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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

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

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Extended forty-fourth session

**Fuzhou (China) / Online meeting
16-31 July 2021**

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

SUMMARY

This document contains information on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee is requested to review the reports on the state of conservation of properties contained in this document. The full reports of Reactive Monitoring missions requested by the World Heritage Committee are available at the following Web address in their original language: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/44COM/documents>

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

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

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I. REPORTS ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF PROPERTIES INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST INITIALLY FORESEEN TO BE EXAMINED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE IN 2020

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

6. Lamu Old Town (Kenya) (C 1055)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2001

Criteria (ii)(iv)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1055/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 2000-2021)

Total amount approved: USD 61,436

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1055/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: for a Heritage Impact Assessment in 2014: USD 85,000: Netherlands Funds-in-Trust; for a workshop on Historic Urban Landscapes in 2011: USD 22,943: Flanders Funds-in-Trust

Previous monitoring missions

March 2004: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2005: World Heritage Centre Advisory mission on water and sanitation assessments; May 2010 and February 2015: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring missions; January 2018: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission (Nairobi) on LAPSET project; December 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/ management and conservation plan
- Clarification of boundaries and buffer zone
- Pressure from urban development
- Marine transport infrastructure
- Air transport infrastructure
- Encroachment of the archaeological sites
- Housing/Deterioration of dwellings/Urban sprawl
- Solid waste
- Non-renewable energy facilities (Coal Power plant)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1055/>

Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property from 29 November to 5 December 2019 (mission report available at

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1055/documents/>). Subsequently, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report on 3 February 2020, which is also available at the above-mentioned address, and responds in detail to Decision **43 COM 7B.107**, as follows:

- The State Party reported that work is ongoing on an assessment of the condition of the built fabric with collaboration of the county government and the site management;
- The State Party process of delineating the boundaries of the property and an enlarged buffer zone is still in progress;
- Development of the Lamu Port Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) project is ongoing. Other projects such as the metropolis and resort city, oil pipeline, international airport, and railways have not yet been started. The State Party notes that detailed plans are not completed for many of the projects within the larger LAPSSET development. The National Museums of Kenya (NMK) is now a member of the technical committee for the LAPSSET Master Plan;
- In regard to Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments (EIAs/HIAs), the government is undertaking a review and revision of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and the HIA for the first 3 berths has been submitted to the consultant as part of this revision process;
- The project for the coal power plant has been put on hold as a result of the 2019 National Environment Tribunal decision;
- The revision of the management plan is ongoing with input from different stakeholders including government agencies and civil society.

The State Party further submitted three inception reports for planning projects being undertaken under the World Bank funded Kenia Urban Services Project (KUSP). The projects are:

- Solid Waste Policy for Lamu Municipality;
- Lamu Municipality Integrated Development Plan;
- Lamu Island Integrated Urban Development Plan (2020–2035).

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

The poor state of conservation of the property and lack of building controls observed by the mission, which pose a threat to its integrity and authenticity, remains of significant concern.

The clarification of the boundaries and the extension of the buffer zone is also of the utmost urgency. As requested repeatedly, the buffer zone should at the very least incorporate all of Lamu Island and a significant part of Manda Island, as well as the relevant mangrove belts. However, while the State Party reports that the delineation of the boundaries and the enlarged buffer zone is still in process, no indication is given as to when the works will be completed. While recognizing the political difficulties of putting a buffer zone in place, it remains of utmost priority. The KUSP projects' inception reports were reviewed by ICOMOS, which considered that the projects cannot achieve their goals before the property and buffer zone boundaries have been clarified. Furthermore, the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property should be thoroughly taking into account in the conceptualization of the three KUSP projects.

The reported progress made in revising the Management Plan to incorporate aspects of the LAPSSET project is also noted. This should be completed along with the revision of the buffer zone to ensure a functional management system. Addressing water security and sanitation remains equally urgent.

The mission noted considerable advancement on the construction of the three berths of the new LAPSSET harbor, the highway construction, and the headquarters of the LAPSSET Authority.

Greater awareness of the potential threats of LAPSSET to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property needs to be established at the political and civil society levels. The LAPSSET SEA should take into account the individual and potential cumulative impacts of the project on the OUV of the property, as well as on Lake Turkana World Heritage property, as requested by the Committee in 2019 (Decision **43 COM 7B.107**). The SEA should be completed urgently and submitted for review, before any of the other components of the LAPSSET project are initiated. Regarding the requested Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the LAPSSET Authority and the NMK, the State Party makes no mention of its completion, but it must be stressed that finalising this MoU would be a stronger

indication that LAPSSET intends to involve the NMK in any decisions of the project that may affect heritage along the corridor.

The Committee may wish to recommend that the State Party send a High-Level governmental delegation, including representatives of the Ministry of Sport, Culture and Heritage and the National Museums of Kenya, to the property to assess the range and urgency of the challenges faced in the maintenance of its OUV and request that the State Party establish a Heritage Task Team, composed of relevant government agencies from both the national and local levels with the support and involvement of civil society, in order to develop proper responses. To improve engagement and partnership with civil society, the creation of a Lamu Island stakeholders and community forum, which can also work closely with the LAPSSET project, is recommended.

The State Party and LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority should establish a corporate social responsibility programme to ensure sufficient funding for conservation and heritage related activities. The County Government may wish to participate to ensure that cultural and heritage related work is adequately funded.

The hold on the Coal Plant project is welcome, as the mission recommended that the proposed coal plant would likely have negative impacts on the OUV of the property as well as the larger environment around Lamu. The State Party should explore alternatives to the plant and ensure that any further development of energy generation infrastructure undergo independent EIAs and HIAs.

While no negative impacts of the Manda airport upgrade project were found by the mission team, it is noted that an HIA was requested before work was implemented. It is hoped that in the future, the impact of such projects on the OUV of the property will be assessed through independent HIAs before irreversible decisions are made and projects are implemented.

As a final consideration, given the continuing concern regarding ascertained and potential threats to the OUV of the property, it is noted that the 2019 mission recommended that the State Party consider requesting the World Heritage Committee to include Lamu Old Town on the List of World Heritage in Danger as a means to active international support. The State Party in discussions requested more time to implement the mission recommendations. Given the seriousness of the issues, the Committee should consider requesting the State Party to invite a Reactive Monitoring mission in the first half of 2023 to examine implementation of the recommendations and the state of conservation of the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.6

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.45**, and **43 COM 7B.107**, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018), and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Expresses its thanks to the State Party for organizing a Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in November/December 2019, considering the security concerns and requests that the State Party implement the recommendations of the mission;*
4. *Underlines the utmost urgency of clarifying the boundaries of the property and putting in place an enlarged buffer zone to include all of Lamu Island, parts of Manda Island, and relevant mangroves belts in the area, as requested numerous times in the past, and also requests that an updated clearly delineated map of the property and its enlarged buffer zone be submitted to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for comment prior to formally submitting it to the World Heritage Committee as a minor boundary modification in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines;*
5. *Expresses its concern about the overall state of conservation of buildings within the property, and further requests the State Party to complete the survey of the building stock*

and strengthen enforcement of building controls to halt the deterioration and use of inappropriate materials;

6. *Regrets that a revised Management Plan which takes into account the Lamu Port Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport (LAPSSET) project has not yet been completed and urges the State Party to complete it as soon as possible and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
7. *Recognizes that the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) has been included in the technical committee for the LAPSSET Master Plan, but also urges the State Party to ensure that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the NMK and the LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority is completed to ensure that the NMK has a role in decisions, that may affect heritage along the corridor, and in particular the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of relevant World Heritage properties, including Lamu Old Town;*
8. *Takes note of the need for greater awareness of the potential threats of the LAPSSET project on the OUV of the property at both the political and civil society levels, and requests furthermore the State Party to:*
 - a) *Send a High-Level governmental delegation, including representatives of the Ministry of Sport, Culture and Heritage and the National Museums of Kenya, to the property to assess the range of challenges and the urgency of finding solutions to ensure the safeguarding of the OUV of the property,*
 - b) *Establish a Heritage Task Team made of relevant government agencies at the national and local levels with the support and involvement of civil society in order to develop appropriate responses to the many development issues that may affect the OUV of the property,*
 - c) *Create a stakeholder and community forum for Lamu Island, which can also work closely with the LAPSSET project,*
 - d) *Set up a core corporate social responsibility programme in collaboration with the LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority and the County Government to ensure that sufficient funds are available for conservation at the property and heritage related projects;*
9. *Requests moreover the State Party to*
 - a) *Complete, as soon as possible, the work on the revision of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the LAPSSET project, taking into account both individual and cumulative impacts that the project and all of its sub-projects may have on the OUV of the property, as well as on Lake Turkana World Heritage property, and that no further components of LAPSSET be implemented before the SEA is completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
 - b) *Provide to the World Heritage Centre, for each sub-project of LAPSSET (resort city, international airport, etc.), full information about the projects and their plans along with the necessary Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments (EIAs/HIAs), for review by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are taken about their implementation;*
10. *Notes that the work on the Lamu Coal Plant is on hold, and requests as well that alternative solutions be proposed to meet the electricity needs of the region, and that any developments in this regard undergo thorough independent EIAs/HIAs to ensure that there are no negative impacts on the OUV of the property;*

11. Requests in addition the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission to the property in the first half of 2023 to review the progress made on the recommendations of the 2019 mission and the Decisions of the World Heritage Committee, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023;
12. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, a progress report, and by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

ARAB STATES

13. Historic Cairo (Egypt) (C 89)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (i)(v)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/89/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 10 (from 1979-2014)

Total amount approved: USD 398,900

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/89/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: Special Account for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Egypt: USD 2,203,304 for the project Urban Regeneration of Historic Cairo (URHC). For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/663>; Euro 150,000 from the Government of France for Enhancing Capacities for the Protection of World Heritage Properties in Egypt (2020).

Previous monitoring missions

August 2002, March 2005: ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; April and December 2007: World Heritage Centre missions for the Cairo Financial Centre; October 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; 2009-2014: several World Heritage Centre missions for the URHC project; November 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; June 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; January/February 2021: UNESCO Advisory mission.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Earthquake in 1992 (issue resolved)
- Inappropriate restoration works (issue resolved)
- Water (rain/water table)
- Dilapidated infrastructure
- Neglect and lack of maintenance
- Buildings and development: Housing; overcrowded areas and buildings; uncontrolled development
- Absence of a comprehensive Urban Conservation Plan
- Absence of an integrated socio-economic revitalization plan linking the urban and the socio-cultural fabric of the city core
- Management systems/management plan: Lack of a management system

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/89/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2020, the State Party submitted a State of Conservation Report, a summary of which can be found at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/89/documents/>. This sets out progress made in addressing the recommendations adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019).

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property from 9 to 13 June 2019. A copy of the mission report is also available at the above-mentioned web address.

The State Party report provided details on the following:

- Decree No. 90 regulates demolition, renovation or replacement of unprotected buildings in proximity to protected Archaeological Buildings and Valuable Buildings with Special Architectural

Style and applies constraints relating to the height and form of replacement or emended structures, but does not preclude demolition. It is implemented by the Department of Tourism and Antiquities;

- The Decree will form the basis for the development of regulations for 17 proposed Historic Cairo areas, based on studies undertaken by consultants in the second stage of the Urban Regeneration of Historic Cairo project (URHC);
- The third stage of the URHC project is underway and was due to be completed by February 2020. This comprises a Sustainable Development Plan that will include initiatives compatible with the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach, such as the development of local crafts and markets as an axis for development, measures to strengthen the structures of local communities, the identification of carrying capacities for tourism and revitalisation of local culture. The Plan will identify areas for rehabilitation that can be offered to development companies in coordination with the Centre for Archaeology and Environment, Cairo University;
- The proposed administrative structure that emerged from the second stage of the URHC projects will be overseen by a Higher Ministerial Steering Committee chaired by the Prime Minister, and is currently being submitted to the Supreme Committee for approval;
- Major restoration projects are being planned with financial support from the United States (USAID) and the European Union amounting to 800 million Egyptian pounds.

The main conclusions of the 2019 mission were:

- Degradation of the urban fabric appears to be increasing and in places accelerating;
- The overall historic urban fabric suffers more than individual protected monuments;
- Neglect and lack of maintenance is leading to deterioration beyond affordable rehabilitation or the total collapse of some structures;
- The attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) are threatened by a process of physical and environmental degradation and functional decay.

The recommendations of the 2019 mission included the following requests to the State Party:

- Halt immediately the demolition of all structures, old or new, within the property;
- Amend Law 119 that permits demolition by owners for reasons of safety against collapse;
- Stop any further street cutting or widening to improve vehicular traffic;
- Clarify how the URHC project relates to the development of a Master Plan and how both will work toward halting and reversing the decline of the urban fabric of the property through multi-agency and multi-disciplinary involvements;
- Complete as a matter of urgency the Conservation Plan to define a holistic vision for the conservation of the historic urban city;
- Apply strict controls for the demolition of non-registered buildings on the basis of the Conservation Plan, or other approved planning tools;
- Activate the decree of 2014 for an inter-ministerial committee for the management of Historic Cairo and clarify the roles and missions of major stakeholders;
- Establish, adopt and submit to the World Heritage Centre one map for the new boundaries and buffer zone of the property;
- Complete the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (RSOUV) and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

A UNESCO Advisory mission to Egypt took place from 30 January to 4 February 2021. The mission considered several issues related to the conservation of World Heritage properties, including Historic Cairo. High level meetings, onsite consultations and a workshop with site managers and focal points were held, in addition to a short online workshop prior to the mission, to provide a detailed introduction to the *World Heritage Convention* and its *Operational Guidelines*.

The main recommendations of the 2021 mission included:

- Full implementation of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations, especially in relation to clearly established boundaries, finalization of the management plan, and submission of the RSOUV;
- Close cooperation among stakeholders, especially on information on any major projects and demolitions to avoid impacts on the historic and urban fabric, and sharing of information with the World Heritage Centre as per paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, prior to the implementation of such projects;
- Decisions to demolish buildings should only be taken when no other alternative is feasible and the demolition would be absolutely necessary for safety reasons and subject to following the established procedures, noting that in most cases this also requires a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA);
- Organization of a HIA training workshop, to start with Historic Cairo as a case study, for capacity building of the site management and analysis of impacts on OUV prior to any decision making;
- Further strengthening of communication and cooperation with local communities.

On 26 April 2021, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre about the issuance of decree number 1097 on 14 of March 2021, which orders a pause on demolition permits in the area of Historic Cairo.

A map of the property in Arabic and a justification including the names of the roads in English was also received, but a presentation in line with Paragraph 164 of the *Operational Guidelines* for submission to the Advisory Bodies is still expected.

With funding provided by the Government of France, a workshop on HIA was organized in June 2021, as follow up to the recommendations of the 2021 mission and the request of the State Party. Coordinated work with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies is needed in order to finalize the RSOUV, and to identify attributes that convey OUV as a basis for the Management Plan and also for a boundary definition of the property.

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

The 2019 mission has highlighted that there has been progress at a strategic level over the past five years, but this did not appear to have been matched by progress on the ground in terms of stopping continuing degradation of the urban structure or applying stricter regulation to demolitions, as has been requested by the Committee.

Clarification on the implementation of Decree No. 90 and the scope of third stage of the URHC project are welcomed, as is advance information on the development of major restoration projects with international support.

Decree No. 90 relates to protected/registered structures and does not prohibit demolition of non-registered structures. For these structures, demolition has thus been allowed on the basis of undermined structural stability due to neglect and lack of maintenance. For unprotected structures, there has been no necessity for demolition permits. The recent decree of March 2021, which pauses demolition permits in the property is to be welcomed, but it remains unclear whether it extends beyond the demolition of protected/registered structures, and whether those where structural stability is proved are exempt.

The property is now reaching a critical point where degradation of the urban fabric appears to be increasing and in places accelerating with the vernacular buildings suffering more than the protected monuments. Although the exact number of demolitions over the past five years is not known, it is clear on the ground that these are cumulatively leading to drastic transformations in some areas of the city.

Moreover, it has been reported through the media that the demolition of several tombs and mausolea in the historic Northern and Southern Cairo cemeteries took place due to the construction of a new road. These cemeteries are within the property and each contained many thousands of tombs intertwined with historic buildings. No information on this project was sent beforehand to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies, as per Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, or since the work commenced. While these demolished tombs and mausolea may not have been protected/registered monuments, they are nevertheless important parts of the historic urban fabric, and the roads could channel yet more traffic into the property. The World Heritage Centre sent a letter in July 2020 to the State Party, requesting confirmation of this information and the provision of any relevant information, but neither of these has yet been provided. This confirms the urgency for a coordinated and

holistic approach in terms of the conservation of the urban fabric, and individual buildings and monuments, in line with an overarching Master Plan, especially in relation to major development and infrastructure projects.

The vast city of Historic Cairo reflects a succession of capital cities over nineteen centuries and while its complex historic urban landscape may be still just about existing in many parts of the property, its attributes of OUV are being cumulatively threatened by a combination of physical and environmental degradation, functional decay, demolition, and most recently, large-scale infrastructure development that is cutting through its urban patterns. Urgent measures and rapid actions are needed to halt the current trend, until the necessary plans are developed and management structures enabled to drive forward a conservation project that is based on protecting the OUV, while at the same time improving the economic and social structures of the city, thus bridging the gap between conservation and development.

Although the URHC is progressing and a Sustainable Development Plan should be elaborated in 2021, what is still lacking is an overarching Master Plan that sets out the road map, and a Conservation Plan that provides the context for renewal and development, while ensuring that overall historical urban fabric is retained. Moreover, a management structure that brings together all the key stakeholders has yet to be approved and implemented, as has the Management Plan.

It is understood that Decree No 90 will form the basis for the development of regulations for 17 proposed Historic Cairo areas. This could imply that new regulations will mainly be directed at the form and shape of new development rather than the conservation, restoration, renovation and upgrading of the historical non-designated structures. Also, from the few details provided for the proposed major projects, it appears that there is a focus on major monuments while conservation of the urban form, with streets and houses reflecting layer upon layer of history is not indicated. It is also concerning that the Sustainable Development Plan will identify areas for rehabilitation that can be offered to development companies in coordination with the Centre for Archaeology and Environment, Cairo University. The use of the many traditional markets as a basis for economic recovery, and the revitalisation of local culture, must all be part of an integrated approach to urban conservation.

The elaboration of the Master Plan and the Conservation Plan needs to proceed as a matter of urgency, based on an approved RSOUV and definition of the attributes of OUV, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Plan, and to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review. The demolition of all buildings should be halted until such plans are in place, Law 119 that permits demolition by owners for reasons of safety should be amended, and any further widening of roads or the construction of new ones to improve vehicular traffic within the property and in the buffer zone should be halted and be subject to an HIA, submitted with detailed plans to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Given the positive reassurances that have been provided by the State Party over several years that progress has been made, details remain insufficient to demonstrate that the measures taken are achieving the desired impact. There still appears to be a strong focus on protected/registered monuments, and what appear to be lacking are mechanisms to promote and support the conservation of traditional and vernacular structures at the property and prevent their demolition. Progress remains extremely slow in improving the overall management framework.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.13

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.44** adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Welcomes the clarification on the scope of Decree No. 90 and the modality of its implementation in relation to the setting of protected buildings, but notes that it does not preclude demolition of unprotected buildings but rather controls their renovation or replacement;*

4. Also welcomes the issuance of decree number 1097 on 14 of March 2021, which orders a pause in permits for demolition in the property, and the submission of a map of the boundaries of the property, but requests that the map be submitted formally in line with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines;
5. Also notes that the proposed administrative structure that emerged from the second stage of the Urban Regeneration of Historic Cairo Project (URHC) will be overseen by a Higher Ministerial Steering Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, and is currently being submitted to the Supreme Committee for approval;
6. Further welcomes the confirmation that the third stage of the URHC is being implemented to produce a Sustainable Development Plan that will include initiatives compatible with the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach, such as the development of local crafts and markets as an axis for development, measures to strengthen the structures of local communities, and revitalisation of local culture;
7. Notes with concern that the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission and the 2021 Advisory mission considered that degradation of the urban fabric has increased and in places appears to have accelerated; that the overall historic urban fabric is suffering more than individual protected monuments; and that neglect and lack of maintenance is leading to deterioration beyond affordable rehabilitation, or in places the total collapse of some structures;
8. Further notes that this situation has been exacerbated by the continuing approval of demolition permits for protected/registered buildings that could be considered unstable, and the continuing lack of protection of unregistered structures, and that the accumulated demolition of buildings is beginning to have a highly adverse impact on the urban fabric;
9. Expresses concern about the recently reported construction of a road, which has led to the demolition of many tombs and mausolea in the Southern and Northern cemeteries, known as the 'City of the Dead', and which could have a major impact on the historic urban fabric of these parts of the property and channel more traffic into the city;
10. Requests the State Party to submit as a matter of urgency technical information on the new road construction project going through the City of the Dead, and any other major project at the property, or in its buffer zone, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
11. Appreciates the work undertaken by State Party over the past five years at a strategic level, but notes furthermore that this has not been matched by actions on the ground to halt the current degradation or to rehabilitate traditional structures as well as protected monuments;
12. Considers that the property has currently reached a critical point where the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) are being damaged cumulatively by a combination of physical and environmental degradation, functional decay, demolition and major infrastructure development, to such a degree that they are under threat and could rapidly reach an irreversible situation if urgent actions are not undertaken;
13. Also requests the State Party to finalize the Management, Master and Conservation Plans as a matter of urgency, and to:
 - a) Ensure that these plans are aligned with the emerging Sustainable Development Plan,

- b) *Approve and put in place a management structure that brings together all the key stakeholders and the necessary disciplines,*
 - c) *Ensure that the plans are based on a clear definition and firm understanding of the attributes of OUV, and on clear boundaries,*
 - d) *Establish one map for the boundaries and buffer zone of the property, and complete the Retrospective Statement of OUV (RSOUV),*
 - e) *Submit the requested plans, map of boundaries and RSOUV to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
14. *Urges the State Party to implement the 2019 and 2021 missions' recommendations, as well as immediate and preventive measures, with particular attention to halting the demolition of all structures, both protected and unprotected within the property; amend Law 119 that permits demolition of protected structures by owners for reasons of safety against collapse, and refrain from pursuing any development project, further street widening or construction to improve vehicular traffic, until the Master, Conservation and Management Plans have been approved and are being implemented;*
 15. *Expresses its appreciation to the Government of France, for the support provided to the State Party towards the conservation and management of the property;*
 16. *Takes note that major conservation projects are being developed, and also urges the State Party to explore how these projects can contribute toward sustainable development of the urban fabric, rather than just to the repair of monuments;*
 17. *Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

ASIA-PACIFIC

19. Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (China) (C 705)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1994

Criteria (i)(ii)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2014: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

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

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/>

Current conservation issues

On 14 January 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/705/documents/>. An Outline Management Plan (2019-2035), an English Summary of the Master Plan for the Wudang Mountains Scenic Area (2011-2025) and an Evaluation Report on the Current Situation of Protection and Management of the Ancient Building Complex in the Wudang Mountains (Evaluation Report) were submitted in 2020.

