World Heritage List can be found. Since we can only provide a limited amount of information about each property, we try to link our pages to those maintained by your World Heritage property or office, so as to provide the public with the most reliable and up-to-date information. If there is a website for the newly inscribed property, please send us its web address.

The full list of the Decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session is available electronically at http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/35COM.

As you know, according to paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the World Heritage Committee invites the States Parties to the Convention to inform the Committee, through the World Heritage Centre, of their intention to undertake or to authorize in the area protected under the Convention major restorations or new constructions which may affect the outstanding universal value of the property.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your co-operation and for your support in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Please accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

[Signature]

Kishore Rao
Director
World Heritage Centre

cc: National Commission of Ethiopia for UNESCO
ICOMOS
UNESCO Office in Addis Ababa
ARCh
Extract of the Decisions adopted by the 35th session of the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2011)

Decision: 35 COM 8B.18

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-11/35.COM/8B.Add and WHC-11/35.COM/INF.8B1.Add,

2. Inscribes the Konso Cultural Landscape, Ethiopia, on the World Heritage List on the basis of criteria (iii) and (v);

3. Takes note of the following provisional Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:

Brief Synthesis

The Konso Cultural Landscape is characterized by extensive dry stone terraces which witnesses hundreds of years of persistent human struggle to harness the hard, dry and rocky environment, which has resulted in the beautifully outlined rows of dry stone terrace. The terraces retain the soil from erosion, collect maximum water and discharge the excess, and create terrace saddles that are used for agriculture. The terraces are the main features of the Konso landscape and the hills are contoured by the dry stone terraces that could reach at some places up to 5 meter high.

The dry stone walled towns (Paleta) of the Konso are located on high hills selected for their strategic and defensive advantage. These towns are circled by, between one and six rounds of dry stone defensive walls, built using locally available rock.

The cultural spaces in the walled towns, called Mora retain an important and central role in the life of the Konso. Some walled towns have as many as 17 Moras. The tradition of erecting a generation marking stone called Daga-hela, quarried, transported and erected through a ritual process makes them among the last of the megalithic people.

The traditional forests are used as burial places for ritual leaders, which are performed ritually, and for medicinal purposes. Wooden anthropomorphic statue called Waka, carved out of a hard wood, and mimicking the deceased is erected as a grave marker. Their water reservoirs (Harada) are communally built in the landscape and maintained culturally.

Criterion (iii): The Konso could be referred to as megalithic for their intensive and systematic use of stone. The Konso Cultural Landscape is mainly constituted by the most spectacularly executed dry stone terrace works in the world, which is still actively in use by the people who created it. This extraordinary terrace work is a witness of the struggle of man to harness its environment in an otherwise hostile environment in an area that covers over 230 square km and which stands today as an example of major human achievement. The Cultural Landscape also includes a living tradition of stele erection. The Konso erect stones/steles every 7 and 11 years to commemorate and mark the transfer of responsibility from the older generation to the younger generation, and erect generation trees to commemorate a full cycle generation transfer every 18 years. In addition to this, they also erect man-hood stones called Daga-Diruma on tombs. The Konso are perhaps among the last stele-erecting people in the world: and thus
they ‘bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or a civilization which is living or which has disappeared’. The Konso funerary system involves the tradition of mummification of their ritual leaders (Pogola). This and the carving and erection of anthropomorphic wooden statuette (Waka) representing the dead is an exceptional living testimony to traditions which are on the verge of disappearance.

**Criterion (v):** The Konso Cultural Landscape, with its settlement pattern, harness of hostile environment and its highly organized social systems, is forged by a strong tradition which is based on common values that have resulted in the creation of the Konso cultural and socio-economic fabrics. The dry stone terraces, which are the dominant feature of the Konso country side, show the adaptive strategy that the Konso followed in dry environment. The labor needed to construct terraces must have necessitated a strong cohesion and unified bond among all the clans. The social organization that enabled the work forces to execute the terrace construction and the indigenous engineering knowledge applied have required certain work divisions which still exist in today’s Konso traditional system. The Konso consistently perform maintenance and conservation works. They still maintain their strong traditions of harnessing their environment following an effective indigenous knowledge of water and soil conservation techniques. This has served as a lesson in environmental protection to people of similar environments in Ethiopia; and visits to Konso by farmers and students of agriculture from all corners of the country are common.

**Integrity**
The boundary of the Konso Cultural Landscape is demarcated taking note of the visual, cultural and socio-economic history of the Konso people. The wholeness of the terraced landscape is considered. The landscape is bounded by natural and cultural markers. Thus the wholeness is maintained.