The reconstruction carried out as part of the lift-up project of Yuzhen Palace was completed in July 2019. The project was managed by the government with the establishment of a special working team consisting of multidisciplinary experts. Next steps will include detailed landscape design and presentation of the site. Regarding the redesign of the shoreline, efforts have been made to weaken the visual impact of the artificially created peninsula and make the boundary of the platform appear more natural.

The maximum number of tourists allowed at the property during peak visitation has been limited to 25,000, with each individual component part having a specific carrying capacity. The most sensitive component, the golden summit area, has a maximum capacity of 8,000 visitors, enforced through live monitoring. A detailed visitor management system has also been implemented.

The State Party Evaluation Report indicates that the total number of component parts is 49 rather than the 62 buildings referred to in the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (rSOUV) adopted by the Committee in 2012. A map submitted by the State Party shows property areas covering 67.1 ha, with each individual component part having a separate buffer zone.

ICOMOS undertook a Technical Review of the Evaluation Report and the conclusions were shared with the State Party. In relation to the buffer zone, and noting confusion since the time of inscription, ICOMOS

concluded that the small separate buffer zones proposed by the State Party do not adequately protect the way that the component sites relate to each other and to the mountains, which was the rationale for their development, and that the components are all part of a single site, as acknowledged in the name of the property.

In April 2021, in response to the request by the Committee and to the World Heritage Centre's letter of October 2020 on this topic, the State Party submitted a boundary clarification request for the property, including maps of the component sites and their buffer zones, which is currently under review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies and shall be examined at a subsequent session of the Committee.

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

The progress made on the lift-up process for the Yuzhen Palace and the work done to reshape the shoreline to a more natural line is noted. The next step will be the reinstallation of the planting materials. As recalled in the report of the 2014 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission, during this phase, it will be important to ensure the re-establishment of the relationship between the ancient building complex and the surrounding landscape setting, which has been disturbed by the lift-up process. As the final work is completed, it would be appropriate for the State Party to provide a final report of the whole lift-up project, including the process of the lift-up of the palace itself, the reintegration of the archaeological remains, and the resulting relationship to the surrounding landscape.

The submission of the Outline Management Plan and Summary of the Master Plan for the Wudang Mountains Scenic Area is acknowledged, in particular the work done on visitor management. The full Management Plan should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, and further information should be provided about the basis used to determine the visitor carrying capacity of the property and its individual components, along with guidelines for the protection from negative impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) arising from tourism.

The submission of new maps of the property by the State Party for boundary clarification is welcomed, and it is recommended that the State Party continue engaging with the World Heritage Centre to clarify pending issues concerning the component parts and the buffer zones of the property, as per the Committee's previous decisions.

The definition of the buffer zone remains a source of significant concern: as indicated by the 2014 Reactive Monitoring mission report, the meaning and value of the component parts and their buildings is underpinned by the mountain landscape and context, whose sacred nature provides the rationale for their existence. For this reason, the 2014 mission recommended that the State Party ensure that the buffer zone of the property corresponds to the Wudang Mountains National Scenic Area, as was acknowledged at the time of inscription. This conclusion is supported by the ICOMOS Technical Review of the Evaluation Report, which also noted that the Master Plan for the Wudang Mountains Scenic Area, which encompasses cultural as well as ecological landscapes, and the existing management structures, can protect the landscape that binds the component parts of the property together. Only an enlarged buffer zone that takes into account the full mountain landscape will be able to fully protect the OUV found in the ensemble of its component parts.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.19

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.1**, adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),*
3. *Takes note with appreciation of the efforts made by the State Party to accomplish the lift-up project of Yuzhen Palace, and requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, upon completion of the project, a final report of the lift-up project, including the process of the lift-up of the palace itself, the reintegration of the archaeological remains and the relationship of the palace to the surrounding landscape;*

4. *Appreciates the development of the Management Plan and the implementation of the Visitor Management Plan for the property, and also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, a full version of the Management Plan and details of the basis used to determine the visitor carrying capacity of the property and its individual components, along with guidelines for the protection from negative impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value arising from tourism;*
5. *Acknowledges the submission of a boundary clarification request for the property in April 2021, which is currently under review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and shall be examined at a subsequent session of the Committee, and further requests the State Party to continue engaging with the World Heritage Centre to clarify pending issues concerning the component parts and the buffer zones of the property, in line with previous decisions;*
6. *Requests furthermore the State Party to ensure, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, that the revised buffer zone for the property incorporates the entirety of the Wudang Mountains National Scenic Area, so as to protect the entire property and its wider setting, and to review the application and implementation of the Master Plan for the Wudang Mountains Scenic Area to ensure that it protects the landscape that binds together the component parts of the property;*
7. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022** an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

20. Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace, Lhasa (China) (C 707ter)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List Inscription: 1994, Extensions: 2000, 2001

Criteria (i), (iv), (vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/707/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/707/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2001: ICOMOS Monitoring mission; April 2003: UNESCO/ICOMOS expert mission; May 2005: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2015: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (Expansion of tourism-related facilities in and adjacent to the boundary of the property)

- Ground transport infrastructure (Negative impact of the rehabilitation projects on the protection of the traditional urban tissue of the historic centre)
- Deliberate destruction of heritage
- Housing (Uncontrolled urban development in and adjacent to the boundary of the property)
- Fire (Fire damage to the Jokhang Temple Monastery in February 2018)
- Localised utilities (Potential impacts of proposed television tower)
- Ritual / spiritual / religious and associative uses (Visitor experience for pilgrims and tourists)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/707/>

Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property on 8-14 April 2019, and the mission report is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/707/documents/>. Subsequently, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report on 9 December 2019, which is also available at the link above. The State Party's report notably provides the following information:

- Following the fire accident at Jokhang Temple Monastery, on 17 February 2018, the State Party initiated a rapid response mechanism. A detailed damage assessment did not reveal any significant damage to the physical attributes that carry the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). A repair plan to ensure the safety and stability of the monastery was developed and implemented, and risk prevention and security control measures have also been developed to prevent such incidents in the future. An underground fire protection pond has been constructed without changes to the overall landscaping of the area;
- To prevent inappropriate developments and the demolition of historic buildings, the State Party has been preparing conservation plans of the three component parts of the property as requested by the World Heritage Committee in Decision **40 COM 7B.31**. Drafts of the plans have been completed and are undergoing expert review;
- Local artisans and traditional techniques are employed for the maintenance and periodic painting and cleaning of the walls of the property. The State Party has constituted a team of qualified Tibetan artisans to oversee the process;
- The State Party has implemented measures to improve visitor management, enhance visitor experience and reduce risks to the property. These include an online ticketing system, separating visitation times for pilgrims and tourists, and capping the number of tourists at any given time;
- The existing television tower was constructed in 1985 before the inscription of property. Local authorities plan to deliberate on the feasibility and necessity of re-location of the tower in the context of revision of the overall planning of Lhasa City;
- Other measures aimed at better protection and management of the cultural property include strict implementation of regulations, capacity building for improved management, digital documentation and establishment of monitoring and early warning systems;
- The stele in front of the Jokhang Temple Monastery were deteriorating, and a decision was made that the best way to protect them was through the construction of protective pavilions. An abstract of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the pavilions was submitted to the World Heritage Centre in May 2020, following the construction of the pavilions.

In June 2020, the State Party provided information on the construction of protective shelters around three stelae located in front of the Jokhang Temple Monastery and fire protection measures, which had been requested by the World Heritage Centre by a letter of 25 May 2020. ICOMOS provided a technical review of the new stele pavilions and advised that they have a negative impact on the cultural setting and cultural context of the Jokhang Temple Monastery and that alternative solutions should be considered. The State Party responded in February 2021, and further advice has been provided, but this matter remains unresolved. This technical review also considered the new fire protection pond and pilgrim and tourism management in the Jokhang Temple plaza.

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

The 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that the general state of conservation within the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple Monastery and Norbulingka is relatively good and confirmed that the 2018 fire did not affect the whole of the structures, art, or belief system of the Jokhang Temple, and the overall

impact on the authenticity and integrity of the temple was minimal. The State Party has undertaken various appreciable measures aimed at emergency stabilization, damage assessment, subsequent repair, and fire prevention and security control measures to prevent such disasters in the future, which should be welcomed. The reconstruction of the Ventilation Chamber and its golden roof at the Jokhang Temple Monastery has been made to relatively good standards of workmanship and tolerance. Modest changes have been made to the Ventilation Chamber to improve the safety of the building by mitigating the risk of fire. The area most severely impacted by the fire dates primarily to the period of major reconstruction in the 1980s. The OUV of Jokhang Temple Monastery is unchanged as a result of the fire and subsequent restoration efforts, as ascertained by the 2019 mission.

There is concern about the construction of the protective pavilions to cover the stelae in the immediate vicinity of the Jokhang Temple. The State Party has responded to ICOMOS' technical review and received further advice, but this matter remains unresolved. It is recommended that the Committee regret that the plans and HIA were not submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review prior to the construction of these pavilions. Noting the State Party's indication that the stelae have been in their current position for hundreds of years, it would nevertheless be appropriate to pursue measures to reduce the size of the protective structures to a minimum and to re-design them to be less visually prominent and less historically confusing. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to explore alternative solutions in accordance with the advice provided in ICOMOS' technical review, and to submit a full HIA, prepared in accordance with the 2011 *ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to implementation of the revised designs.

Efforts by the State Party towards the completion of conservation plans for the three component parts of the property are ongoing, but it is increasingly urgent that these be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, prior to their formal adoption and implementation. The State Party's report includes maps of the three component parts and their buffer zones, but some refinement may be necessary, as the buffer zone of Norbulingka seems to cut through buildings in a somewhat haphazard manner. The State Party should reconsider this buffer zone so that it conforms more clearly to identifiable landmarks. In particular, as recommended by the 2019 mission, the maps contained in these conservation plans should clarify the buffer zones of the property and the regulations, which will apply to the buffer zones. As requested by the World Heritage Centre in its letter of October 2020, the State Party should submit a proposal for a boundary clarification for the property, including maps of the component sites and their buffer zones, as soon as possible.

Efforts have been made to protect the intangible cultural heritage associated with the living traditions of pilgrims, such as capping tourist numbers during the high season. There is still concern that the living heritage traditions at the property remain at risk, as confirmed by the 2019 mission, and more attention is needed to safeguard these important attributes of the property. In accordance with the ICOMOS' technical review, the State Party should be encouraged to manage the Jokhang Temple plaza so that pilgrims can bow and visit the shrine in a sacred atmosphere, respectful of the cultural setting and integrity, and traverse from the plaza entrance to the temple while praying without being disturbed by tourists.

In regard to the television tower, the 2019 mission was advised that plans are underway to demolish the existing tower, once a new tower located at the eastern end of the city becomes operational. The mission recommended that an HIA be conducted, in line with the 2011 ICOMOS Guidance, to determine potential impacts of the new television tower on the OUV of the property and avoid any negative impact.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.20

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.2** adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),
3. Notes with satisfaction the conclusion of the April 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission that there was no significant negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of

the property resulting from the 17 February 2018 fire at Jokhang Temple, welcomes the State Party's efforts to undertake response, recovery and prevention initiatives following the fire, and requests the State Party to implement fully the recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission;

4. Regrets that pavilions were erected close to the Jokhang Temple Monastery to protect three historic stelae prior to the submission of plans and a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), despite the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, expresses concern that these may have a negative effect on the cultural setting and context of the Jokhang Temple Monastery, and also requests the State Party to explore alternative solutions in accordance with the advice provided by ICOMOS and to submit a full HIA, prepared in accordance with the 2011 ICOMOS Guidance on HIA for Cultural World Heritage Properties, for review by the Advisory Bodies, prior to the implementation of any revised design;
5. Notes the ongoing work to complete the three conservation plans for the three component parts of the property, but reiterates its request to submit these as soon as possible to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, prior to formal adoption and implementation;
6. Also notes the submission of three maps with property boundaries and buffer zones, but further requests re-examination and adjustment of the buffer zone of Norbulingka so that it conforms more clearly to identifiable landmarks, and clarify the buffer zones of the property and the regulations, which will apply to the buffer zones along with the submission of a proposal for a boundary clarification for the property as soon as possible;
7. Expresses its appreciation to the State Party for its commitment towards the protection of the intangible heritage attributes of the property, but requests furthermore that more work be carried out to ensure that sufficient attention is given to safeguarding these important attributes and that the Jokhang Temple plaza be managed so that pilgrims can bow and visit the shrine in a sacred atmosphere, respectful of the cultural setting and integrity, and can traverse from the plaza entrance to the temple while praying without being disturbed by tourists;
8. Commends the efforts of the State Party with regard to the possible demolition of the existing television tower once a new tower on the eastern edge of the city is completed, but urges it to prepare an HIA for the new tower as a matter of priority, in accordance with the 2011 ICOMOS Guidance, to ensure that it does not have any negative impact on the OUV of the property;
9. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

30. Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining (Japan) (C 1484)

See Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add.2

32. Town of Luang Prabang (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (C 479bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1995

Criteria (ii)(iv)(v)

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

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

International Assistance

Requests approved: 5 (from 1994 to 1998)

Total amount approved: USD 92,242

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

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 200,000 (France / UNESCO Cooperation Agreement, 1997-2015).

Previous monitoring missions

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

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of enforcement of the Luang Prabang Conservation Plan (PSMV) and illegal constructions
- Public works (proposed new town, airport extension, pedestrian bridge) which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value

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

Current conservation issues

In 2014, the Committee observed that its main concerns were being addressed and encouraged the State Party to apply the Luang Prabang Conservation Plan (PSMV) in controlling the development pressure in the property and the buffer zone to prevent any threats to its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). The operationalization of the Heritage Fund was expected to sustain the conservation efforts. Since then, the state of conservation of the property has remained subject to technical assessments and monitoring, notably through a bilateral cooperation mechanism with France. Technical missions and third parties raised issues relating to the Heritage Fund, the disappearance of traditional buildings, new constructions within the property, its buffer zones and wider setting and the protection of the banks of Nam Khan River.

In response to a request from the World Heritage Centre, the State Party provided a state of conservation report on 13 March 2020, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/479/documents> and indicates the following:

- The PSMV has been upgraded into the World Heritage Preservation Programme and integrated in the Provincial Strategic Plan, aiming at preserving built and environmental values;
- The Luang Prabang World Heritage Office (LPWHO) has been implementing the PSMV and regulations in the buffer zones, notably for the restoration, extension and construction of buildings;
- A Heritage Fund was established in 2009 to collect resources from tourist sites and entrepreneurs and operated during two consecutive years. In 2014, a Prime Minister's Decree instituted a 'National Heritage Funds', which has some overlap with the previously established Funds. Both need to be revised. The State Party intends to apply an ad hoc measure for the Town of Luang Prabang to ensure the availability of the necessary resources;
- The LPWHO has taken the initiative to expand the Provincial Strategic Plan by creating an Infrastructure Development Plan and suggests 32 detailed plans;

- On 11 March 2020, the World Heritage Centre requested clarifications concerning the reported Luang Prabang hydropower project (LPHPP), situated 25 km upstream from the property. On 30 April 2020, the State Party provided information on the context of the intervention for the protection of the riverbank, which is supported by the World Bank and the ASEAN's 'Smart City' project. It also mentioned the hydropower project, which was submitted to the Mekong River Commission (MRC) for consultation with the States Parties of Thailand, Viet Nam and Cambodia, and is coordinated at the level of the central government. The MRC issued two technical evaluations in December 2019 and June 2020, indicating that the LPHPP is classified as an Extreme Risk Dam according to the Lao Electric Power Technical Standards (LEPTS) of 2018 and must meet stringent flood safety standards. The exchange of information is ongoing at the time of preparation of this working document;
- In conformity with Article 6 of the Convention, a consultation meeting was held on 16 September 2020 between the Director of the World Heritage Centre and the States Parties of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam, with the participation of ICOMOS experts; .
- In March and April 2021, the State Party submitted technical documents to the World Heritage Centre, including a design brief, to show that this is a run-of-the- river dam, and to demonstrate the high technical standards that are to be applied to the construction, and indicating their will to work in close consultation with UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies. The Lao International Cooperation Unit also conducted an online meeting to discuss progress on the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and risk assessment in relation to the World Heritage property. The meeting was attended by representatives of the State Party and its LPHPP developers, the World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Office in Bangkok and ICOMOS;
- Meanwhile, the State Party submitted a request for the International Assistance under the World Heritage Fund for the project to "Support for Heritage Impact Assessment to protect World Heritage in Lao PDR". In March 2021, the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee approved an amount of USD 30,000 under the Conservation & Management category to enable the State Party to conduct a specific Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) with rigorous risk analysis and the impact on the OUV of Luang Prabang. The project is being implemented collaboratively by the national authorities, World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Office in Bangkok.

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

The property is a well-known tourism destination in South-East Asia and has attracted increasing visitation. In its report, the State Party reaffirms its commitment to implementing the PSMV and integrating it into the provincial policy, applying its regulations to any modification of the townscape through restoration or development. However, the State Party's report does not demonstrate concrete, implemented policies or modalities to ensure the safeguarding of traditional town fabrics, including traditional houses and other features. There is no detail about the World Heritage Preservation programme and infrastructure development plan, its purpose, rationale, scale or scope.

Importantly, there is no indication concerning the planning of tourism control, although this issue has been a long-lasting concern for the safeguarding of the property. The PSMV should be updated with a solid Tourism Management Plan, based on a carrying capacity study and necessary prospects assessment, which need to feed the decision-making process in terms of the number of tourism facilities, the conservation of the townscape and other values. A coherent and sustained mechanism of financial allocations is vital to ensure not only the functioning of LPWHO, but also the researching, planning and implementation of the policies for heritage preservation and tourism management in a balanced way.

The reported construction of the LPHPP has been through a process of consultation via the MRC, for which the State Party has implemented several studies but no specific assessment of the risks or impacts that such a project could represent for the attributes of OUV of the property. The MRC's technical reviews of the project, carried out in December 2019 and June 2020, clearly highlight concerns about its possible impacts in terms of heritage preservation, environment, and socioeconomic contexts, including seismic risks and damage by flood in case of a dam break. The LPHPP Feasibility Study (Volume 4), published in May 2019, contains an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) that covers management issues such as the resettlement of affected villagers and ethnic minority development planning. The documents submitted in March and April 2021, finalised by the project developers and approved by the Lao authorities, argue that because this is a run-of-the-river hydropower facility, there is no direct threat to the World Heritage property and its buffer zone.

Considering that Decision **40 COM 7** “urges States Parties to ensure that the impacts from dams that could affect properties located upstream or downstream within the same river basin are rigorously assessed in order to avoid impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)”, and bearing in mind the provisions of Paragraph 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines* concerning the needs for HIA to be carried out as a pre-requisite for development projects and other activities that are planned within or around a World Heritage property, it is noted that the submitted technical studies and analysis did not contain specific analysis of expected changes in cultural and natural environment, nor a specific section focusing on the potential impacts of the project on the OUV of the property, nor any mitigation measures against potential impacts. The State Party, using the support of the International Assistance project from the World Heritage Fund, has committed to undertaking a full HIA of the potential impacts of the project on the property and its OUV, and to identify whether mitigation measures might be warranted, and if so, how they would be implemented. The HIA should also identify and mitigate potential negative impacts, including those of natural flooding of the Mekong, and should take into account the findings of the ESIA undertaken for the State Party in 2019. This HIA should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, and its conclusions should guide the planning and implementation of the project, as appropriate. An Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP), also recommended by the MRC, should also be prepared and include reinforced measures to prevent any major threats to the property.

It is also recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess its overall state of conservation and the implementation of heritage preservation policies and related regulations, to undertake an assessment of all the proposed projects and to make recommendations on how development projects could support the OUV of the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.32

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7B.98**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Notes that the Luang Prabang Conservation Plan (PSMV) is implemented, upgraded into the World Heritage Preservation Programme and integrated into the Provincial Strategic Plan, also notes that regulations are in place for the expansion and restoration of existing buildings and new construction and that an Infrastructure Development Plan is being developed within the framework of the Provincial Strategic Plan, and urges the State Party to submit the World Heritage Preservation Programme and the Infrastructure Development Plan to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to their final approval and implementation;
4. Notes with concern that the number of traditional houses and structures within the property is decreasing, and also urges the State Party to adopt and implement, as part of the PSMV, a policy to preserve, maintain and document these constitutive elements of the property’s Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
5. Also notes with concern that there is no indication of an integrated Tourism Management Plan, and requests the State Party to urgently develop such a plan, which should be integrated into the World Heritage Preservation Programme;
6. Expresses its concern regarding the Nam Khan Riverbank project, both due to its potential visual impact on the landscape and the arising security and safety risks, and also requests the State Party to ensure that the project does not have any negative impact on the property’s OUV;

7. Further notes that the design of the Luang Prabang Hydropower Project (LPHPP) has been completed by the project developers and approved by the relevant Lao authorities and, also recalling Decision **40 COM 7** and the provisions of Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, recommends that the State Party halt construction activities until the State Party has undertaken the following and submitted them to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies:
 - a) Carry out a full Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), in conformity with the ICOMOS Guidelines on Heritage Impact Assessments for World Heritage Cultural Properties, including the potential impact of the LPHPP project on the property and its OUV, with a risk analysis of the potential impacts, including those of natural flooding of the Mekong river, taking into consideration the findings of the 2019 Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, and identifying whether and how mitigation measures are required and how they might be implemented, with support from the International Assistance project approved under the World Heritage Fund,
 - b) Integrate appropriate measures both into the property's planning and management and hydropower planning processes and prepare an Emergency Preparedness Plan in order to prevent, to the greatest extent possible, any damage to the property,
 - c) Submit these documents to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
8. Further requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate the overall state of conservation of the property, the implementation of heritage preservation policies and related regulations, the operationalisation of the Heritage Fund, to undertake an assessment of all the proposed projects, and to make recommendations on how development projects could support the OUV of the property;
9. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

33. Kathmandu Valley (Nepal) (C 121bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (iii)(iv)(vi)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2003-2007

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/121/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 16 (from 1979 to 2015)

Total amount approved: USD 417,619

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/121/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 10 million (1979-2001) from the International Safeguarding Campaign; USD 45,000 (2005) and USD 20,000 (2011) from UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust. Several

UNESCO extra-budgetary projects have been approved in 2015-2016 for the emergency safeguarding, conservation and rehabilitation process of the Kathmandu Valley after the 2015 earthquake. They include USD 1 million from the Chinese Hainan Airlines Group (Cihang Foundation), USD 250,000 from the Hong Kong-based Fok Foundation, USD 145,000 from the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust, USD 100,000 from the Nepal Investment Bank, and USD 18,000 from voluntary contributions to the World Heritage Fund.

Previous monitoring missions

February 2003: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS mission; April 2007: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2011: UNESCO Advisory Mission with international experts; November 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; October-November 2015: joint World Heritage Centre /ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; March 2017: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission; October 2019: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Earthquake (Severe earthquake of 25 April 2015)
- Housing (Uncontrolled urban development resulting in the loss of traditional urban fabric, in particular privately-owned houses)
- Management systems/management plan (Lack of a coordinated management mechanism)
- Ground transport infrastructure (Construction of a forest road)
- Underground transport infrastructure (Project for tunnel road in Pashupati Monument Zone)
- Air transport infrastructure (Project for the extension of the Kathmandu International Airport)

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/121/>

Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property in October 2019 (mission report available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/121/documents/>). On 29 January 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation and on 3 March 2021 additional information and an update on works completed within the seven Monument Zones were submitted. Both reports are available at the above-mentioned address. The following has been reported:

- The Government of Nepal are committed to the rehabilitation of the property and to the protection of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
- A process has commenced to revise the Integrated Management Framework (IMF). Assessments by the Institution of Engineering and ICOMOS Nepal will inform the updating of the Recovery Master Plan (RMP) and the IMF. The IMF will address the long-term management of architectural and town-planning coherence. The RMP will also be reviewed and the previous six-year plan will be adjusted accordingly;
- The State Party has endeavoured to address issues raised by previous Reactive Monitoring missions and Committee decisions and progress has been made towards completion of repair of earthquake damaged monuments within the seven monument zones. The 2021 update includes a detailed table of works completed, together with a detailed photo inventory on progress with some 103 monuments affected by the earthquake, including those where conservation works have been completed. But the documentation has not been submitted in advance for review, as outlined in the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission report;
- A 'Cultural Heritage Information Management System (CHIMS)', comprising a database and a documentation system, has been established within the Department of Archaeology;
- The socio-economic recovery of the Monument Zones will continue to be monitored. Further economic revitalization of the urban communities will be initiated;
- Recommendations from the April 2019 ICOMOS Technical Review of the Patan Durbar Square Monument Zone sewer project are being implemented;
- Capacity building training focused on earthquake recovery has been provided to Department of Archaeology officials, in collaboration with a range of international partners, including UNESCO, ICCROM and ICOMOS;

- Assistance will be provided to traditional artisans to pass on skills and knowledge, and master craftspeople will be honoured. Documentation and research will occur on traditional building technology and knowledge;
- The Public Procurement Act processes will be reviewed and provisions adopted to ensure the required expertise in traditional construction methods using traditional artisans to ensure the quality of conservation projects. Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) procedures will be established;
- Heritage management of the Monument Zones will be brought under a single authority to ensure the protection of the attributes conveying the OUV, following a single Master Plan adopted by the Department of Archaeology (DoA). The capacity and organization of the DoA will be reviewed;
- Community involvement will be promoted, particularly for site monitoring, maintenance, and safeguarding of intangible heritage.

The State Party proposes to establish a new International Scientific Committee to facilitate collaboration and the international community is requested to assist through workshops and research, focused on technical issues such as structural assessment of traditional load-bearing structures, and materials dating and testing.

The State Party remains committed to collaborating with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to implement previous recommendations of the Committee and considers that it is not necessary to include this property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Meanwhile, on 22 April 2020, the World Heritage Centre wrote to the State Party to request that the proposed rehabilitation project of Lal Baithak, located in the Bhaktapur Monument Zone of the property, be halted pending the submission of further documentation and a thorough technical review by the Advisory Bodies. On 12 August 2020, the World Heritage Centre wrote to the State Party, relaying concerns regarding the appropriateness of the proposed New Master Plan for the Pashupati Protected Monument Zone. The State Party confirmed, on 3 March 2021, that the proposed New Master Plan for the Pashupati Protected Monument Zone had been withdrawn. On 16 December 2020, the World Heritage Centre wrote to the State Party regarding the proposed ring roads expansion of Swayambunath in the vicinity of the site and potential impact on the Swayambunath Temple Complex. No formal response has been received by the World Heritage Centre to either of these requests, although the 2021 update states that the World Heritage Centre will be informed if the Ring Road causes any impacts.

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

The support expressed by the Government of Nepal for the conservation of the property is welcome, as is the establishment of the International Scientific Committee. The 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission acknowledged that there has been substantial progress towards the recovery of the property and its OUV. However, although many previously identified issues and Committee decisions have been addressed, others remain outstanding and continue to affect adversely the property's state of conservation.

The integrity of the urban and religious ensembles is being recovered progressively through reconstruction, utilizing traditional materials, methods and skills. Proposed changes to the Public Procurement Act support this process. However, in some places, authenticity has been affected by the introduction of new materials (e.g. addition of lime to mud mortar) and the reconstruction of some buildings based on conjecture instead of sufficient supporting evidence. Concern remains about the poor condition of the Hanuman Dhoka Durbar and Bhaktapur Durbar Palaces, the Changunarayan complex and Vishwarupa Temple (Pashupati). Focus on particular monuments at the expense of other attributes continues to have adverse ramifications for traditional urban housing and ancient settlements. The reconstruction of these elements using flat-roofed, concrete framed structures (as per the new building codes) has resulted in buildings of very different forms, compared to their historic counterparts.

The advice from the State Party that the recommendations from the April 2019 ICOMOS Technical Review of the Patan Durbar Square Monument Zone sewer project are being implemented is welcome, but confirmation and documentation of the project has not been received. The Committee should re-iterate its previous request that the State Party prepare Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) for proposed major new urban infrastructure projects within the Monument Zones and buffer zones, in accordance with the *ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, and submit them to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse. For all rehabilitation,

reconstruction and/or development projects, the State Party should be encouraged to use the approach outlined in the 2011 *UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)*, which should also be reflected in all relevant planning documents.

The RMP has been used to guide recovery from the effects of the 2015 earthquake, in conjunction with the adopted Conservation Guidelines and the six-year recovery programme coordinated by the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA), but it does not provide specific guidance on the recovery of each of the seven individual Monument Zones, which are all very different in their attributes, values, uses, associated communities and intangible heritage. The State Party has proceeded apace with repair of many monuments across all seven monument zones, but is yet to develop and implement Recovery Master Plans for the seven Monument Zones, in accordance with previous decisions of the Committee. The review of the IMF remains outstanding and is now urgent, and the State Party's commitment to allow for a comprehensive review with expert advice is welcome. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies consider that the Committee may wish to welcome the State Party's confirmation that the proposed New Master Plan for the Pashupati Protected Monument Zone had been withdrawn.

The term of the NRA expired in late 2020; to ensure the ongoing and successful recovery of elements, it is important that coordination between the Department of Archaeology, other government departments and authorities, site managers and community stakeholders, is maintained. Therefore, the decision to review the Department of Archaeology and bring heritage management of the Monument Zones under a single authority is appropriate.

The State Party has endeavoured to address issues raised by previous missions but is yet to comply with the Committee decisions requesting the submission of documentation for review and other measures, as outlined in the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission report. Remaining threats to the property include the ongoing deterioration of structures that have yet to be repaired, a lack of attention to urban and ancient settlements, loss of traditional housing, unsympathetic new developments around Monument Zones, uncontrolled development within monument and buffer zones, the impacts of new urban infrastructure, the lack of master planning and values-based conservation management planning, the need for cyclical maintenance programmes and disaster risk management planning, the potential demolition and replacement of Lal Baithak, Bhaktapur, and implications of the proposed Swayambunath ring roads expansion.

These outstanding issues continue to threaten the property's integrity, authenticity and other attributes bearing the OUV. As highlighted in previous reports to the Committee and in previous Reactive Monitoring mission reports, the dangers to the property continue to meet the conditions set out in Paragraph 179 (a) for inclusion of a property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The 2017 and 2019 missions both note that the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger and identify a 'desired state of conservation' for the property, along with proposed corrective measures. However, these have not yet been approved by the Committee, as the Committee has not to date inscribed the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission confirmed that the recovery process remains inadequate to deal with the challenges that have arisen following the 2015 earthquake, and it is recommended that the Committee consider again the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The Committee could also adopt the following Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and the corrective measures identified and drafted with the State Party during the last two Reactive Monitoring missions, namely:

#	Target	Rationale	Means of Verification (to be submitted to WHC)	Timeline (due dates)
1.	Damaged monuments are protected and safety measures are implemented.	Increased protection is given to damaged monuments, particularly those that are not included in the current program of work, to minimise any future deterioration of the heritage fabric. Additional safety measures should be implemented to ensure the safety of both locals and visitors to the sites.	Evidence of implementation of protective measures including covering of severely damaged monuments (e.g. Vishwarupa Temple and portions of Hanuman Dhoka Palace) exposed to the weather.	1 October 2021

#	Target	Rationale	Means of Verification (to be submitted to WHC)	Timeline (due dates)
2.	Repairs and reconstructions are implemented according to the highest international quality standards.	Establish quality control measures to be implemented to ensure that the monuments are repaired and reconstructed in accordance with best practice and that the work is undertaken by appropriately experienced master artisans with specialist expertise in the use of traditional materials and traditional methods of construction.	Adopted Quality Control System including: criteria for prequalification of contractors, quality documentation being provided for tender and construction purposes, contract conditions including adherence to the Basic Guidelines for the Conservation and Reconstruction of Earthquake-Damaged Heritage (2072), and monitoring of work in progress.	1 October 2021
3.	Management documents and policies are revised and/or updated, taking physical and management changes to the property into account.	The Integrated Management Plan (IMP) and Integrated Management Framework (IMF) should be updated to reflect the changes to the property brought about by the earthquakes and any changes in management structures.	Revised and updated IMP and IMF	2 January 2022
4.	Potential impacts of development and/or infrastructure projects are identified ahead of time and mitigation measures developed, if necessary.	Coordinate with NRA and infrastructure providers regarding the construction of new infrastructure (e.g. sewer, drainage, water, street lighting, new roads or road upgrades) or infrastructure upgrades through the KVVHP. Review proposals and provide feedback to the authorities, identifying heritage impacts on the KVVHP and its attributes including the subsurface archaeology, the monuments and other structures, paving and streetscape. Negotiate the most acceptable route with the authorities prior to its implementation. Develop protective and mitigation measures to be implemented during construction including archaeological monitoring, recording and salvage.	Plans for installation of new infrastructure or infrastructure upgrades Heritage Impact Assessment to be prepared. Mitigation Measures to be implemented during construction.	As soon as routes are identified and agreed with DoA.
5.	Projects that may have an impact on the property and its OUV are submitted and reviewed in line with the <i>Operational Guidelines</i> .	All major works projects must be reviewed and approved by the WHC and the Advisory Bodies, in line with Paragraph 172 of the <i>Operational Guidelines</i> . This includes projects proposing changes to the monuments (e.g. Lal Baithak), as well as proposed new development within the monument zones (e.g. police station site at Hanuman Dhoka).	Documentation , including evidence for proposed interventions and Heritage Impact Assessments for all major works projects undertaken in the recovery.	When proposal is made Approval must be granted prior to commencement.

#	Target	Rationale	Means of Verification (to be submitted to WHC)	Timeline (due dates)
6.	Master Plans are prepared for each monument zone, using the Historic Urban Landscape approach.	Using the HUL approach, prepare Master Plans for each of the monument zones and their buffer zones to guide development within them.	Master Plans for all PMZs , including map showing proposed/potential development sites, as well as proposed development controls and guidelines. Include requirement for heritage impacts of proposed work to be assessed against all the mapped heritage attributes (tangible and intangible) and heritage values (OUV and local). Mapping of monument zones and buffer zones to show each of the information layers identified in section 4.2.4.1	December 2021 2 January 2022
7.	Conservation Management Plans are prepared for major monument complexes, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.	Prepare conservation management plans (CMPs) for two of the major monument complexes – Hanuman Dhoka Durbar Palace Museum, Bhaktapur Durbar Palace (National Art Museum) The CMPs should guide conservation, adaptation and change for these two monuments and should be prepared prior to any major change occurring.	Table of contents for review Draft CMPs for review Final CMPs	1 October 2021 1 December 2021 1 February 2022
8.		Prepare conservation management plans (CMPs) for other major monument complexes – Swayambu, Pashipatinath, Changuanarayan. The CMPs should guide conservation, adaptation and change for these three monuments and should be prepared prior to any major change occurring.	Draft CMPs for review Final CMPs	1 April 2022 1 June 2022
9.	Policies for disaster risk management are in place at the property level and for each monument zone.	Develop a risk management framework for the World Heritage property. In consultation with local site managers, communities and emergency responders, prepare a disaster risk management plan for each of the monument zones.	Risk Management Framework for the World Heritage Property Disaster Risk Management Plan for each Monument Zone	1 December 2021 1 April 2022

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.33

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **39 COM 7B.69, 40 COM 7B.41, 41 COM 7B.95, 42 COM 7B.12 and 43 COM 7B.70** adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*

3. Welcomes the commitment made by the Government of Nepal and by national and international organizations towards the recovery of the property, as well as the progress made in response to the major challenges arising from the 2015 earthquake, including repair of monuments within the seven monument zones;
4. Urges the State Party to expedite the revision of the Integrated Management Framework (IMF), the updating of the Recovery Master Plan (RMP), including revisions to the six-year plan and timetable, reiterates its requests that the State Party integrate the updated RMP within the overall socio-economic revitalization programme for urban communities, and requests that these revised plans, as well as the proposed single Master Plan for the Monument Zones, be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
5. Also urges the State Party to expedite the establishment of the International Scientific Committee (ISC) to assist with the development of structures and resources to guide the recovery of the property and its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), and also requests the State Party to submit the ISC's Terms of Reference and membership to the World Heritage Centre;
6. Noting the conclusions and recommendations of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring mission, expresses serious concern at the mission's findings regarding the adverse effect on the authenticity of the property, the continuing poor condition of some monuments, including the Hanuman Dhoka Durbar and Bhaktapur Durbar Palaces, the Changu Narayan complex and Vishwarupa Temple (Pashupati), and the focus on monuments at the expense of other attributes, with resulting ramifications for traditional urban housing and ancient settlements, and therefore further requests the State Party to fully implement the mission recommendations, in particular:
 - a) The establishment of a Recovery Master Plan for each Protective Monument Zone of the property, and
 - b) The immediate cessation of proposed changes to the Lal Baithak wing of the National Art Museum, Bhaktapur, pending the submission of further documentation and a thorough technical review by ICOMOS to consider the potential impacts of the proposed project on the OUV of the property;
7. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to integrate the RMPs for each Protective Monument Zone of the property with the overall socio-economic revitalization programme for urban communities;
8. Notes that the recommendations from the April 2019 ICOMOS Technical Review of the Patan Durbar Square Monument Zone sewer project are being implemented and requests furthermore that the State Party submit the resulting documentation to the World Heritage Centre,
9. Also notes the State Party's confirmation that the proposed New Master Plan for the Pashupati Protected Monument Zone has been withdrawn, and requests moreover that the State Party prepare Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) for all proposed major new urban infrastructure projects within the Monument Zones and buffer zones, including the proposed ring roads expansion of Swayambunath, in accordance with the ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties, and submit them to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, for review by the Advisory Bodies before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse;

10. *Calls upon* the international community to continue supporting the State Party's recovery work through financial, technical or expert assistance, including support for local communities and their housing and social needs, and in particular to continue to support capacity building, which will facilitate:
 - a) *Workshops and research focused on technical issues such as structural assessment of traditional load-bearing structures, and materials dating and testing,*
 - b) *Further development of a secure centralized and accessible digital database for management of all documents pertinent to the property,*
 - c) *Values-based heritage assessment and conservation management planning for the property, its Monument Zones and monument complexes,*
 - d) *Master Planning utilizing the approach of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) to manage urban development within the property and its buffer zones, and*
 - e) *Disaster Risk Management Planning for each Monument Zone and for graded monuments;*
11. *Considers* that the potential and ascertained threats to the OUV of the property are so considerable that the recovery process needs to be further improved, and that inscribing the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger will assist the recovery process to focus on projects that sustain the attributes that sustain the OUV, particularly the distinctive building structures and materials, in order to avoid problematic reconstruction, conservation and development activities that may damage the property's authenticity;
12. ***Decides* therefore, in conformity with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines, to inscribe Kathmandu Valley (Nepal) on the List of World Heritage in Danger;**
13. *Requests as well* the State Party, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to refine and finalize the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and the corrective measures identified during the 2017 and 2019 Reactive Monitoring missions, along with the timeframe for their implementation, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session;
14. *Finally requests* the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

48. Historical Monuments of Mtskheta (Georgia) (C 708bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1994

Criteria (iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2009-2016

- Lack of a management mechanism
- Privatisation of surrounding land
- Loss of authenticity of some components due to restoration works conducted using unacceptable methods

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1997-2010)

Total amount approved: USD 96,160

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: Funds-in-Trust. Georgia-UNESCO Agreement: Cultural heritage advisory service to the NACHP (National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia) to be implemented under the Third Regional Development Project (RDP III). Total budget: USD 250, 000.

Previous monitoring missions

1993: World Heritage Centre mission; May 1994: ICOMOS Advisory mission; 1999: World Heritage Centre mission; May 2001: Heritage and Tourism Master Plan mission; November 2003, June 2008, March 2010, April 2012, November 2014 and February 2018: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Reactive Monitoring missions; November 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/World Bank Advisory mission; November 2015, February and December 2016: World Heritage Centre technical assistance missions; July – September 2017: World Heritage Centre on-site technical assistance; December 2018: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; February 2020: ICOMOS Advisory Mission.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of a management mechanism (issue resolved)
- Lack of definition of the unified buffer zone (issue resolved)
- Lack of Urban Master Plan of the City of Mtskheta
- Insufficient coordination between the Georgian Church and the national authorities
- Privatization of surrounding land
- Natural erosion of stone
- Loss of authenticity during previous works carried out by the Church
- Inappropriate urban development within a sensitive historical environment (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708/>

Current conservation issues

On 29 November 2019, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the summary of which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708/documents/>. It provides information on measures implemented by the State Party in response to the Decision adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018) as follows:

- Adoption of the new “Code of Georgia on Planning of Space, Architectural and Construction Activities” (entered in to the force on 3 June 2019);

- Establishment of the Special Steering Committee (SC) and the Inter-institutional Professional Committee to support, supervise and monitor the elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation;
- Adoption of the decision to extend until July 2020, the Decree on Urban Development and Land Privatization in the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones of Mtskheta (known as the Moratorium).

Other conservation issues identified by the State Party in the report include further information on the implementation of a conservation project of the Minor Church of Jvari monastery (2015-2018), rehabilitation works for the Samtavro Valley archaeological site, stone conservation works of the Western Gate and rehabilitation works of the fragment of the western defence wall of Svetitskhoveli Cathedral Complex, and adaptation works of the new Mtskheta archaeological museum.

In 2018-2021, the State Party has submitted 36 project proposals, located within the boundaries, in the buffer zone and in the wider setting of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, to the World Heritage Centre and for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Following a high-level meeting between the Assistant Director-General for Culture, the Vice-Prime Minister, the Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia and the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia held at UNESCO on 4 February 2020, constructive dialogue was enhanced between the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and national authorities in order to provide additional advisory assistance to the state institutions to finalise "Management Documentation for Spatial Territorial Development of Mtskheta".

The State Party continued to send additional information to the World Heritage Centre in 2020 and 2021:

- On 10 March 2020, information was provided in particular on the Mtskheta City Master Plan Concept, including all sectorial plans, projects and programmes related to the area, information on a Governmental Action Plan for Sustainable Development of "Great Mtskheta", as well as the 2019-2020 Advisory assistance report;
- On 23 December 2020, the State Party informed the Secretariat about the extension of the Moratorium beyond 1 January 2021, until uncertain date. Updates were provided on the Mtskheta City Master Plan, as following difficulties with the company contracted to advance the development, the State Party plans online consultation meetings with experts to progress with the document;
- On 17 April 2021, documentation was received from the State Party on the planned Tbilisi Wind Power Plant to be implemented within the wide setting and outside the buffer zone of the property, followed by third party concerns on 23 April 2021;
- On 17 May 2021, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that the development of the Management Documentation for Spatial-Territorial Development of Mtskheta (ULUMP) and of detailed guidance specifying conditions and construction limits is still slowing down due to COVID-19. Therefore, the Moratorium has been extended until the General Plan, Development Plans and Detailed Development Plans of Mtskheta are approved by the municipality.