**Authenticity**
The Konso Cultural Landscape still largely retain its original form and design. The materials used for the original construction of the terraces and the town walls are local and their conservation is done by the community members. The terraces continue their original use and function. The walled towns are inhabited by the communities and organized following the traditional system. The traditionally protected forests are still protected and used for ritual and burial. The ponds are still in use and periodically conserved. The conservation of the terraces, the walled towns, the forests and the ponds is still performed traditionally. The tradition of the ritual erection of generation and man-hood stones and generation trees following the generations old “age-grading system” is actively practiced. The active age group still use the collective cultural houses (Moras). Wooden funerary statues are still erected on the graves. The communities respect the traditional code of respect to the culture and adherence to the age group (Hela) and the ward (Kanta) which is responsible for the protection and conservation of the walled towns, the ponds, Mora, the dry stone terraces.

**Protection and management requirements**
The property is protected by traditional, Regional and Federal laws. The traditional code of management of the cultural landscape is practiced side by side with the modern administrative system. Elected community members and elders ensure the protection and management of the cultural properties. Management committees are formed at all levels - community and district - and involved all stakeholders. A Konso Cultural Landscape Management Office (with six governmental personnel) has been put in place, to address the planning, funding, supervision and conservation tasks.
The Constitution (Proclamation No. 1/1995), The Cultural Policy adopted by the House of Representatives (Parliament) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in October 1997, Federal law that provides for the protection and conservation legislation, the regional land proclamation, Proclamation No. 209/2000, Rural Land Administration and Utilization Proclamation No.53/2003, and the ‘Proclamation to provide for the protection of Konso Cultural Landscape Heritage’ provide the necessary legal protection for the Konso Cultural Landscape. The walled towns are all protected by the last decree that no development work is to be undertaken within 50 meters of the outer most wall. The issue of the interface between Karat town and lower Dokatu and other neighboring traditional towns is solved by the new proclamation and the boundary posts that are in place defining the boundaries.

4. **Recommends** the State Party to:

   a) Undertake and consider that further inventory and research should take place in the Konso Cultural Landscape to further strengthen the information on in this exceptional landscape, in particular issues related to the walled towns,

   b) Revise the existing Management Plan to include community members, in addition to the District Management Committee, from the added greater area,

   c) Undertake further research work in order to fully justify criteria (vi) for its eventual consideration in the future;

5. **Encourages** the State Party to invite an advisory mission to provide assistance in determining a possible further revision to the boundaries to conform to the attributes that convey Outstanding Universal Value.

Surface and coordinates of the property inscribed on the World Heritage List by the 35th session of the World Heritage Committee (UNESCO, 2011) in accordance with the **Operational Guidelines**.

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<th>State Party</th>
<th>ID N</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Buffer zone</th>
<th>Centre point coordinates</th>
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<td>Konso Cultural Landscape</td>
<td>1333 Rev</td>
<td>23 000 ha</td>
<td>N5 18 E37 24</td>
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**Brief Description in English**

Konso Cultural Landscape is a 55 km² arid property of stone-walled terraces and fortified settlements in the Konso highlands of Ethiopia. It constitutes a spectacular example of a living cultural tradition stretching back twenty-one generations (over 400 years) adapted to its dry hostile environment. The landscape demonstrates the shared values, social cohesion and engineering knowledge of its communities. The site also features anthropomorphic wooden statues – grouped to represent respected members of their communities and particularly heroic events – which are an exceptional living testimony to funerary traditions that are on the verge of disappearing. Stone steles in the towns express a complex system of marking the passing of generations of leaders.

**Brief Description in French**

Le Paysage culturel du pays konso est un site aride de 55 km², avec des terrasses en pierre et des fortifications, situé sur les hauts plateaux d’Éthiopie. Il constitue un exemple spectaculaire d'une tradition culturelle vivante remontant à vingt et une générations (plus de 400 ans) et adaptée à un environnement sec et hostile. Le paysage témoigne du partage des valeurs, de la cohésion sociale et des connaissances en ingénierie de ses communautés. Le site présente également des statues de bois anthropomorphiques, disposées en groupe pour représenter les membres respectés de leurs communautés et les événements héroïques de leurs vies. Elles sont un témoignage exceptionnel et vivant de traditions funéraires sur le point de disparaître. Les stèles de pierre présentes dans les villes expriment un système complexe marquant la disparition de générations de chefs.