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

The State Party has achieved considerable progress in addressing the factors affecting the property. The development of the "Management Documentation for Spatial Territorial Development of Mtskheta", including Mtskheta Urban Land Use Master Plan (ULUMP) is underway and this will deliver 1) General plan of Mtskheta; 2) Development Plans and Detailed Development Plans of Mtskheta; and 3) Mtskheta Spatial Planning and Urban Planning Information System.

In December 2018, at the request of the Georgian authorities, and in the context of the 2019-2020 Advisory assistance, a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission was invited to the property, and undertook the following:

- Review of the progress with ULUMP, in particular the Mtskheta City Master Plan Concept - Stage II - a very important database that encompasses all the buildings and plots of the town and the surroundings in 3D representations, complemented by their basic data. This database will be a key tool in subsequent phases of the Master Plan, as well as for future monitoring of its implementation;

- Review of the updated Terms of Reference for the elaboration of the Mtskheta Spatial Planning and Urban Planning Information System, based on a shared strategic spatial planning vision, integrating heritage and landscape as an essential component of the city;
- Recommendation on the use of the 2011 Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach as a main tool to develop and introduce a long-term vision for the integrated protection of cultural heritage and sustainable development;
- Review of a draft amendment to Decree N411 of Georgian Government on “Enactment of Special Regime of Regulation of Urban Development in Cultural Heritage Protection Zones of Mtskheta Municipality” (the Moratorium).

The extension of the Moratorium until further notice or until the approval of the General Plan, the Development Plans and Detailed Development Plans of Mtskheta by the municipality, is welcome. The Moratorium will include amendments introducing a softening of the regime in some parts of Mtskheta and detailed guidance specifying conditions and construction limits, and with a condition that the Moratorium will be removed only after the approval of the Spatial Urban Planning Information System and Territorial Documentation.

In line with these mission recommendations, the State Party, with the assistance of an independent international urban planner, has reinforced the process of elaboration of the Urban Planning Documentation.

It is recommended that the Committee endorse the recommendations of the 2018 Advisory mission, as well as support the 2019-2020 Advisory assistance process. The State Party should be requested to submit for review the remaining completed components of the ULUMP, including the Spatial Urban Planning Information System for the city of Mtskheta before approval.

It is noted that the State Party has submitted documentation on the planned Tbilisi Wind Power Plant to be implemented within the wide setting and outside the buffer zone of the property, and the proposal will be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies.

The State Party should also be requested to continue to submit to the World Heritage Centre, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, all projects presented in the Mtskheta City Master Plan Concept, in particular those concerning “Tourism Gateways of Great Mtskheta”, “National Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage” and the “Museum of Spreading of Christianity”, including Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to be carried out already at the strategic level, for review by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible action is taken.

The property is listed as a “Cultural Property Under Enhanced Protection”, a mechanism established by the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention. In this regard, the highest-level protection measures, including risk and emergency preparedness, will need to be integrated in the Urban Planning Documentation.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.48

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.24**, adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),
3. Acknowledges the considerable progress made by the State Party to implement the Committee’s recommendations;
4. Welcomes the development of the Mtskheta City Master Plan Concept database that encompasses all the buildings and plots of the town and the surroundings in 3D representations, complemented by basic data, a key tool in subsequent phases of the Master Plan, as well as for future monitoring of its implementation and strongly suggests the timely completion of the Mtskheta City Master Plan;

5. Encourages the State Party to continue on-going work on the development of the “Management Documentation for Spatial Territorial Development of Mtskheta”, including Mtskheta Urban Land Use Master Plan (ULUMP), and to submit drafts of the main components of this plan to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS International by at the latest **1 February 2022**;
6. Also acknowledges the State Party’s decision to maintain the “Enactment of Special Regime of Regulation of Urban Development and Land Privatization in the Cultural Heritage Protection Zones of Mtskheta Municipality” (the Moratorium) until the “Management Documentation for Spatial Territorial Development of Mtskheta” has been adopted, and control and monitoring is fully in place; and also welcomes the decision by the State Party to extend the Moratorium until further notice, or until all the necessary systems and approvals are in place;
7. Supports the on-going 2019-2020 Advisory assistance and endorses the recommendations of the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission and invites the State Party to implement these recommendations that relate to:
 - a) The development of the ULUMP;
 - b) The need to address existing urgent conservation issues that if left unresolved could have a negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
 - c) The need for the development of a long-term vision for the historic urban landscape of Mtskheta, to guide the management of change resulting from increased commercial tourism with an approach that integrates cultural heritage with sustainable development;
8. Requests the State Party to continue submitting, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, detailed information on any proposed development projects within the property, its buffer zone and setting, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies prior to any decisions being taken that could be difficult to reverse;
9. Reiterates its request to the State Party to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for developments within the property and its buffer zone as a timely and appropriate method of assessing the multiple and cumulative impacts of current and planned developments, taking into account potential impacts on the OUV of the property, in conformity with the ICOMOS Guidelines on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage properties, prior to allowing any developments to take place and prior to the finalization and implementation of the ULUMP;
10. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

49. Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andr ssy Avenue (Hungary) (C 400bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1987

Criteria (ii)(iv)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: 800 million HUF (ca. 2.7 million EUR) EU support for the "Street of Culture" project

Previous monitoring missions

March 2005: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; November 2007, February 2018: ICOMOS Advisory missions; February 2013, April 2019: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Large scale reconstruction
- Building heights and regulations
- Demolition and inappropriate development in the buffer zone known as the 'Jewish Quarter'
- Inappropriate use of public areas and street amenities
- Lack of conservation of residential housing in the area inscribed as World Heritage
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure (increased traffic volume)
- Management Plan Systems/Management Plan
- Legal framework
- Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community
- Housing

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/400/documents/>. The State Party submitted updated information for the report on 29 January 2021. These provide information on measures implemented by the State Party in response to the decision adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019) as follows:

- Reorganisation of state administration in charge united cultural heritage protection and building construction field within the Deputy State Secretariat for Architecture and Construction in the Prime Minister's Office;
- The Act on the protection of townscapes had been enforced, adopting the approach of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL Recommendation);
- The World Heritage Act had been amended with a new implementing regulation Decree clarifying tasks of World Heritage management bodies in Hungary, introducing a new classification for the properties recognized as Highly Determinative Sites in Terms of Protected Urban Landscapes. It offers a possibility for the Prime Minister's Office to include in the Management Plan, the major urban landscape requirements;

- The Government Decree on Planning Councils had also been amended, by which regional councils are being replaced by the World Heritage Councils as the responsible body to assess impacts of potential projects related to World Heritage in Hungary and by which such projects have to comply with rules set out in the Management Plans or the World Heritage Act, in case the property does not have a Management Plan;
- A Management Plan containing a set of rules for all actors is under development in two phases, on the basis of several studies, including 3D-based visual impact assessments of significant scale developments in and around the property. Due to the sanitary situation, the Management Plan was not finalised as foreseen, nevertheless, the State Party continues to work on it without further delay;
- Amendment to the "High-Level House Act" introduced the height limit up to 65 meters within Budapest;
- A New World Heritage Design Guide had been developed, and its implementation is in progress;
- Revision of the previous regulation regarding Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) that meet the ICOMOS criteria has been finalised in 2020 and will be submitted in 2021 for approval by the parliament;
- An Information Module is being developed with an interactive, map-based, rotatable (3D) and graphical interface, providing online record of all relevant actors and information on developments;
- For the National Hauszmann Programme (NHP) at the Buda Castle Quarter, no specific response was provided to the Committee's request to halt all ongoing and planned reconstruction works and to consider developing an alternative approach to conservation and development. The State Party indicated that it 'disagrees with the concerns about the NHP, in particular the risk of a progressive loss of historical authenticity' and considers that the national value of the Quarter is 'paramount' with projects being undertaken to 'reinforce national identity'. In the updated information submitted on 29 January 2021, the State Party emphasises the "ideological basis" of the NHP and commissioned the VERITAS Historical Research Institute to conduct a research on how the Buda Castle reflects 'national identity'. This report was submitted with the updated information on the state of conservation of the property;
- The State Party submitted more than 1,700 pages of annexes on projects including for the NHP, and also the MAHART Scientific Building, MOL Campus, and the Biodome and Museum of Ethnography parts of the Liget Project. All these documents were reviewed by ICOMOS and recommendations were transmitted to the State Party. Furthermore, the State Party has provided in the updated information the HIAs and Visual Impact Assessments for the former Red Cross Palace, the former Military High Command Building and the former Palace of Archduke Joseph, for review by ICOMOS.

From June 2018 to March 2021, the World Heritage Centre received nineteen third party complaints. These included details of the apparent complete demolition of the Radeczky Barracks. All information was transmitted to the State Party for clarification in line with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*. At the time of preparing this report, the State Party has not provided the World Heritage Centre with clarifications related to the third party information, transmitted since July 2020.

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

The State Party report addresses some of the recommendations of the Committee and those of the 2018 and 2019 missions, mainly in relation to governance and regulatory frameworks for future developments.

In terms of governance, the Prime Minister's Office at the Deputy State Secretariat for Architecture and Construction will now be responsible for the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* and heritage protection in general. It has started a review and deregulation of the Hungarian World Heritage regulations – but the context of the term "deregulation" is unclear. The Management Plan is still under development.

In terms of the regulatory framework, the 2011 World Heritage Act was modified to allow these governance changes, while the Act on the protection of townscapes was enforced in 2016 to adopt the HUL Recommendation approach. The High-level House Act was strengthened in 2018 to limit heights of building constructions to 65 metres, with the result that in 2019, three new high-rise building

permission requests were rejected. An amendment of the Government Decree on Planning Councils to assess impacts of potential projects that relate to World Heritage in Hungary has been modified. The State Party assures that in the near future, Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) regulations will be strengthened, however, no details have been provided on what impact these changes will have. Nor have details been provided on the relationship between state and municipal legislation which has been a key issue in the past.

ICOMOS has reviewed submitted documentation (available in working languages) for the Budapest Eye, MAHARAT Scientific Building, Radeckzy Barracks, Former Electric Power Dispatch Centre, MOL Campus building, Biodome and the Museum of Ethnography, submitted by the State Party as well as for other planned, ongoing or implemented major projects besides the NHP.

What remains unaddressed are the imminent threats to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property resulting from the large-scale reconstruction projects in the Buda Castle Quarter as part of the NHP (that was initially the National Hauszmann Plan (2014-2024)) combined with the cumulative impact of a number of developments, which have been carried out without the establishment of an updated Management Plan (requested by the Committee since 2015), and without integration with the city development plan, including building guidelines that have been reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

It is recommended that the Committee expresses its utmost concern that the reconstruction work being undertaken as part of the NHP has not been halted nor have alternative approaches to the conservation and development of the Buda Castle Quarter been considered, as requested previously by the Committee. The State Party has highlighted its disagreement with the Committee's concerns about the NHP, which aims to return the entire complex of the Castle and its neighbouring quarter to the form it had before World War II. The current proposed reconstruction is seen by the State Party to be recreating a national symbol. The State Party has emphasised the "ideological basis" of the NHP, and commissioned a research on how the Buda Castle reflects the 'national identity' of the pre-Communist era. The proposed transformation will require the demolition of most alterations undertaken during the Communist era.

The Riga Charter (*Riga Charter on authenticity and historical reconstruction in relationship to cultural heritage*, 2000) clearly outlines that conservation interventions should be minimal, and that reconstruction be considered only in exceptional circumstances, such as long-standing monuments lost. If the entire NHP is carried out, and the construction of the post war regime is reversed, this could create an illusion that does not correspond with historical reality. While the State Party in its report makes reference to the Venice and Riga Charters, in fact, the ongoing work is contrary to the spirit of these documents and the most recent international norms for conservation.

The NHP has been developed without consultations with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS. In spite of a request by the Committee, based on Advisory and Reactive Monitoring missions in 2018 and 2019, for the State Party to provide full details of the project for discussion before work commenced, details have not been provided and substantial construction works are ongoing.

The Committee has not ruled out the idea of some reconstruction being included in the project and stressed the need for detailed proposals to be developed for the whole initiative, as well as for each of the buildings and spaces, based on a clear understanding of their fabric and value, as a basis for a dialogue with the Advisory Bodies on possible approaches, in order to identify interventions that respect the OUV of the property. Such a dialogue is essential and urgent.

The 2013 and 2019 missions have clearly identified relevant parts that should be retained among others the facade of the Ministry of Finance building, the remaining parts of the Military High Command Building, the interiors with the staircase in the north wing of the castle, public rooms, staircase in the southern wing, and the dome of the castle. What needs to be established is the degree to which buildings reconstructed in the post-war era bear witness to the past, in the context of the OUV.

Although the State Party has submitted some details on individual elements of the NHP, the level of detail submitted is insufficient to allow an understanding of the entire project. The HIAs are also not adequate and no account has been taken of the missions' recommendations. The proposed demolition of the Ministry of Finance facade towards Szentháromság Square cannot be supported, nor can the entire demolition of the Military High Command Building, or the proposed reconstruction of the huge Palace of Archduke Joseph, unless further documentation and evidence can be provided beyond general plans and photographs.

This exceptionally extensive NHP could transform the Buda Castle quarter with a highly negative impact on the OUV. As has already recommended by the Committee, the project needs to be halted and reassessed to allow an understanding of how its main objectives might be achieved in a way that is compatible with the OUV. Such a re-assessment should be based on a Conservation Plan and underpinned by a detailed inventory and historical documentation. In the absence of such an approach in line with international norms for the conservation of the OUV of World Heritage properties, and with reconstruction work progressing, the authenticity and integrity of the Buda Castle Quarter is under threat.

The State Party's commitment, expressed in the report, to fulfil its duties arising from the *World Heritage Convention* is to be welcomed. Unfortunately, these commitments seem to have so far had no impact on decision making processes in relation to the NHP. Several buildings, such as Buzogány tower, the Riding Hall and the Main Guard building, have already been completed or almost completed, the Radeckzy Barracks has been demolished according to third party information received, and work is on-going on other buildings, even though there is still no clear documentation for the project, no Conservation Plan, nor approval by the Committee on the approach that the work should take place in line with international norms and standards for conservation and reconstruction in and around a World Heritage property in order to protect its OUV. The State Party argues that its justification for the project lies in its ideological basis, as returning Buda Castle to its pre-World War II form will better reflect the 'national identity' of the pre-Communist era. Buda Castle is certainly of national importance, but it is also a major part of the inscribed property and contributes to its OUV. Any proposals for amending or transforming the Castle area must respect the OUV, including the property's authenticity and integrity. The World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies do not necessarily consider that these two values are incompatible, but to achieve an outcome that maintains the OUV while respecting national values will need discussion and collaboration based on open dialogue, clear documentation on what is proposed, a timescale that allows for such discussions, and major modifications to what is now proposed.

In the Decision **43 COM 7B.84** at its session in 2019, the Committee expressed its concern at what it considered to be a threat to the historical authenticity of the Buda Castle Quarter as a result of reconstruction works, and it urged the State Party to halt all ongoing and planned works, and develop an alternative approach to conservation and development, submitting these for review and approval before work re-commenced. It also encouraged the State Party to engage in dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies towards this end. Unfortunately, so far, these requests to halt interventions and engage in dialogue have not been responded to.

As a result, the state of conservation of the property has been and continues to be impacted highly negatively by recent large scale reconstruction and development works, including the NHP, which collectively and cumulatively diminish the authenticity and integrity of the property, and which remain on-going in spite of the serious concerns expressed by the Advisory Bodies and the Committee. It is therefore, recommended that the Committee acknowledges that the property faces ascertained and potential threats to its OUV in conformity with Paragraph 179 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and consider its inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.40

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.84**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Notes the reorganization of State administration in charge of World Heritage properties' protection at the national level and the designation of World Heritage properties as Highly Determinative Sites in Terms of Protected Urban Landscape, through enabling amendments to the 2011 World Heritage Act;
4. Acknowledges the recent efforts made by the State Party to address urban development issues through legal and regulatory measures, notably through 2018 amendments to the "High-Level House Act" limiting the height of new constructions to 65 meters;

5. Also notes that the amended “High-Level House Act” is not applicable for construction permits issued before it became law and that in absence of relevant legal provision the constructions, such as the 120-meter-high MOL Campus building in District 11, are ongoing;
6. Further notes that the revision of the regulation regarding Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to ensure that they meet the ICOMOS Guidance is planned in the near future and that 3D visual simulations will also be prepared, and urges the State Party to ensure its processes for commissioning HIAs, including Visual Impact Assessments and visual simulations address impacts on relevant attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and relevant views of the property as well as requests clarifications whether the revised regulation would be applicable to development projects already planned and ongoing;
7. Observes with concern that construction works on a number of major new developments within the property and its buffer zone have continued or have already been completed despite the Committee’s request in **43 COM 7B.84** to halt further projects for conservation, restoration, and new developments until the completion of the updated Management Plan for the property in line with the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape;
8. Notes with regret that so far the State Party has not complied with Decision **43 COM 7B.84**, as works have not been halted on the National Hauszmann Programme (NHP) for the Buda Castle Quarter, and that as a result the state of conservation of the property has been and continues to be highly negatively impacted by planned reconstruction and new construction which have had and continue to have a cumulative negative impact on the OUV of the property including its authenticity and integrity;
9. Notes furthermore that the State Party argues that its justification for the NHP lies in its desire to return the Buda Castle to its pre-World War II form so that it will better reflect the ‘national identity’ of the pre-Communist era, while at the same time emphasizing that it is also a major part of the inscribed property contributing to its OUV, and considers that this approach challenges the authenticity and integrity of the property and runs counter to prevailing international norms and standards of conservation and reconstruction requiring resolving contradictions between national objectives and international obligations to the World Heritage Convention through discussion and collaboration based on open dialogue, clear documentation on what is proposed, and a timescale that allows for such discussions;
10. Regrets that the State Party did not respond to Decision **39 COM 7B.79** to engage in dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies with the aim of modifying the NHP so that it maintains the OUV while also respecting its pre-World War II attributes;
11. Notes moreover that the Management Plan could not be finalized as foreseen in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and recalls Decision **39 COM 7B.79**, which requested the State Party to finalize, as soon as possible the Management Plan of the property including details of the protective measures and regulatory regimes and submit it to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies as well as Decision **43 COM 7B.84**, which requested the State Party to halt further projects (in the whole property) for conservation, restoration, and new developments in the property and the buffer zone until a Management Plan integrated with the city development plan in line with the HUL Recommendation, as well as building guidelines have been prepared, and reviewed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;

12. *Also regrets the apparent demolition of the Radeckzy Barracks and the outlined proposal for the demolition of the Ministry of Finance facade towards Szentháromság Square;*
13. *Also considers that the state of conservation of the property is impacted highly negatively by the recent, ongoing and large scale reconstruction and development works at the Buda Castle, which are not in line with international conservation norms for protecting the OUV of a World Heritage property, collectively and cumulatively diminish the authenticity and integrity of the property, and present ascertained and potential threats to the property, in conformity with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines;*
14. *Concludes that, as a result of the considerations noted above, the property is in danger in conformity with Chapter IV.B of the Operational Guidelines, and **decides to inscribe Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue (Hungary) on the List of World Heritage in Danger**;*
15. *Requests the State Party, to develop a set of corrective measures, a timeframe for their implementation, and a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022;*
16. *Reiterates its request to the State Party to halt all ongoing and planned works at Buda Castle and invites the State Party to request, as a matter of urgency, and to initiate (on-line) ICOMOS Advisory Assistance to develop alternative conservation approaches for interventions in line with international norms for conservation of the OUV of World Heritage properties, for development of the Buda Castle Quarter;*
17. *Also requests the State Party to ensure that, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, details of interventions that could impact the OUV are submitted with appropriate HIAs, in line with ICOMOS Guidelines, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
18. *Further requests the State Party to adopt the recommendations of the 2019 Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, as well as the ICOMOS Technical Review in relation to the Budapest Eye, the MAHART Scientific Building, the Former Electric Power Dispatch Centre, the MOL Campus buildings, the Biodome, and the Museum of Ethnography;*
19. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

50. Venice and its Lagoon (Italy) (C 394)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1987

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Programme for the Safeguarding of Venice: since 1966 more than 1,500 projects worth over 50 million Euros (mainly conservation and restoration projects)

Previous monitoring missions

October 2015: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/RAMSAR Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2020: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/RAMSAR Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Concern over the announcement of a universal exhibition in Venice (issue resolved)
- Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure
- Inadequate planning tools
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation, including damage to building fabric and cultural context, through conversion of residences for tourist accommodation or commercial use
- Proposals for large infrastructure, navigation and construction projects (including new offshore platform, new terminals, tourist port and large leisure facilities) in the Lagoon and its immediate setting
- Potential negative environmental impacts triggered by motorboats, cruise ships and oil tankers
- Management and institutional factors / Governance / Challenges in co-ordination between the multiple government and non-government institutions involved in conservation, tourism, management and regulation
- Climate change and severe weather events / Climate Change impacts on the Lagoon ecology and built fabric

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/>

Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/Ramsar Advisory mission took place on 27-31 January 2020. The mission assessed progress related to issues addressed in Decision **43 COM 7B.86** and studied the state of conservation of the property with a special focus on the consequences of the high tide events of the end of 2019. The report of this mission is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/394/documents/>.

On 14 February 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report and an updated report was also provided on 1 February 2021, which are available at the above-mentioned link, outlining the following:

- The 'Climate Action Plan' is foreseen to be completed in June 2021. The 'Water Plan of the Municipality of Venice' was prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Centre in July 2019. Subsequently, the document was subjected to a regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), after which it was approved by the Municipality of Venice. This document aims to support territorial planning in relation to hydraulic safety of new interventions. The related Water Plans of the individual municipalities in the Lagoon are also under preparation. The 'Morphological and Environmental Plan of the Venice Lagoon' is foreseen to be finalized by the end of 2021. The

assessment of this document profits from the result of the above SEA. The now finalised new sediment management guidelines for the Venice Lagoon are closely linked to this Plan, and are currently under the legal publication process;

- The global Covid-19 pandemic has led to a drastic drop in visitor numbers to Venice, severely affecting the city's economy. It has also led to the need to revise the 'Project of Territorial Governance of Tourism in Venice'. A Smart Control Room has been set up to monitor and collect visitor data and an electronic database created to monitor and register the short-term rental of private apartments. A web-based tool will operate access-fee payments for day visitors from 2022 and will provide the option to control the number of daily visitors and encourage redirecting visits to less busy periods. Funding was provided for the creation of a World Heritage Site Info Point at Forte Marghera as an access hub to Venice, and a project has been launched for the enhancement of traditional craftsmanship within the property;
- Stricter regulations are applied to the retail day stalls, tourism product retail and the creation of new tourism infrastructure. Green areas have been rehabilitated. Public housing is being refurbished and the possibilities enhanced to provide rental apartments for residents and students. Incentives are provided for renovating the facades of building fronts in the historic centre of Venice. Mobility infrastructure improvements are planned;
- The availability of some terminals in Marghera to temporarily accommodate larger cruise ships on their days of inactivity emerged as a short- to medium-term solution to reroute large ships from the San Marco-Giudecca channel. The State Party is investigating further options for a permanent solution. Additionally, stricter parameters are being applied to ships currently passing through the Lagoon area;
- The MoSE tide defense barriers are reported to be 95% completed, and the system is already operational. The full system, including maintenance guidelines and a permanently manned control room in the Arsenal area, will be implemented by the end of 2021. Studies have been carried out on possible environmental effects of the differentiated inlet closures, and further investigations to this end are on-going;
- Progress is reported in updating the Management Plan and revising the management/governance system of the property, taking into consideration the planned buffer zone. The draft document is planned to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre. The related Minor Boundary Modification will be resubmitted to the Committee, taking into consideration its recommendations (Decision **43 COM 8B.46**);
- Progress is also reported towards an integrated strategy at national, regional and local levels for monitoring the vulnerability of the property to climate change and disaster risk through the implementation of a series of ongoing and planned activities;
- Brief information is provided on ongoing or proposed major projects. A procedure is not yet in place for notifying development plans and projects to the World Heritage Centre in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines. A policy and legal framework for Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) is currently missing as well. The State Party is investigating ways to comply with the related Committee requests;
- In relation to the recently-constructed LPG storage facility within the property in Chioggia, information is provided about new legal measures that provides for both a ban on the construction of new plants and the prohibition of starting the operation of LPG storage facilities already authorized but not yet in operation. Previously adopted authorizations are now being re-evaluated;
- An updated Road-Map was submitted, and a brief preliminary report on the high tide event of November 2019 has been provided.

On 15 April 2021, the State Party submitted additional information related to measures on transport and regulation of cruise ship traffic in the Venice Lagoon, and the launch of a competition of ideas and collecting proposals to reroute traffic outside the Lagoon.

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

The State Party report addresses the recommendations of the last Committee Decision. The details presented about the implementation of the tourism management strategy are welcome. While several additional tools and controlling mechanisms are in place to limit the continuous increase of tourism

infrastructure in Venice itself, these efforts are hindered by the restricting nature of national legislation. The extremely high number of visitors to Venice is considered problematic and is closely related to the (social) carrying capacity of Venice and the Lagoon area and the quality of life of residents and is a main factor threatening the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. While the number of tourists drastically decreased due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it also highlighted the need for more sustainable tourism management and the development of a more diverse resilient economic basis for the future of the property and its inhabitants. The reported renovation of public housing and other public infrastructure improvements should be acknowledged. These alone may not be sufficient to turn the tide of the depopulation of Venice and other historic centres in the Lagoon, and their resulting serious negative impacts to the functionality of the urban areas.

While legal bans already exist for ships over 40.000 gross ton to enter the Venice Lagoon, it has no practical effect, as no alternative exists for the mooring of these large ships. Timeframes for the implementation to temporarily reroute ships over 40.000 gross ton from the San Marco Basin and the Giudecca Canal potentially to moor in Marghera are required, but no major investments should be encouraged for this option. The State Party should continue searching for a long-term solution with utmost urgency, prioritizing the option of banning large ships from the Lagoon altogether, and preferably redirecting them to more suitable ports in the region.

The exceptional high tide event of November 2019 focused attention anew on the property's vulnerability. All stakeholders are to be commended for their efforts and their joint action to mitigate the damage done. Efforts of the State Party should be also acknowledged for completing and operationalizing the MoSE system. The impacts of the construction and operation of the system should continue to be closely monitored. Appropriate mitigation measures need to be developed for any potential and ascertained negative impacts on the ecosystem of the Lagoon.

A joint and coordinated approach is needed by all stakeholders to enhance existing efforts and policies to mitigate the negative impacts of human interventions in the Lagoon ecosystem. This calls for alignment of the 'Climate Action Plan', the 'Morphological and Environmental Plan of the Venice Lagoon', the Water Plans of the municipalities and other relevant documents to ensure the long-term protection and preservation of this unique and complex environmental area. The industrial activities of the Lagoon and the port area of Marghera should be dealt with from an enforced sustainable development approach, and all activities that have a damaging effect on the ecosystem of the property should be eliminated in the long term.

Urban development and large-scale projects remain problematic. No mechanism is in place to assess potential impacts of planned projects/changes in line with Paragraph 118bis, or to notify the World Heritage Centre of proposals according to Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*. As a result, projects are implemented in the property, its future buffer zone and its setting which have negative impacts on the OUV. As an example of the existing problems with governance, no notification was received regarding the LPG storage facility in the property in Chioggia until after its construction. The mission recommended that this facility should be dismantled and moved to an alternative location, and that governance systems for evaluating projects related to the property be revised at all levels. The new legal measures related to construction and operation of LPG storage facilities should be noted with satisfaction.

The mission noted that the recently built 'Hybrid Tower' at Mestre, another planned building in this area, and the 'Venus Venis' hotel planned behind Marghera port highlight the problematic issue of high-rise buildings in the property's setting and future buffer zone. The visual impacts of these planned and implemented projects threaten the property's integrity. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to develop an overall strategy and vision for the protection and preservation of the property's OUV, an Integrated Master Plan for construction projects, including a skyline policy for the property, its future buffer zone and its setting, and mechanisms to comply with the *Operational Guidelines*.

The updating process of the Management Plan should also be noted, as is the intention to integrate the future buffer zone's management into the document. Nonetheless, the mission pointed out that the State Party should ensure that the management system provides an overall strategy/vision for the long-term preservation and protection of the property's OUV, taking into consideration the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape. The Management Plan should include essential currently lacking elements, especially an adequate identification of attributes, and enhance the monitoring indicators.

The mission also considered that despite the progress made in several issues identified by the Committee, crucial problems remain unresolved. These pose ascertained significant cumulative threats

to the OUV of the property and include, especially, the complex impacts of mass tourism, the constant decrease of population and the basic deficiencies in governance and cooperated management which have led to a significant loss of historical authenticity within Venice and the other historic centres within the property. These result in harmful effects to the property's inherent characteristics and pose ascertained and potential danger to its OUV and its attributes that convey OUV. The continued deteriorating effects of human intervention, combined with climate change on the vulnerable Lagoon ecosystem, threaten to result in irreversible change. The resolution to these long-standing problems is hindered by a lack of overall vision and low efficiency of the integrated coordinated management on all stakeholder levels. These factors warrant the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.50

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **38 COM 7B.27**, **40 COM 7B.52**, **41 COM 7B.48** and **43 COM 7B.86** adopted at its 38th (Doha, 2014), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Notes the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/Ramsar Advisory mission of 2020, which reviewed the progress in implementing previous Committee decisions, and to assess the state of conservation of the property, and the State Party's efforts to start implementing the mission recommendations;*
4. *Also notes that the State Party is working towards refining tourism management tools, improving public spaces and public housing and urges the State Party to work towards a sustainable tourism model for the property and to develop strategies and policies that will result in reducing the number of visitors to the property, in significantly enhancing the quality of life of residents and the requalification of urban areas to their former residential use, as well as in a more diverse resilient economic basis for future of the property and its inhabitants;*
5. *Acknowledges that the State Party started to work on solutions to reroute ships over 40.000 gross tons from the San Marco-Giudecca channel, nevertheless, requests the State Party to search for a long-term solution to this problem with utmost urgency, prioritizing the option to ban these ships from the Lagoon altogether and redirecting them to other, more suitable ports in the region as a final solution;*
6. *Also acknowledges that the Management Plan of the property is being updated, and also urges the State Party to ensure that, in order to protect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, the updated Management Plan is based on a systematic value assessment, including the identification and mapping of attributes that convey the OUV of the property, and that it will serve as an integrated plan for the property and its planned buffer zone;*
7. *Notes with concern the exceptional high tide events that affected the property at the end of 2019, and commends the joint efforts of the stakeholders, including the local communities, for managing the disaster in an efficient way and taking actions and measures for repairing and mitigating the damage;*
8. *Further acknowledges the efforts of the State Party to work towards the completion and operationalization of the MoSE high tide defense barriers system, and further urges the State Party to monitor closely the impacts of the construction and the operation of the*

system, and to develop appropriate measures for mitigating any negative impacts it might have on the ecosystem of the Lagoon;

9. Also requests the State Party to continue its efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of human interventions in the Lagoon ecosystem in a more strategic and coordinated way, and to develop further measures that will ensure the long-term protection and preservation of this unique and complex environmental area; and therefore, urges furthermore the State Party to progressively eliminate activities in the port of Marghera which have a damaging effect on the ecosystem of the property and implement a sustainable development approach to all future plans;
10. Also notes with concern that currently, there are no adequate mechanisms in place to report planned changes/projects to the World Heritage Centre in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, or to assess their potential impacts to the OUV of the property in line with Paragraph 118bis, and therefore, urges moreover the State Party to:
 - a) Further revise the governance of the property and develop appropriate mechanisms that allow compliance with the Operational Guidelines,
 - b) Develop an overall strategy and vision for the protection and preservation of the property, and ensure its implementation through targeted Action Plans and a revised Road Map,
 - c) Develop an Integrated Master Plan for construction projects, including a skyline policy for the property, its future buffer zone and its setting, in order to protect the property from impacts on its integrity,
 - d) Implement the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape approach in the regional and urban planning,
 - e) Halt all newly proposed large-scale projects within the property and its setting until the above listed measures are put in place,
 - f) Engage in dialogue with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies towards developing the proposed measures;
11. Regrets the construction of the liquified petroleum gas (LPG) storage facility in Chioggia within the property that presents an important threat to its OUV, and while noting with satisfaction the new legal measures related to construction and operation of LPG storage facilities, further requests the State Party to dismantle the storage facility in Chioggia and move it to an alternative location outside the property's boundaries;
12. Expresses concerns that despite the progress assessed on several issues identified, crucial problems remain yet unresolved that are already resulting in significant loss of historical authenticity as well as important loss of cultural significance, which are inherent part of the OUV of the property;
13. Considers therefore that the property is faced with ascertained and potential danger due to individual threats and their cumulative impacts and **decides, in conformity with Paragraph 178 of the Operational Guidelines, to inscribe Venice and its Lagoon (Italy) on the List of World Heritage in Danger**;
14. Endorses the key conclusions and recommendations of the 2020 Advisory mission and requests furthermore the State Party to fully implement them;
15. Requests moreover the State Party, to develop a proposal, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) and a set of

corrective measures with a timeframe for their implementation, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022;

16. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

52. Auschwitz Birkenau

German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945) (Poland) (C 31)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1998-2000)

Total amount approved: USD 30,000

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

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

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

Previous monitoring missions

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

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Lack of Management Plan
- Slow process of consultation with local communities
- Ground transport infrastructure

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

Current conservation issues

On 24 January 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/31/documents> addressing the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee at its 42nd session, as follows:

- A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the construction of the S1 expressway and the south ring road of Oświęcim was carried out in 2018. It was appended to the State Party's report for review. The HIA and report concluded that the potential impact of the S1 expressway and south ring road on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage property will be "negligible, subject to effective limitation by minimizing mechanisms";
- Several appeals against the decision by the Regional Director of Environmental Protection (Katowice Branch) on the environmental conditions for the construction of the S1 expressway and the south ring road of Oświęcim are pending. It is expected that the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways will announce a construction tender soon;

- The State Party invited a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission to coincide with an expert group meeting in March 2020. The mission was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Extensive conservation work has been carried out in accordance with international conservation standards, including the use of various technologies. The project for the conservation of two prisoner brick barracks in section BI nears completion;
- The main manager of the property, the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim (PMAB), is involved in educational activities and awareness-raising about the property's historic value and cultural context. For this purpose, the PMAB plans to open a new Visitor Service Centre outside the World Heritage property. Its construction is foreseen to start in 2020;
- Several commemorative elements have been or are currently established in the silence zone and the protective zone, including the Park of Peace and Reconciliation and the "Avenue of the Trees of Memory";
- The Municipality of Oświęcim is implementing two road projects in the direct vicinity of the World Heritage property: a road to reduce traffic in the foreground of the property and the new access road to the Judenrampe and the potato warehouse; both projects to be completed in 2020.

On 17 May 2021, the State Party has submitted additional information to the World Heritage Centre on the S1 expressway and the south ring road of Oświęcim. This indicated that the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways had signed a contract for the south ring road to Oświęcim in July 2020, that the construction design has been submitted in May 2021 to the Małopolska Region Voivodeship Office in Kraków to obtain permission for the road construction, and that construction is foreseen to start in March 2022 and to be completed by December 2024.

On 19 May 2021, a preparatory online meeting for the proposed joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS International Advisory mission to the property took place.

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

The efforts by the State Party concerning educational activities are positively noted. In terms of visitor management, the State Party plans to construct a new Visitor Service Centre outside the boundaries of the property to manage the increasing number of visitors.

The different measures and efforts undertaken by the State Party to conserve the property and its setting are welcomed, especially efforts to preserve the original substance as much as possible and to ensure the authenticity of the setting. It is positively noted that two institutions are working to preserve the remains and buildings of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp complex – the "Auschwitz Birkenau Nearby Memorial Sites" Foundation (founded in 2013) and the Memorial Museum of the People of the Land of Oświęcim with its designated location at the former food warehouse ("Lagerhaus"). Under the care of the "Auschwitz Birkenau Nearby Memorial Sites" Foundation, the SS Kitchen/Canteen, the potato warehouse, the fermentation building, a historical bathhouse building, a lighthouse, and a former school building in Bor that served as a branch of the women's concentration camp are being restored and prepared to receive visitors.

In relation to the proposed S1 expressway and the south ring road of Oświęcim, it is noted that several appeals against the decision of the Regional Director of Environmental Protection (Katowice Branch) have been lodged with the General Directorate of Environmental Protection, in terms of the environmental impacts of the road construction and these cases are pending.

Furthermore, it is noted that the General Directorate for National Roads and Motorways signed a contract for the south ring road to Oświęcim in July 2020, that the construction design has been submitted in May 2021 to the Małopolska Region Voivodeship Office in Kraków to obtain permission for the road construction, and that work is foreseen to start in March 2022 and to be completed by December 2024.

An HIA for the proposed south ring road of Oświęcim was submitted by the State Party, but no overall detail on the 9km long road or its alignment and design accompanied the HIA. The HIA refers to the recommendations of the 2013 Expert Group and states that these have been considered but does not detail how they have been met, particularly in relation to access roads, the design of the 0.5km Vistula bridge, the outcome of visual and acoustic impact studies, or the conclusions of traffic studies that necessitate a 0.6km bridge over the Sola river. The HIA concludes that most of the negative impacts arising from the project can be effectively mitigated by design solutions, while the major impact on the

protected area (the immediate setting of the property) arising from the elimination of parts of the relict landscape by the new road barrier will be 'masked' or 'integrated'. No detail, however, has been provided as to how exactly the project will be modified to address all of these impacts.

The State Party should be requested to submit details of the southern bypass route, together with modifications made following the mitigation measures recommended in the HIA, and await the review by the Advisory Bodies before taking any decisions or entering into any contractual agreements for the construction of the road that cannot be reversed.

The Terms of Reference of the postponed joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission that was requested by the World Heritage Committee in Decision **42 COM 7B.27**, include the development of an educational and social awareness-raising programme, the development of the management plan and its adoption by all stakeholders, the possible establishment of a buffer zone for the property to offer greater protection to its immediate setting, as requested by the Committee, and the south ring road of Oświęcim in relation to the recommendations of the 2013 Expert Group meeting.

It is recommended that the Committee requests the State Party to carry out the planned on-site World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission in conjunction with the expert meeting as soon as the sanitary circumstances allow in order to, amongst others, develop ways to enhance the dialogue initiated with the authorities and the local communities to explain the historical value of the cultural context surrounding the property, notably through mediation methods and appropriate educative material to enable the establishment of a buffer zone for the property, guaranteeing the appropriate use of the property and its surroundings.

It is recommended that the Committee reiterates its request to the State Party to focus on the preparation of a comprehensive management plan for the property and its surroundings, as recommended also by the 2013 expert group.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.52

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **33 COM 7B.115**, **40 COM 7B.55** and **42 COM 7B.27**, adopted respectively during its 33rd (Seville, 2009), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 42nd (Manama, 2018) sessions,*
3. *Congratulates the State Party for its efforts to conserve numerous remains of the wider setting of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp complex through the "Auschwitz Birkenau Nearby Memorial Sites" Foundation and the recently created Memorial Museum of the People of the Land of Oświęcim;*
4. *Notes the information provided by the State Party on progress with the planning and design of the south ring road of Oświęcim, including the requested Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), but regrets that the HIA was not accompanied by full design details and alignment of the proposed ring road, or by background visual and acoustic assessments, with the result that it currently remains unclear how the project respects the recommendations of the 2013 Expert Group;*
5. *Requests the State Party to:*
 - a) *Submit full details of the Oświęcim southern ring road project, including how it responds to the recommendations of the 2013 Expert Group and to the conclusions of the HIA, to allow a review of the project by the Advisory Bodies,*
 - b) *Keep the World Heritage Centre informed about the pending decision in regard to the issued appeals against the Regional Director of Environmental Protection concerning the environmental impacts,*

- c) *Await the reviews by the Advisory Bodies of the proposed south ring road project before taking any decisions or entering into any contractual agreements for the construction of the road that cannot be reversed;*
6. *Reiterates its request to the State Party to continue its efforts to complete the management plan and its adoption by all the stakeholders;*
7. *Welcomes that a preparatory online meeting on the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission took place in May 2021 and also requests the State Party to organize the planned on-site World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission and expert meeting as soon as the global health situation allows it;*
8. *Urges the State Party to continue implementing the recommendations of the 2013 expert group;*
9. *Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

56. Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape (Turkey) (C 1488)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2015

Criteria (iv)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Concern over the situation prevailing in Diyarbakır (issue resolved)
- Rehabilitation and reconstruction works and development
- Ground transport infrastructure (roads)
- Water infrastructure
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation
- Management system/Management and Conservation Plan modified
- Land Conversion

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/>

Current conservation issues

On 1 February 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, the executive summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1488/documents/>, which addresses the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee as follows:

- Work carried out at the Diyarbakir City Walls is considered to have had no negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property. It addressed vegetal growth, moisture and damage caused by environmental factors. Unlicensed buildings in the vicinity of the walls were demolished and graffiti cleaned;
- In the buffer zone (Surici District), urban design and rehabilitation projects became urgent after destruction following the terrorist incidents in 2015. Emphasis is given to maintaining the integrity and the traditional and historic fabric of the region. These projects are considered to have no negative impact on the OUV and have not been subject to Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs);
- The 2016 amendments, which take into consideration the general principles of the 2012 Conservation Plan, have been inserted to the 2012 Conservation Plan and submitted as an annex to the State Party's report. The amendments refer to a Conservation Implementary Development Plan covering the walled city urban archaeological site and the walls and Urban Design Project, and provide implementation provisions for urban design, the expansion of some roads and amendments to provide public security and facilities;
- Besides the HIA carried out for the Tigris River Rehabilitation Project, an HIA has been initiated for the Tigris Valley Eastern Surici Landscaping Project. The implementation of the Landscaping Project for Areas outside Diyarbakir City Walls has not yet started. Implementation of the urban renewal project in the Yenisehir District has not yet started;
- Rehabilitation works in the buffer zone (Surici District) consist of evacuating and demolishing highly damaged risky structures and the creation of new ones in line with the strategies defined in the Urban Design Guide for Sur and the Conservation Plan. Traditional examples of civil architecture from the Surici District are studied, documented and taken as references and models for the new constructions;
- The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission requested by Decision 41 COM 7B.50 (Krakow, 2017), was scheduled to take place in April 2020 but was postponed due to current health pandemic;
- In 2019, excavations to the Divanhane section of the Artukid Palace continued.

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

It is regrettable that no details of the urban rehabilitation projects at the Diyarbakir City Walls and the buffer zone of Surici District have been submitted by the State Party. It is also regrettable that the reconstruction works are continuing before the Reactive Monitoring mission has taken place, and against the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee. The World Heritage Centre has received third party information with photographs on the destruction of many buildings after the end of the 2015 incidents, which might suggest that irreversible change of the social and historic fabric of the area has already happened.

It is also a matter of concern that the inclusion of the 2016 amendments in the 2012 Conservation Plan was made before the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies had the opportunity to review them, and that the implementation of the revised 2012 Conservation Plan (henceforth referred to as the "2016 Conservation Plan") was not halted in accordance with the explicit request by the World Heritage Committee in its last decision (**43 COM 7B.90**). The amendments include provisions already executed that may have already harmed the OUV of the property, such as the provision for formalising the recently inserted ring road adjacent to the Diyarbakir City Walls. The 2016 Conservation Plan with all its annexes and supporting planning instruments should be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies before implementation. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to halt the implementation of the 2016 Conservation Plan and to revert to the 2012 Conservation Plan until the revised Conservation Plan with its Conservation Implementary Development Plan covering the walled city urban archeological site and the walls and Urban Design Project have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for review.

Besides the HIA carried out for the Tigris River Rehabilitation Project and the HIA initiated for the Tigris Valley Eastern Surici Landscaping Project, numerous other projects ongoing or under planning are continuing without the State Party indicating its intention of conducting or submitting HIAs. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to halt the reconstruction and rehabilitation or reprogramming projects in progress or in the process of planning in the property and its buffer zone that may have an impact on the property's OUV until the Reactive Monitoring mission has visited the property and its conclusions are known. The State Party should also be requested to submit the project documentation and the results of independent HIAs for all projects that are planned for review by the Advisory Bodies, including a section on the potential impacts of the projects on the OUV of the property, before the beginning of any works.

It is finally recommended that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission requested by the Committee, scheduled to take place in April 2020 but postponed due to current health pandemic, be replanned as soon as the sanitary situation allows.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.56

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.90**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Notes the work carried out by the State Party to rehabilitate and protect the property and its buffer zone;*
4. *Regrets that no details have been submitted on the urban rehabilitation projects for the property and its buffer zone;*
5. *Expresses concern that reconstruction work has started before the Reactive Monitoring mission has taken place and its conclusions known and before Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) were undertaken for all projects and submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;*
6. *Reiterates its request to the State Party that all projects that could affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property be halted until the recommendations of the Reactive Monitoring mission are known and adopted by the Committee;*
7. *Also reiterates its request to the State Party to halt the implementation of the 2016 Conservation Plan and to revert to the 2012 Conservation Plan until the revised Conservation Plan with its Conservation Implementary Development Plan covering the walled city urban archeological site and the walls and Urban Design Project have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for review;*
8. *Further reiterates its request to the State Party to carry out independent HIAs for urban design, landscape and infrastructural projects which may have an impact on the OUV of the property and its setting, in conformity with the ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage properties, each with a specific section focusing on the potential impact of the project on the OUV, before these projects are implemented;*
9. *Requests the State Party to inform the World Heritage Centre on the possible new dates for the requested joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate the overall state of conservation of the property as soon as the current sanitary situation allows for it;*

10. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

58. Historic Areas of Istanbul (Turkey) (C 356bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1985

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

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 16 (from 1986-2004)

Total amount approved: USD 452,208

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

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

Previous monitoring missions

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

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Commercial development
- Ground/underground transport infrastructure
- Low impact research/monitoring activities
- Management systems/management plan
- Loss of integrity and authenticity: decay and loss of Ottoman/vernacular architecture

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/>

Current conservation issues

I

On 6 December 2019, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents/>, which outlines progress made in relation to the requests of the Committee, and current projects, as follows:

- An urgent Action Plan was implemented for simple maintenance and repair of 10 privately owned Ottoman timber houses in Süleymaniye. A similar project is ongoing for 10 Ottoman timber houses located in Zeyrek and for civil architecture in Süleymaniye;
- Reconstruction projects have been undertaken for 20th century civil architecture buildings;

- Simple repairs were made to the facade of numerous buildings and there have been surveys of 654 civil architecture buildings within Fatih Municipality;
- Information is provided on completed and ongoing large-scale restoration projects at: Topkapi Palace, Hagia Sophia and Affiliated Units, Istanbul Archaeology Museum building, Basilica Cistern and Molla Gürani Mosque. Restoration works are in progress at several mosques, schools and burial sites;
- A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment report (CHIA) has been prepared for the Land Walls and the Fatih Municipality initiated a landscape design project to create a Land Walls National Garden;
- A joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission in 2019 assessed the conservation and restoration work at the Molla Zeyrek Mosque, the Chora Museum, the Bucoleon Palace, the Land Walls and the Hagia Sophia Madrasa and confirmed that all projects meet international standards. The Hagia Sophia Madrasa reconstruction was previously positively assessed through an ICOMOS Technical Review;
- Capacity building and public awareness activities were organized, including, for example:
 - a CHIA workshop for 100 participants, including representatives of central and local government, cultural heritage professionals, NGOs, private sector and academics;
 - Conservation and restoration training programs for Traditional Timber Structures, stone-making and wooden techniques, study tours, seminars and workshops were provided to graduate students and experts in architectural restoration;
 - A 'Booklet for the Management of Disaster Risks against Cultural Heritage' was published, following an earlier workshop in Istanbul and Ankara;
 - A 'Conservation and Restoration Training Program for Traditional Timber Structures' aimed at high school graduates;
- An Istanbul Cultural Heritage Council was created to revise conservation and management policies, set a visionary framework and expand participation;
- A CHIA for the Kazlıçeşme Marina Project was completed and will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre once translated;
- An Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), Feasibility Report and CHIA are in progress for the Yenikapi Cruise Port project;
- The 'Cultural Heritage Inventory Project' will create a digital database for Istanbul and will allow compilation, classification and transformation of the archives into a spatial databank, up-to-date, accessible and open for query.

II

From May 2020 onwards, the World Heritage Centre received various information emanating from media sources but also from States Parties raising concerns on a possible change by the State Party of Turkey of the museum status of Hagia Sophia, to turn the monument into an active religious building. On 9 and 18 June 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent letters to the State Party of Turkey, reminding it of the spirit of the *Convention*, as well as its *Operational Guidelines*, according to which States Parties are responsible for the sustainable use of a property, must provide prior notice to the World Heritage Centre in case of any substantial modification and must ensure that no change in use adversely affects the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property.

The change of status of Hagia Sophia and its conversion into a mosque were subsequently confirmed by a Turkish Court decision and a Presidential decree on 10 July 2020 that announced moreover transferring the management of the site to the Presidency of Religious Affairs. UNESCO issued a public statement on 10 July (see <https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-statement-hagia-sophia-istanbul>), stating that UNESCO deeply regrets the decision of the Turkish authorities, made without any prior discussion and called for the universal value of World Heritage to be preserved. ICOMOS and the International Council on Museums (ICOM) issued a joint statement on 16 July 2020 (see <https://www.icomos.org/en/178-english-categories/news/76133-icomos-and-icom-joint-statement-on-hagia-sophia-istanbul-turkey>), noting among other concerns about accessibility, the importance of shared heritage and emphasising the multi-layered cultural richness of Hagia Sophia.

The State Party of Turkey responded to UNESCO on 20 July 2020 advising that a Cooperation Protocol was signed between the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (formerly in charge of Hagia Sophia) and the Directorate General of Religious Affairs aiming at “ensuring the preservation, development and sustainability of the historical, cultural, social, and spiritual values that are represented by (the) World Heritage Site and to duly address the aesthetic concern”; also stating that “no work or physical interventions which can harm the Outstanding Universal Value of Hagia Sophia, both tangible and non-tangible, can be carried out” and that “the World Heritage Centre will be informed beforehand of any restoration or infra-structure relating to the Grand Mosque”.

The Director General of UNESCO received a letter dated 24 July 2020 from the Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey informing UNESCO of “Turkey’s steps concerning the change of Hagia Sophia status into mosque”. The Minister’s letter underlined that “the conservation and protection of the Hagia Sophia as an architectural masterpiece is under the full responsibility of the State” which “is to fulfill (this) responsibility through the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Article 2 of the Organisational Law of the Ministry entrusts it with the duty to protect our cultural heritage”. It further stated that the “UNESCO World Heritage Centre will be informed before the major restoration works that may affect the Hagia Sophia and its setting within Sultanahmet Archaeological Park and a cultural heritage impact assessment report will be prepared”. However, in the covering letter received from the Delegation of Turkey, it was advised that a number of changes had already been implemented, namely:

- *Visitors routes are determined. The property will be open for both worshippers and visitors;*
- *Worship and visiting areas are separated;*
- *Only during the prayer times, the apse mosaics on the mihrab in the worship area, the Imperial Gate Mosaic and the southwestern entrance mosaic (the vestibule mosaic) will be closed with a folding curtain system, the remaining mosaics and frescos will be kept as they are;*
- *Felt is laid over the ground of the worship area and it is covered with a carpet;*
- *The imperial coronation area within the main area (naos) is separated with esthetic barriers;*
- *Works will be carried out in order to make the First Mahmut Fountain usable within the courtyard.*

In late August 2020, the World Heritage Centre received information from media sources stating that the museum status of the Chora Museum, within the property, has been revoked by a Presidential decree to turn the monument into an active religious building. The World Heritage Centre sent to the State Party of Turkey a letter recalling its obligations as regards paragraphs 119 and 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

In addition to the potential impact on the OUV of the property, linked to issues such as access and to physical interventions, the decision to change the status of these two components raised multiple questions, relating to the potential impact of this very change of status, on the OUV. Indeed, the justification for inscription of the property “Historic Areas of Istanbul”, underlined that it was built “at the crossroads of two continents” and one of the criteria under which the property was inscribed, criterion iii, refers to the “testimony to the Byzantine and Ottoman civilisations.” The immense symbolic importance, in particular of Hagia Sophia in this regard, is to be underlined. The absence of notification to the World Heritage Centre and to other stakeholders fails to fulfil the obligations of the State Party in relation with the *World Heritage Convention* and the *Operational Guidelines*. The consequences of the change of status are to be assessed in this context.

Further to the decisions of Turkey in July and August 2020 to turn Hagia Sophia and Chora into mosques, despite the fact that they were museums at the time of the inscription as integral components of the World Heritage property, the State Party of Turkey invited a UNESCO Advisory mission to the property (5 - 9 October 2020). The mission collected information relevant to the decision to change the status of the Hagia Sophia and Chora, and assessed any works done to both the interior and exterior of these components.

In reaction to numerous inaccurate statements and errors circulating in the press regarding the situation of Hagia Sophia and Chora, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre issued a public statement on 16 November 2020 (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2197>), recalling the July 2020 UNESCO

statement and confirming that the results of the mission will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee at its next session.

Following the recommendations of the 2020 UNESCO Advisory mission, and on the invitation by the State Party of Turkey, a second UNESCO Advisory mission was carried out to the property (29 January – 3 February 2021) to complete the assessment conducted during the first mission. The mission looked in detail at the issues of access and physical interventions in Hagia Sophia and Chora, and their potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, authenticity and integrity, through site visits and working meetings with key stakeholders.

The findings of both missions are available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356/documents/>.

In late May 2021, the World Heritage Centre received third-party information regarding the addition of major light installations between the minarets of the Hagia Sophia. The World Heritage Centre shared this information with the State Party of Turkey in line with paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

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

I

The State Party has continued its efforts to streamline reporting on significant projects including through the 2019 joint Advisory mission. However, although project documentation has been submitted, this has typically occurred after decisions have been made to proceed and/or works have commenced, contrary to both the spirit and some specific requirements of the *World Heritage Convention* and the *Operational Guidelines*. In particular, prior notifications of major restorations or new constructions which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property have not been submitted in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*. For a number of projects, no CHIA has been prepared. The CHIA process has been included in the revised draft Management Plan for the property, and the State Party advises that it is constantly drawing the need for CHIA to the attention of relevant authorities. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism organized a CHIA workshop, in conjunction with the 2019 mission, aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the process and encouraging better implementation of CHIA procedures.

The revised draft Management Plan for the property should be reviewed in order to protect the attributes that convey the OUV of the property. This is an overdue matter of high priority, as these attributes underpin the policies and actions of the Management Plan and understanding them will help inform assessment of the heritage impact of recent and proposed changes at the property. There is reported progress on this item since Decision **42 COM 7B.31** (Manama, 2018), with the State Party currently working on the completion of the Plan through a focus group meeting and committing to submit the complete draft Management Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review.

The maintenance and repair of Ottoman timber and stone houses, reconstruction projects for 20th century civil architecture buildings, surveys and the repairs to building facades are all welcome. However, the State Party has not advised on how the Ottoman houses project relates to the long-term strategy for timber buildings requested by the Committee in Decision **42 COM 7B.31**.

Many proposed restoration and reconstruction projects are currently taking place or being planned. However, the Committee's request that a strategic roadmap with a short- and long-term strategy covering all types of projects that may impact upon the OUV of the property has not been implemented. The Committee should reiterate its request that such a document be prepared in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

Large-scale projects such as the Kazlıçeşme Marina and the Yenikapi Cruise Port, will undoubtedly have a major effect on the city's cruise tourism. The report mentions that in both cases, CHIAs are in progress and will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre. In addition to the CHIAs, the State Party should also submit an EIA, which addresses the consequences of additional tourism, to the World Heritage Centre before any irreversible decisions are taken.

The creation of the Istanbul Cultural Heritage Council in November 2019, which will reinforce participative levels among the different stakeholders and determine a future-looking plan for the city is welcome. The creation of a Cultural Heritage Inventory Project aiming at creating a digital database for Istanbul is also welcome, as it will enhance monitoring of state of conservation of the property.

II

The change of status of Hagia Sophia and Chora museums to turn both heritage buildings into active religious sites has been decided and implemented without prior notice to the World Heritage Centre, despite explicit and repetitive requests made in reference to Paragraphs 172 and 174 of the *Operational Guidelines* in the past years as well as during the weeks before the Presidential decree of 10 July 2020.

Widely publicized in the press, the revocation of their museum status, originally granted respectively in 1934 and 1945, has raised major international protests and concerns, especially regarding public access to both components of the property. Having regard to the obligations that arise under Article 5 of the *World Heritage Convention*, and the OUV of the property, it is important that provision should be made for ongoing access to and presentation of the multi-layered cultural richness of Hagia Sophia and Chora museums.

The invitation by the State Party for the 2020 and 2021 UNESCO Advisory missions to the property is welcomed. The missions' findings and recommendations on the issues of access and physical interventions to date can be summarized as follows:

Access to the Hagia Sophia remains open to all visitors. The antique marble paving inside the prayer hall of Hagia Sophia is covered with a green/turquoise wool carpet. The mission recommended to analyse the degree of humidity created by the carpet and to consider enrolling rugs of more appropriate colours at prayer times. During prayers, mosaic panels on the ground floor level are covered by canvasses operated through electrical systems which do not touch the surface of the mosaics. Through this system, the mosaics are made visible for visitors outside of prayer times.

There is no new construction of lavatories in the southern part of the Hagia Sophia, as they are being installed in a former office building. The renovation works of the Hagia Sophia Madrasa are in its final phase. For the fitting out of the lavatories and the conclusion of the Madrasa works, the mission recommended to have a landscaping and circulation plan drawn up between these two buildings and the entrance to the Hagia Sophia, and to establish an "Archaeological Garden" regrouping the archaeological pieces scattered in the southern area of Hagia Sophia. A "Master Plan" for the entire Hagia Sophia area would be beneficial for a long-term vision of this area.

The site of Saint Sauveur in Chora (Kerya) will undergo a two-year large-scale conservation and enhancement project during which it will not be open for visitors. Consequently, the implementation of the decision to convert it into a mosque has been delayed. The mission recommended to take advantage of these two years to organise an International Seminar on "the conservation of mosaics and frescoes". Inside the Chora, arrangements to intermittently cover three mosaic panels during prayer times have already been completed. The coverings are electronically controlled and made in colours that do not contrast with the aesthetic of the naos. The mission recommended the authorities to also consider drafting a "Master Plan" for the Chora area.

Considering the outstanding symbolic significance of Hagia Sophia in particular, the Committee may wish to call on the State Party to take the recommendations from the missions into account, to inform the UNESCO World Heritage Centre of any proposed plans for major restoration or new construction projects that may affect the OUV of the property, and to pursue international cooperation and dialogue before any further major changes are implemented at the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.58

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.31**, adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),

I

3. Thanks the State Party for inviting a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission in April 2019; commends the State Party for the conservation and restoration work accomplished to international standards at a number of built structures within the

property; and requests the State Party to implement fully all of the 2019 Advisory mission recommendations;

4. Welcomes the implementation of an urgent Action Plan to maintain and repair ottoman timber houses and reiterates its request to the State Party to provide information on how this relates to a long-term strategy for timber buildings within the property;
5. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to define the attributes that convey the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property in the draft Management Plan as a matter of priority before it is completed; and also requests that the draft Management Plan is submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before being formally adopted;
6. Noting the large number of proposed infrastructure and other projects at the property, further reiterates its request to the State Party to develop a progress report on these projects, together with a road-map including short and long-term strategies covering all types of project (development/renovation/renewal), which may have an impact on the OUV of the property, in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, before any irreversible decisions are taken, and submit this road map to the World Heritage Centre by **1 December 2021**;
7. Further requests the State Party to undertake Heritage Impact Assessments, as well as Tourism and Environmental Impact Assessments for large-scale projects including the Kazlıçeşme Marina and the Yenikapı Cruise Port that may have a negative impact on the OUV of the property; and submit such reports to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are taken;

II

8. Welcomes the State Party's invitation for two UNESCO Advisory missions in October 2020 and January/February 2021 to review the impacts of change of status of Hagia Sophia and Chora Museum on the OUV of the property;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party to implement fully all of the missions recommendations;
10. Deeply regrets the lack of dialogue and information from the State Party prior to the change of status of Hagia Sophia and Chora Museums, two components of the property, despite numerous requests addressed to the State Party to comply with paragraphs 172 and 174 of the Operational Guidelines;
11. Expresses grave concern about the potential impact of changes at these key components may have on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property;
12. Calls on the State Party of Turkey to engage in international cooperation and dialogue before any further major change are implemented at the property;
13. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

61. Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (C 373bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1986

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/373/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/373/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

2003 and 2006: World Heritage Centre missions; 2015, 2017, 2018: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory missions

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Need for information on the management (issue resolved)
- Site Museum project (issue resolved)
- Risks of collapse of Silbury Hill (issue resolved)
- Lack of visitor management (issue resolved)
- Upgrading of the A303 trunk road project
- Infrastructure development pressure
- Proposals for sections of dual carriageway and tunnel portals within the property

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/373/>

Current conservation issues

On 4 February 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/373/documents>. Subsequently, updated information was provided by the State Party in relation to the decision-making process of the A303 scheme. The report focuses on the Development Consent Order (DCO) planning process for the proposed A303 road improvement scheme, at Stonehenge, which includes:

- a 3.3 km long tunnel, with cut-and-cover canopy at eastern and western portals;
- a c. 150m-wide 'green bridge' south of the Winterbourne Stoke Barrow Group;
- a deep cutting, approximately 1km, with vertical retaining walls containing the dual carriageway western approach roads; and
- a new flyover junction of the A303 with the A360, 600 metres west of the existing Longbarrow roundabout and the Winterbourne Stoke Barrow Group (on the western boundary of the property).

In response to Decision **42 COM 7B.32**, consideration was given to extending the bored tunnel and to greater covering of the cutting, but it was determined that the additional benefits would not justify the costs. The decision was instrumental in securing additional mitigation measures, including the c. 150m 'green bridge'. A detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy has been finalized to guide archaeological mitigation associated with the design and construction of the proposed road improvement.

Public Planning Hearings took place between April and October 2019. 16 hearings were conducted; two specifically directed at cultural heritage and with most of the rest also considering aspects of heritage. Decision **43 COM 7B.95** was relayed to all key parties to the hearings. The additional small-scale

detailed design and mitigation measures aimed at reducing harm to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), were also presented to the hearings.

The Planning Inspectorate reported their Recommendations to the Secretary of State for Transport on 2 January 2020. The decision-making deadline for the A303 improvement scheme was initially postponed from early April to 17 July 2020, then to 13 November 2020, in order to consult further on recent archaeological finds. The Secretary of State approved the Development Consent Order (DCO) in November 2020. Subsequently, a request for judicial review of the DCO decision was lodged with the High Court, which will likely be considered in June 2021.

The State Party has offered to discuss an appropriate measure of ongoing engagement with the Committee, the World Heritage Centre, and ICOMOS. Legally binding safeguards are proposed to ensure that heritage advice and considerations will contribute to construction, operations and maintenance.

Details are also provided on other initiatives and projects, including a forthcoming property setting study and related boundary review, and plans for implementing the 2015 Transport Strategy at the Avebury component of the property.

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

Progress with new management and governance arrangements, implementation of an improved Transport Strategy for Avebury, introduction of Traffic Regulation Order and the proposed study of the property's setting are welcome. The setting study should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for Technical Review by ICOMOS (noting the potential for ensuing changes to the boundary of the property).

Although consideration was given to extending the length of the bored tunnel across the property proposed as part of the A303 dual carriageway road upgrade, and to greater covering of the approach road cutting, as recommended by the Committee, the State Party determined that the additional landscape benefits would not justify the additional costs. Although small-scale design refinements that seek to reduce impact on the OUV have been made, such as a c. 150m 'green bridge' to the west of the proposed tunnel, the overall position with the proposed A303 improvement scheme has not changed substantively while the State Party has pursued the applicable national statutory planning process. The proposed tunnel still only extends across part of the property, with around 1km of the proposed new dual carriageway being exposed in a wide cutting within the open landscape.

The proposed tunnel length remains inadequate to protect the OUV of the property. As both the 2018 World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission and, subsequently, the Committee have advised, a longer tunnel section, which removes or substantially reduces the proposed open dual carriageway approach to the tunnel within the property, and is required in order to avoid highly adverse and irreversible impact on OUV, particularly on the integrity of the property. It is regretted that for such an iconic World Heritage property, the argument persists that the perceived benefits of a longer tunnel do not outweigh the costs. Additionally, the approach to propose mitigation measures for the adverse impacts of the planned A303 scheme could not be considered an appropriate solution. Notwithstanding the approval of the DCO, the scheme should be modified to deliver the best available outcome for the OUV of the property.

The Committee has previously been advised that the State Party's own Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) highlights that the current proposal would adversely affect the setting of, and relationships between, monuments and the landscape including, amongst others, the Winterbourne Stoke Crossroads Barrows, the Diamond Group and the Normanton Down Barrows. The HIA also acknowledges that the scheme would impact on the integrity of the intended spatial relationships between monuments, a key part of the prehistoric 'landscape without parallel' as inscribed.

While it is noted that the State Party is committed to engage further, if the permission which has been granted were to be upheld by the High Court, it is unclear what might be achieved by further engagement, as it would not be possible to compensate for the unacceptable adverse impacts of the present scheme, which the State Party itself has identified, and which are borne out by the findings of the 2018 mission.

The approved A303 improvement scheme threatens the integrity of the property within the meaning of Paragraph 179(b) of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is therefore, recommended that the Committee consider the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger in the event that DCO consent was confirmed by the High Court. Such a decision would exacerbate this threat.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.61

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **42 COM 7B.32** and **43 COM 7B.95**, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,
3. Notes the progress made with the new management and governance arrangements, and implementation of the 2015 Transport Strategy, as well as the initiative to introduce Traffic Regulation Order on roads where traffic has an adverse impact on attributes of the property, and urges the State Party to continue finding solutions to address these negative impacts;
4. Also notes the forthcoming setting study and related boundary review of the property and requests the State Party to submit the draft setting study to the World Heritage Centre for review by ICOMOS;
5. Further notes the small-scale design refinements, which have been made to the A303 improvement scheme within the property;
6. Recalls that the Committee has previously noted that the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission and the State Party's own Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) highlight that the current overall proposal would impact the integrity of the intended spatial relationships between monuments, a key part of the prehistoric 'landscape without parallel' as inscribed;
7. Reiterates its concern that, as previously advised by the Committee and identified in the 2018 mission report, the part of the A303 improvement scheme within the property retains substantial exposed dual carriageway sections, particularly those at the western end of the property, which would impact adversely the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, especially affecting its integrity;
8. Notes with concern that, although consideration was given to extending the bored tunnel and to greater covering of the cutting, as requested by the Committee, it was determined by the State Party that the additional benefits of a longer tunnel would not justify the additional costs;
9. Reiterates its previous request that the State Party should not proceed with the A303 route upgrade for the section between Amesbury and Berwick Down in its current form, and considers that the scheme should be modified to deliver the best available outcome for the OUV of the property;
10. Notes furthermore the State Party's commitment to ongoing engagement with the Committee, the World Heritage Centre, and ICOMOS, but also considers that it is unclear what might be achieved by further engagement unless and until the design is fundamentally amended;
11. Regrets that the Development Consent Order (DCO) has been granted for the scheme; and therefore, further considers in conformity with Paragraph 179 of the Operational Guidelines that the approved A303 improvement scheme is a potential threat to the property, which - if implemented - could have deleterious effects on its inherent characteristics, notably to its integrity;

12. *Notes moreover that in the event that DCO consent was confirmed by the High Court, the property warrants the inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger;*
13. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022, **with a view to considering the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger if the A303 route upgrade scheme is not modified to deliver the best available outcome for the OUV of the property.***

MIXED PROPERTIES

ARAB STATES

73. The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq) (C/N 1481)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2016

Criteria (iii)(v)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

2017: Heritage Emergency Fund – support to Iraqi World Heritage properties: USD 100,000

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Legal Framework
- Need to conduct further studies regarding minimum water flows, to confirm the biodiversity within the property and its surrounding landscapes
- Incomplete designation of all the components of the property as legally protected areas
- Need to regulate oil and gas concessions, and other potentially impacting activities in the buffer zones of the property
- Highly unstable conservation conditions of the archaeological sites
- Need for a detailed master plan/road map that ensures the conservation of the property on a sustainable basis
- Need for an effective implementation of the consolidated management plan

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2020 the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, and on 31 January 2021 an updated report, in addition to a report on the cultural components of the property submitted on 28 January 2021. The reports are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1481/documents/>, providing the following information:

- Some surveys were carried out at Tell Eridu and some conservation and maintenance work was carried out at Ur. However, further archaeological work was impeded in 2019 by instability and in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic: this includes maintenance, survey work, and conservation planning. In response to the urgent conditions of the stone building at Uruk, it was re-buried until conservation can take place again;
- From November 2018 to May 2019, an inflow of 12.3 billion cubic metres (BCM) of water from heavy rains and flooding of the Tigris River and eastern borders exceeded the 5.8 BCM minimum requirement by 112%. Positive environmental outcomes include increased vegetation cover by

331%, recovery of biodiversity, such as the reappearance of water flora not recorded in 15 years, and increased fish stocks. In 2020, inflow was 4.8 BCM, and water quality monitoring and improvement works were undertaken;

- Dialogue with the States Parties of Turkey and Islamic Republic of Iran is ongoing including meetings of the Iraqi-Turkish Joint Economic Committee to secure water levels required for the sustainability of the marshes; a draft legal agreement was presented by the Iraqi Minister for Water Resources on required water resources to the State Party of Turkey; and discussions to establish an Iraqi-Turkish Joint Water Research Centre in Iraq and activate a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012 on common water management issues are underway;
- Concerns regarding negative impacts of the construction of the 'Al Jazeera' dam in Turkey on the quality and quantity of Iraq's water shares within the Tigris River were expressed to the State Party of Turkey. Operation of the Ilisu Dam on the Tigris River in Turkey is planned without causing harm to Iraq, with a fixed share agreement for the discharges released from the dam;
- The World Heritage designation provides legal protection for natural components as protected areas within the national framework. A process is underway to modify the Wildlife Protection Law to widen protection for the property. In 2020, a draft law has been submitted that provides protection for the natural components;
- Oil activities were limited and exploration in the vicinity of the property discontinued due to inundation of the Ahwar swamps. Oil companies are required to adhere to environmental impact studies in line with environmental regulations and international standards. In 2020, the Higher Committee for the Implementation of the Management Plan for the Ahwar of Southern Iraq as a World Heritage Property (Higher Committee), took a decision obligating oil companies not to undertake any development or investment in oil industries without coordination with the Higher Committee, not to carry out oil exploration activities within the boundaries of the property, and that any oil activities outside the property should not cause harm to the property;
- Measures to address illegal activities include reducing overfishing through the preparation of a law, monitoring fishing activities and raising awareness of biodiversity impacts, convicting traffickers, and compliance and enforcement measures by environmental police and rapid response forces;
- The preparation of an updated Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the entire property and updated Management Plans for each component remains underway, but hindered by prevailing conditions in Iraq. In 2020, updated topographical surveys of several natural components were completed;
- The Higher Committee is working with ministries and authorities to address tourism activities. Tourism projects were established within the natural components, a visitor centre will be established, and a comprehensive tourism management plan was planned for 2020. Thirteen projects are proposed inside the property including villages, waste water, tourism, handicrafts and legal revisions. No measures were undertaken in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Local communities continue to be engaged through the Water Users Association and sub-committees;
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions imposed on movement, and lack of monitoring, littering became in excess in two areas; this was since addressed by authorities.

The State Party invited a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, however it has not been possible for the mission to be undertaken due to security, logistical issues, and travel restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 7 May 2021, the World Heritage Centre transmitted a letter to the State Party regarding third-party information received in 2020 and 2021 concerning: dam projects that are planned or already under construction, including Makhool Dam, which could further exacerbate water scarcity; concerns regarding oil development in the vicinity of the Hawiza Marsh; and the reported pollution of the marshes by sewerage pipe discharge.

On 12 May 2021, the World Heritage Centre received two notes from Turkey. The first note provides information and clarification regarding the cooperation between Turkey and Iraq on water issues, and efforts undertaken to improve transboundary water management during 2018-2020. This includes a proposal for a Turkey-Iraq Action Plan for Cooperation in the Field of Water, which covers joint water

projects, including the establishment of the aforementioned Joint Water Research Centre in Iraq. The second note on the Mesopotamian Marshlands provides an overview of the alterations of Mesopotamian Marshlands over time as a result of human induced changes in the Euphrates and Tigris basin and drainage activities, and documents the complexity of the problem of sustaining the marshes which have been transformed into a semi-constructed wetland and lost their natural structure. The note stresses the need for a scientific approach to ensure the protection of fragmented marshlands.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

It is regrettable that prevailing security conditions and the COVID-19 pandemic have limited progress in several key activities related to the management of the property.

The Committee was already concerned at the time of inscription over the need to conserve the vulnerable archaeological remains, and the situation has been exacerbated by the recent halt of conservation and maintenance due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the three cultural components, there is an urgent need to complete site surveys and develop conservation plans, while resuming maintenance as soon as possible. Priority must be given to urgent conservation work, before further excavations are undertaken and tourism is encouraged.

Following drought in 2017-2018, it is positive that in 2019 flooding and rainfall events led to the minimum water flow requirements for the natural components being exceeded, with positive environmental outcomes. However, it is concerning that minimum flow requirements were again not met in 2020. The State Party of Iraq's concerns regarding negative impacts of the construction of the 'Al Jazeera' dam in Turkey on the quality and quantity of Iraq's water shares within the Tigris river are noted, as are third party reports indicating that several dam projects are being planned or are already under construction in Iraq and neighbouring countries which could further exacerbate water scarcity. The information provided by the State Party of Turkey, which clearly demonstrates the complexity of the conservation of the remnant marshes in the context of the different water abstractions in the Tigris and Euphrates basin, is also acknowledged. It is important to stress that the water shortages are likely to be exacerbated in the future as a result of climate change. It is recommended that the State Party be requested to provide information on all dam developments upstream of the property, specifically an assessment of the potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and that no project is undertaken that could negatively impact the OUV. Recalling the 2016 IUCN Evaluation mission conclusion that significant fluctuations in water flows pose a major threat to the property in the longer term, and Decision **42 COM 7B.66**, that the non-fulfilment of minimum water requirements could represent a potential danger to the OUV, it remains crucial that the State Party of Iraq secures effective management measures to ensure the adequate and long-term water supply to the property. It is clear that the long term conservation of the marshes can only be achieved through greater transboundary cooperation for water management which is informed by science and identifies how to achieve the minimum water requirements for the property, while ensuring an adequate and equitable water availability to address the needs of the people living in the basin. It is recommended that the Committee urge the States Parties of Iraq, of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Turkey to strengthen and expedite their cooperation towards long-term sustainable water management measures that are informed by science and can guarantee the minimum flow needed to preserve the OUV of the property. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN are available to assist with this process. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN also consider that a basin-wide Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) would enable a comprehensive assessment of cumulative and future impact on flows to the Ahwar.

The development of a draft law that provides protection for the natural components of the property is a positive development. Since components continue to lack formal legal protection, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to complete the designation of all natural components of the property as protected areas. Whilst the confirmation of measures to address illegal activities and a reported reduction in overfishing are appreciated, the extent to which these are impacting the OUV of the property remains unclear since no precise data have been provided. The reported actions to address littering and awareness raising are welcome.

The completion of the IMP for the entire property, which should incorporate a regular monitoring programme of values and attributes, as well as threats and how these impact OUV, remains a high priority. This should over-arch updated management plans for individual components and the proposed tourism plan. A draft of the IMP should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

While the planned initiation of a comprehensive tourism plan for the property is welcomed, it is reiterated that the plan should cover both cultural and natural components, regulate visitation, ensure visitor safety, and cover sustainable tourism practices and infrastructure. Noting the establishment of several tourism projects, it is recommended that the tourism plan is finalised as a matter of priority to ensure a strategic approach to infrastructure development within the property, including tourism accommodation. Specifically regarding the proposal for a 2.5 ha-hotel and ecotourism complex within the marshes including an amusement park, sporting fields and other infrastructure for a capacity of 300 people, it is important that an impact assessment is completed to assess the potential impacts of the proposed project on the OUV of the property in line with the IUCN *Advice Note on Environmental Assessments* and the ICOMOS *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, before any decision is taken to proceed. A draft of the tourism plan should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, as well as any new construction proposals before these are implemented.

Recalling significant concerns regarding the continued vulnerability of the property to oil and gas developments, the confirmation in 2020 that oil companies are obligated to not carry out oil exploration activities within the boundaries of the property and to ensure that any activities outside the property do not harm the property, is positive. This commitment should be permanent and extended to all extractive activities including gas. Noting that the potential for exploration activities in the vicinity of the property remains, and third party concerns regarding the pollution of rivers feeding into the Hawiza Marsh, it is important that any potential impact of such activities on the OUV are appropriately assessed in line with the IUCN *Advice Note* and the ICOMOS *Guidance* prior to any approvals being issued, and that any activities that negatively impact the OUV are avoided.

The engagement of local communities should be further strengthened to ensure meaningful engagement in a range of site management areas, including water usage and rights-based approaches to protecting the OUV of the property.

The joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property should be undertaken as soon as conditions allow.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.73

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **42 COM 7B.66** and **43 COM 7B.35**, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,
3. Reiterates its concern over the continued high vulnerability of the three cultural component sites and the need for their conservation to prevent further irreversible erosion and collapse, and urges the State Party to resume maintenance work as soon as possible, give priority to completing site surveys, and develop conservation plans for each component as a basis for urgent conservation work, before further excavations are undertaken and before tourism is encouraged;
4. Acknowledges that the 5.8 billion cubic metres (BCM) minimum flow level required for the natural components of the property was met in 2019 due to abundant flooding and rainfall, however notes with concern that flooding and rainfall events remain highly variable and the minimum level was again not met in 2020, and recalls that significant fluctuations in water flows may pose a major threat to the property and non-fulfilment of minimum water requirements could represent a potential danger to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;

5. Requests the State Party to urgently implement management measures that demonstrate adequate flows to the property are ensured in the short and long-term as a matter of utmost priority;
6. Also requests the States Parties of Iraq, of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Turkey to strengthen and expedite their cooperation towards long-term sustainable transboundary water management measures, which are informed by science and can guarantee the provision of the minimum water supply required to sustain the OUV of the property, and encourages the States Parties to prepare a basin-wide Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessments, to assess cumulative and future impact on flows to the property;
7. Noting with concern that different dam projects are planned or underway in Iraq, as well as in Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which could further exacerbate water scarcity and therefore negatively impact on the OUV of the property, further requests the States Parties of Iraq, of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of Turkey to:
 - a) Provide full information on all existing and planned dam developments upstream of the property, including a clear and complete assessment of the potential for these developments to create impacts on the OUV of the property, both individually or cumulatively,
 - b) Ensure that any potential developments that may impact the OUV of the property are fully assessed in line with the IUCN Advice Note on Environmental Assessments and the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessment, and to submit the assessments to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, before any decision is taken to proceed further with planning or implementation,
 - c) Not proceed with developments that would impact negatively on the OUV of the property;
8. Reiterates its request to the State Party to complete the designation of all of the natural components of the property as protected areas, in order to provide effective protection under national legislative and management systems, as required in the Operational Guidelines;
9. Requests furthermore the State Party, as part of an integrated management approach, to further strengthen its monitoring, legal protection, enforcement and management capacity to control illegal activities such as bird hunting and overfishing, and to submit to the World Heritage Centre data on these activities;
10. Also reiterates its request to the State Party to finalise the preparation of an updated Integrated Management Plan for the entire property, as a matter of priority, together with the development of updated Management Plans for each of the component sites of the property, and to submit drafts of these to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
11. Acknowledging the planned development of a comprehensive tourism management plan in 2020, further reiterates its request to the State Party to develop and implement an overall tourism plan for the whole property to regulate visitation, and to ensure visitor safety and sustainable tourism practices, infrastructure and facilities, and noting the development of tourism projects, including a proposed hotel and ecotourism complex within the marshes, requests moreover the State Party to assess the potential impacts of any infrastructure development on the OUV of the property through Environmental Impact Assessment processes in line with IUCN and ICOMOS guidance, prior to taking

any decision to proceed, and to submit plans to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any irreversible decisions are taken;

12. Recalling its significant concern over the continued vulnerability of the natural components of the property to oil and gas developments and its established position that oil and gas exploration and exploitation are incompatible with World Heritage status, notes with appreciation the confirmation by the Higher Committee in 2020 that oil companies are required to not carry out oil exploration activities within the boundaries of the property, and that any oil activities outside the property should not cause harm to the property; strongly urges again the State Party to make a permanent commitment to not explore or exploit oil and gas within the property, and to ensure that any such activities outside the property do not cause a negative impact on its OUV, and requests moreover the State Party to clarify the status of any oil and gas developments within or in the vicinity of the property, including the assessment of potential impacts on the OUV of the property in line with the IUCN and ICOMOS guidance;
13. Requests moreover the State Party to continue to meaningfully engage with the local communities on a range of management issues, including matters concerning hunting and fishing, water usage, rights-based approaches to management and for the application of traditional ecological knowledge to any planned new constructions;
14. Regrets that the joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property could not yet be undertaken as a result of the prevailing security and global health situation, and reiterates furthermore its request that the mission takes place as soon as possible;
15. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

ASIA-PACIFIC

75. Tasmanian Wilderness (Australia) (C/N 181quinquies)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1982

Criteria (iii)(iv)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/181/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/181/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2008: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; November

2015: joint IUCN/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Forestry / Wood production (Commercial logging in areas adjacent to the property; plans to permit commercial logging in the property) (issue resolved)
- Impacts of tourism / visitation / recreation
- Management systems / management plan
- Mining (Mineral exploration and extraction)
- Water infrastructure (potential construction of a dam) (issue resolved)
- Other (Biosecurity)

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/181/>

Current conservation issues

On 22 November 2019, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, followed by an update on 1 February 2021, both of which are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/181/documents/>. The State Party also submitted updates on the impacts of 2019-2020 fires on 22 January 2020 and on the proclamation of Future Potential Production Forest Land (FPPFL) and Permanent Timber Production Zone Land (PTPZL) as reserves on 12 February 2021. These reports provide the following information:

- Most of the recommendations of the 2015 joint ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission and other subsequent decisions by the Committee have been or are being implemented;
- Public consultation on the proclamation of FPPFL and PTPZL within the property as reserved land commenced in February 2021;
- Fires affected the property in 2016 and 2018–2019, the latter event affecting approximately 6% of the property. Most fires occurred in the fire-adapted vegetation communities, but some areas of extreme and very high fire sensitivity vegetation were also affected, and recovery could take decades. The loss of approximately half of a relictual population of pencil pines at Crooked Lake and losses of some peat mounds are reported. A number of fire-related projects have been initiated, and it is foreseen to prepare a comprehensive Fire Management Plan for the property. There was no significant loss of fire-sensitive vegetation during the 2019-2020 fire season;

- A 'Cultural Values Assessment of the 2013 Extension Area to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area' has been completed and has identified and recorded 132 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites;
- Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania initiated the management and implementation of various projects within the framework of the Detailed Plan for a Comprehensive Cultural Assessment of the property. Progress reported includes the finalisation of the Guide on the Interpretation and Presentation of the Aboriginal Cultural Values of the property, the addition of cultural heritage specialists to the property staff, and the delivery of a cultural awareness training programme to the property staff;
- The engagement with Tasmanian Aboriginal people has improved and resulted in a better understanding and protection of their cultural heritage within the property;
- A dual name for the property to reflect its Aboriginal heritage will be identified in consultation with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community;
- A Tourism Master Plan for the property is undergoing final approval by the Tasmanian Government following public consultation. During this process, the Technical Reviews of the draft by ICOMOS, IUCN and the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme were taken into account. The Tourism Master Plan will consider current and future visitor expectations and demand and will provide additional guidance and policy direction for tourism in the property;
- The critically endangered orange-bellied parrot is reported to have had a very successful breeding season in 2020.

On 20 April 2021, the Advisory Bodies' latest comments on the draft retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (rSOUV) were transmitted to the State Party for further review and confirmation.

On 3 June 2021, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Tourism Master Plan was released on 1 June and can be accessed at the following link: [https://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/conservation/tasmanian-wilderness-world-heritage-area-\(twwha\)/twwha-tourism-master-plan](https://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/conservation/tasmanian-wilderness-world-heritage-area-(twwha)/twwha-tourism-master-plan).

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

Progress in implementing the recommendations of the 2015 joint ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission and other decisions by the World Heritage Committee should be welcomed, including progress with the initiated public consultation on the proclamation of FPPFL and PTPZL as reserved land. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to complete this process as a matter of priority.

The completion of the 'Cultural Values Assessment of the 2013 Extension Area to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area' is an important achievement and has added 132 registered Aboriginal cultural heritage sites, thereby more than doubling the previous number of registered sites. Requested by the Committee when the extension of the property was approved, this assessment completes the cultural documentation of the extension area and allows for the draft rSOUV to be completed.

While noting the submission of the draft Tourism Master Plan for the property, a number of concerns should be raised, including the scope of the document, taking into consideration the current situation with international travel; the lack of clarity in practical and legal terms of its relation with the 2016 Management Plan for the property; the lack of more specific guidance on how exactly the wilderness values of the property should be considered in decision-making processes related to tourism management; and how the preparation of the Plan considered the parallel Expression of Interest process for tourism development projects, and how this process may be affected by the Plan, once finalized. Furthermore, the Plan reflects an imbalance by mainly focusing on the Aboriginal community and leaving out other cultural heritage elements. While it is noted that the comments provided by the Advisory Bodies had been considered by the State Party, it will need to be ensured that these concerns have been fully addressed in the revised version. It should also be emphasized that all proposed tourism developments within the property, regardless of their nature and spatial extent, should be subject to adequate impact assessments prior to being permitted. This is of particular importance since currently not all cultural heritage values of the property (e.g. Aboriginal cultural landscape values) are identified. The Committee may wish to take note of the finalization and release of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area

Tourism Master Plan on 1 June 2021 and request the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to review this Plan in light of their earlier comments.

In accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the State Party should also be reminded to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, details of any project that may affect the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

It is noted with concern that the 2018-2019 fires negatively affected parts of the property and that localized impacts and losses have been recorded, particularly of some fire-sensitive vegetation communities. The response by the State Party, particularly the commitment to developing a comprehensive Fire Management Plan for the property, are welcomed and should be further sustained.

The progress towards a more inclusive approach to the protection and management of the property is also welcomed. The advances of the Detailed Plan for a Comprehensive Cultural Assessment are additional positive steps, but it is of great importance to conclude this process before any further development (e.g. tourism development) takes place at the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.75

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.61**, adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),
3. Welcomes the State Party's further progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the 2015 joint ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission, but notes that some of these recommendations remain to be fully implemented, and reiterates its request to the State Party to finalize, as a matter of priority, the on-going process to designate Permanent Timber Production Zone Land (PTPZL) and Future Potential Production Forest Land (FPPFL) within the property as reserves;
4. Commends the State Party for the completion of the 'Cultural Values Assessment of the 2013 Extension Area to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area' that more than doubles the number of registered Aboriginal sites in the extension area, and also reiterates its request to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre details of how the cultural values of the additional areas relate to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
5. Also takes note of the finalization and release of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Tourism Master Plan and requests the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to review this Plan in light of their earlier comments, and in particular to verify whether this Tourism Master Plan:
 - a) *Is fully aligned with the 2016 Management Plan for the property,*
 - b) *Includes more specific guidance regarding the protection of the OUV of the property, including more details on how the wilderness values of the property should be considered in decision-making processes related to tourism management,*
 - c) *Considers the parallel Expression of Interest process for tourism development projects and how the latter may be affected by the Plan, and*
 - d) *Advances the implementation of the Detailed Plan for a Comprehensive Cultural Assessment in order to be able to take into account all relevant expressions of cultural heritage, including those not yet identified;*

6. Notes with serious concern the impacts of the 2018-2019 fires at the property, including localized losses of some vegetation types, and urges the State Party to develop, in line with its commitment, a comprehensive Fire Management Plan for the property as a matter of priority;
7. Also urges the State Party to avoid any development at the property before the Detailed Plan for a Comprehensive Cultural Assessment is implemented, reminds the State Party of the importance of carrying out impact assessments, and to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, details of any project that may affect the property's OUV, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
8. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for review by the Advisory Bodies.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

77. Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region (Albania/North Macedonia) (C/N 99)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (i)(iii)(iv)(vii)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/99/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1986-2011)

Total amount approved: USD 20,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/99/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 20,000 (UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Venice)

Previous monitoring missions

September 1998: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN mission; December 2013: Joint ICOMOS/UNESCO Advisory mission; April 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2019: Joint ICOMOS/IUCN Advisory mission; January 2020: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management Systems/Management Plan
- Buildings and development
- Ground transport infrastructure
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (proposed Galičica Ski Centre)
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/99/>

Current conservation issues

A joint ICOMOS/IUCN Advisory mission visited the North Macedonia part of the property in December 2019 to consider road improvements, and a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property in January 2020 (mission reports available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/99/documents/>). On 2 February 2020, the States Parties of North Macedonia and Albania submitted two separate reports on the state of conservation, addressing the recommendations of the Committee, which are available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/99/documents/>. The State Party of North Macedonia submitted an updated report on 25 February 2021. The States Parties also submitted substantial background information for the mission experts and subsequent comments on the mission reports. The States Parties have reported the following key actions:

- Temporary suspension of construction permits in North Macedonia was introduced in July 2019 (until February 2020);
- An inventory of illegally built structures has been compiled for North Macedonia and some illegally built structures along the shore have been removed; a few illegal buildings have been demolished along the lake in Albania and there are further plans to remove informal settlements;
- Technical alternatives for Kichevo to Struga routes of the Lin Pan European corridor VIII railway in North Macedonia have been reviewed. Currently, there are no plans for the section from Struga

to Lin in Albania, although the two States Parties are initiating a dialogue to consider alternative routes for this section;

- Possible routes for the remaining sections of the A2 Highway Trebenista–Struga are being explored;
- Sanitation and rehabilitation of the Lake Ohrid wastewater management system has been initiated in North Macedonia following allocation of funding by the government;
- Technical preparations for the re-diverting of the Sateska River to its natural path into Crn Drim River have continued and the project is planned to be completed by the end of 2023;
- The Transboundary Watershed Management Committee has been established and held two meetings since January 2020;
- Protection and presentation of Lin Church, Albania, has been improved;
- A Management Plan for the property for 2020–2029 has been adopted in North Macedonia. The World Heritage Supplement Plan is effective in Albania and staff have been appointed;
- Preparations are underway for the proclamation of Lake Ohrid as a Monument of Nature in North Macedonia, including development of a valorisation study and its harmonization with the Management Plan for the property. A preliminary decision to declare the Studenčišča Marsh a nature park has been approved by the Government of North Macedonia and the proposal will now undergo public consultation;
- Details of the following major projects are provided:
 - Waterscape leisure park at Drilon and Tushemisht springs, Albania;
 - Master Plan for the Pogradec to Tushemisht lakeshore promenade, Albania;
 - Regeneration plan for the urban area of Lin, Albania;
 - Revised plan for Quay Macedonia, Ohrid, North Macedonia.

On 30 March 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of North Macedonia requesting clarifications regarding third-party information raising concerns about a number of issues, to which the State Party replied on 19 April 2021, referring to the information provided in its state of conservation report. On 10 May 2021, the State Party of North Macedonia provided documentation concerning National Park Galičica, and on 1 June 2021, additional information in relation to the designation of Lake Ohrid and Studenčišča Marsh under the Convention for Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971), the removal of illegally build structures on the lake shore and updates on solid waste management, which is currently under review by the Advisory Bodies.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

The efforts made by both States Parties to address the latest recommendations of the Committee are welcomed. These relate to improvements in legal processes and management structures, including those for Lin Church, temporary suspensions of building permits in North Macedonia, the demolition of some illegal structures in both North Macedonia and Albania, the creation of a transboundary committee, the intention to initiate a transboundary dialogue for the Struga to Lin section of the European corridor VIII railway, as well as continued progress with the improvement of the wastewater management and preparations for the re-diverting of the Sateska River to its original path.

However, many recommendations of the Committee over the past six years and of previous missions have not been implemented, several have only been partly or insufficiently implemented, and a number of them not addressed at all.

Regarding North Macedonia, there has been insufficient action to halt the slow but accumulative erosion of attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) over time in the urban fabric arising from inappropriate conservation, reconstruction, and development, and to re-consider alternative outcomes for major projects relating to railway and road development.

Although some proposals for large infrastructure and construction projects identified by the 2017 Reactive Monitoring mission, notably the Galičica Ski Centre, the A3 road (sub-sections (a) and (e)) and the tourism development at Ljubaništa 3, were already abandoned, major projects still remain potential threats. While route options have been explored for part of the European corridor VIII railway, no

analysis of these has been shared and it remains unclear whether the tunnel recommended by the 2017 mission will be considered. Three further infrastructure projects will cut across the still rural landscape near the Lake: the A2 road, the 400kV Bitola–Elbasan transmission line, and a new gas pipeline. To mitigate the damaging fragmentation of the landscape and resulting loss of cultivated land, sections of the A2 road not yet planned need to be re-considered further away from Lake Ohrid and urgent consideration needs to be given to aligning all four projects. Further new development proposals include a free economic zone near Ohrid airport. The newly adopted Management Plan recognizes a marina project as a potential threat, however, it remains unclear whether a project for a marina around a completed promenade at Studenčišča Marsh will be taken forward.

Regarding Albania, the acute vulnerabilities that were noted at the time of the extension of the property have not been curtailed and new developments are being planned that could be highly detrimental to the already-compromised lake shore and the Lin peninsula. The major Waterscape leisure park project around the Drlon and Tushemisht springs includes excessive construction in a rural lakeside landscape which will impact highly adversely on the springs feeding into Lake Ohrid that contribute to its oligotrophic status. Planned building development/regeneration of the waterfront of Pogradec and along Lin peninsula and its lakeshore will impact adversely on one of the last almost unspoiled stretches of the lakeshore in Albania.

For both North Macedonia and Albania, the construction of tall buildings close to the lake, the poor architectural quality of the built environment especially in the main towns and along the coast, and the inappropriate and excessive use of the coastal zone for tourism exploitation have all had a negative impact on the property. In response to these threats, there appears to be an insufficient shared understanding of the values of the property, conflicting priorities, poor implementation of the legal framework and little involvement of civil society, which have combined to fragment the management system, leaving it ineffective in maintaining OUV.

The progress made has thus not been commensurate with the scope and extent of the many threats facing the OUV of the property, nor does it capture the urgency of the situation. At the time of inscription for cultural values in 1980, the well-preserved old towns of Ohrid and Struga were set in an almost untouched natural landscape, which was seen to be of exceptional beauty and an essential part of their setting. The first mission in 1988 noted threats from economic and demographic developments and the need for an integrated approach to conservation that linked culture and nature, based on a sound legal framework, strengthened management and a spatial plan. Nearly all of these measures are still missing. The 2013 mission noted that uncontrolled development in parts of the city and even more along the lakeshore had eroded the authenticity and integrity, while four years later, the 2017 mission requested a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to define the cumulative impacts of the many major projects on the property's OUV. This is still awaited. The property within Albania is facing similar threats from similar causes.

The legacy of erosion of the attributes over decades, combined with the impact of the proposed developments in both parts of the transboundary property, represent an ascertained and potential danger to the property according to Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is therefore strongly recommended that the Committee inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Halting and reversing the cumulative degradation that is now facing the property will take considerable concerted efforts over a long timespan. While the immediate actions to halt certain activities are welcomed, they are not sufficient and can only be seen as the beginning of a much longer process. Currently, in spite of the clear vision for the part of the property in North Macedonia set out in the Management Plan, the development of the foreseen recovery and revitalization plan has not yet begun. An agreed, phased Strategic Recovery Plan is urgently needed with short, medium and longer term actions and adequate resources. Such a Strategic Recovery Plan should aim to restore the property in line with its OUV.

It is recommended that the Committee urge the two States Parties to develop a Strategic Recovery Plan, with an associated phased action plan that sets out clearly defined aims and outcomes to address the mitigation of threats to OUV whose delivery can be monitored over time. Such a Strategic Recovery Plan should provide an overarching framework for the development and implementation of a set of corrective measures, which will need to be defined as a matter of urgency, based on the detailed recommendations of the 2020 mission. The Statement of OUV acknowledges that the “*convergence of well-conserved natural values with the quality and diversity of its cultural, material and spiritual heritage*”

makes this region truly unique” but all this remains now under severe threat and, with the current direction of travel, will only get worse unless a sustained effort is made to change direction.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.77

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **43 COM 7B.36** and **43 COM 8B.9**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Welcomes the efforts that have been made by both States Parties to start addressing the recommendations of the Committee, and notes in particular the improvements in legal processes and management structures, the temporary suspension of building permits in North Macedonia and the demolition of some illegal structures in both North Macedonia and Albania as well as the creation of the Transboundary Watershed Management Committee and the commitment to initiate a transboundary dialogue on the Struga to Lin section of the European corridor VIII railway project;*
4. *Considers that while some decisions and missions’ recommendations over the past six years have been addressed, several have only been partly or insufficiently implemented, and a number of them not addressed at all;*
5. *Expresses utmost concern at the findings of the 2020 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission that:*
 - a) *Regarding North Macedonia, there has been insufficient action to halt the slow erosion of the attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the urban fabric and the wider landscape arising from inappropriate conservation, reconstruction and development, or to re-consider alternative outcomes for major projects relating to railway and road development,*
 - b) *Regarding Albania, the acute vulnerabilities that were noted at the time of the extension of the property have not been curtailed and new projects and new developments are being planned that could be highly detrimental to the already compromised lake shore and the Lin peninsula;*
6. *Notes with grave concern the conclusions of the 2020 mission, which considered that tall buildings close to the lake, the poor architectural quality of the built environment (especially in the main towns of Ohrid, Struga, and Pogradec (buffer zone), but also along the coast outside urban centres), and the inappropriate and excessive use of the coastal zone for tourism infrastructure, have all had a highly negative impact on OUV of the property;*
7. *Takes note of the ongoing process for the proclamation of Lake Ohrid as a Monument of Nature in North Macedonia, including the development of a Valorization study, as well as a preliminary decision to declare the Studenčišča Marsh a nature park, and requests the State Party of North Macedonia to ensure that these processes are fully integrated with other relevant management and planning processes and are aimed at strengthening the overall management of the property, including through the establishment of functioning management structures;*
8. *Notes with concern that in spite of recent initiatives, the management system appears still not to be fully mandated to maintain OUV due to conflicting priorities, poor*

implementation of the legal framework and little involvement of civil society, all of which have combined to fragment the management system;

9. *Also considers that halting and reversing the degradation that is now facing the property, which reflects the cumulative impact of inappropriate changes and lack of conservation over many years, will take considerable concerted efforts over a long timespan, and that, while the immediate actions to halt certain activities are welcomed, these are insufficient and can only be seen as the beginning of a much longer integrated and strategic process, which remains to be defined;*
10. *Further considers that this legacy of erosion of the attributes over decades, combined with the continuing impact of the development in both parts of the transboundary property, represent actual and potential danger to the property according to Paragraphs 179 and 180 of the Operational Guidelines;*
11. ***Decides to inscribe the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region (Albania, North Macedonia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger;***
12. *Urges the two States Parties to develop a detailed Strategic Recovery Plan with an associated phased action plan that sets out clearly defined aims and outcomes to mitigate threats to OUV both in the short and longer term as well as a phased action plan, based on the full recommendations of the 2020 mission, and which would provide an overarching transboundary political and institutional framework for addressing the severe and multiple threats facing to the property;*
13. *Also requests the States Parties, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to develop a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger and a set of corrective measures, including a timeframe for their implementation, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022, based on the recommendations of the 2020 mission and the framework of the Strategic Recovery Plan;*
14. *Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property, including a report on the progress made in the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

NATURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

79. W-Arly-Pendjari Complex (Benin/Burkina Faso/Niger) (N 749bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1996

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/749/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 5 (from 1997-2012)

Total amount approved: USD 105,450

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/749/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted : USD 247,870 by the Government of Norway in 2020-2021

Previous monitoring missions

UNESCO/RAMSAR mission, 8-22 May 2004

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Phosphate mining project (issue resolved)
- Dam project (issue resolved)
- Lack of monitoring of the implementation of the Management Plan
- Transhumance
- Insecurity
- Poaching

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/749/>

Current conservation issues

On 24 December 2019, the States Parties of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger submitted a joint state of conservation report, available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/749/documents>, containing the following information:

- The surveillance mechanism for the property has been reinforced through an increase in the number of eco-guards (+139 agents), trained in the strategy of Anti-Poaching Combat (LAB) and with the provision of equipment, including arms and munitions to ensure control of the property;
- Mixed transnational surveillance patrols with defence and security forces have been initiated to ensure the protection of the property in a context of grave insecurity;
- In the framework of transnational cooperation, two major decisions have been adopted to guarantee the management of shared resources (24 January 2017) and to harmonize the management of the protected areas of the Complex (Tripartite Agreement of 9 May 2019);
- Concerted initiatives in the management of the property are carried out with several partners to integrate aspects linked to climate change;

- To guarantee the sustainable funding of the property, the West African Savannah Fund (FSOA) is functional in Benin; Burkina Faso has a presence since 2019 and the procedure is underway in Niger;
- Several initiatives are being implemented with support from different technical and financial partners for the sustainable management of transhumance around the property but difficulties persist;
- Despite the efforts of Benin and Burkina Faso, the map for the boundaries of the buffer zone on the scale of 1/50 000 was not carried out due to financial constraints and UNESCO support was requested by the three States Parties in an official correspondence dated 21 February 2020;
- An agreed buffer zone was defined for the W National Park in Niger and the new map will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- In 2019, an aerial census of elephants and the monitoring of large carnivorous with camera traps was carried out. The reports on these activities are under preparation;
- A landing strip has been built in the Pendjari National Park following an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) that concluded that the work would have no impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- The principal challenge remains the increased insecurity situation in the region, with the possibility that terrorists seek refuge in the property.

The World Heritage Centre was informed of development work in the Pendjari National Park, including the construction of electric fencing, an aerodrome and paths. Following correspondence from Benin of 27 August and 11 December 2019, the different studies carried out in the framework of this work have been transmitted to the World Heritage Centre for examination by IUCN.

On 12 February 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Burkina Faso to clarify information according to which security problems had caused the evacuation of the staff of the Arly National Park. On 7 July 2020, the Burkina Faso State Party confirmed the increased insecurity situation and the evacuation of the staff from the W and Arly Parks. On 12 November 2020, the World Heritage Centre informed the States Parties of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger of the proposal to inscribe W-Arly-Pendjari Complex on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to the increasing insecurity and total lack of management of the Arly and W components of the property in Burkina Faso, in accordance with paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and requested a meeting at the convenience of the three States Parties.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The signature, in 1919, of the Tripartite Agreement for harmonized management of the protected areas comprising the property illustrates a strengthening of transnational cooperation for efficient management of the area. It is recommended that the Committee encourage the three States Parties to implement this Agreement and to continue the current initiatives and incorporate the climatic considerations into the management of the Complex to mitigate the effects and implement adaptive activities with the technical and financial partners involved in these initiatives.

Important efforts have been deployed to define in a participative manner a buffer zone for the W National Park in Niger and to prepare a map of the boundaries of the buffer zone of the property on the scale of 1/50 000°. It is recommended that the Committee applaud the efforts of the States Parties and request Niger to submit the new map to the World Heritage Centre through the process of a minor modification to the boundaries of the property, and request that the States Parties complete the map of the boundaries of the buffer zone for the entire property on the scale of 1/50 000°.

The increase in the number of eco-guards, strengthening their operational capacity and the organization of joint surveillance patrols with the defence and security forces are favourably welcomed. However, recent insecurity in the region has become very worrying, as witnessed by the murderous attack of 9 August 2020 in the Kouré zone in the vicinity of the Complex and the ambush on 27 April 2021 of an anti-poaching patrol in the Arly component of the Complex that was newly formed to assist in efforts to secure the property. The property also serves as a refuge to several active terrorist groups in the Sahel thus causing the evacuation of the management staff of the Arly and W Parks in Burkina Faso. In the light of increasing insecurity that has led to a total absence of management presence in these components of the property, the OUV of the property is faced with potential danger, as defined in paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Consequently, it is recommended that the Committee

inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger to alert the international community of the critical situation of the property, support the three States Parties in the preparation of a road map to improve the state of conservation of the Complex, whilst guaranteeing the necessary funding for its safety. In this context, and with the financial support of the Government of Norway, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN cooperate with the three States Parties and its partners in the organization of national and regional consultations and a high-level meeting to contribute to the sustainable management of the property and its periphery in the face of the security crisis in the Sahel.

Noting the importance of the characteristic species for the OUV of the property, it is regrettable that the results of the 2019 biological inventories are not yet available, and it is recommended that the Committee request the States Parties to provide this information to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible for examination by IUCN.

Furthermore, the pressure of transhumance in the property remains a cause of concern with illegal grazing in the dry season. It is important that the States Parties implement the Development and Management Plans (PAG) for the ecological blocks of the property in strict respect of the defined zonings.

Finally, in the light of these above-mentioned concerns, it is recommended that the Committee request the States Parties to invite, as soon as the security situation permits, a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission to evaluate the current state of conservation vis-à-vis the security situation in concertation with the States Parties. This mission should also propose a set of corrective measures and a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), for examination by the Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.79

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **41 COM 8B.3**, adopted during its 41st session (Krakow, 2017),*
3. *Expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the guards killed in the line of duty and to all the staff of the national administrations in charge of the management of the property;*
4. *Takes note of the strengthening of the operational capacity of the eco-guards and their numbers, and the organization of joint surveillance patrols with the defence and security forces and considers that this collaboration should be reinforced over a longer period in view of the security situation in the region;*
5. *Expresses its grave concern with regard to the increasing insecurity in the region and the property and in particular the presence of armed terrorist groups who operate in the property, causing the evacuation of the management staff of the Arly and W Parks in Burkina Faso, and leading to an increase in illegal activities (poaching, transhumance, gold panning), endangering the lives of the surveillance staff of the Park and integrity of the property;*
6. *Also considers that in the light of increasing insecurity and the resulting total absence of management presence in the two Arly and W components of the property in Burkina Faso, the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property is faced with potential danger, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;*
7. ***Decides to inscribe the W-Arly-Pendjari Complex (Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger) on the List of World Heritage in Danger;***

8. Requests the States Parties, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to develop a set of corrective measures, a timetable for their implementation, as well as a proposal for the Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022;
9. Expresses its concern with regard to the impacts of transhumance in the property and also requests the States Parties to implement the Development and Management Plans (PAG) for the ecological blocks of the property strictly respecting the defined zonings;
10. Congratulates the States Parties of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger for the signature in May 2019 of the Tripartite Agreement concerning the harmonized management of the protected areas of the transnational W-Arly-Pendjari Complex and encourages them to implement the provisions of this Agreement;
11. Warmly welcomes all the activities undertaken in the consensual definition of the buffer zone for the W National Park in Niger, and further requests the Niger State Party to submit the new map to the World Heritage Centre through the procedure of a minor modification to the boundaries of the property to ensure a coherent approach to the buffer zones of the whole W-Arly-Pendjari Complex;
12. Notes the technical and financial difficulties, requests furthermore the States Parties of Benin and Burkina Faso to submit to the World Heritage Centre a new map of the boundaries of the buffer zone on the scale of 1:50 000° by **1 December 2022** for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023;
13. Regrets that no information on the results of the different inventories carried out have been provided and therefore requests moreover the States Parties to make available this information to the World Heritage Centre as soon as possible for examination by IUCN;
14. Welcomes the efforts deployed firstly to incorporate the climatic considerations into the efficient management of the property, and secondly to mitigate the effects by implementing adaptive activities, and also encourages the States Parties to continue their efforts with the technical and financial partners involved in these initiatives;
15. Requests in addition the States Parties to invite, as soon as the security situation permits, a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN reactive monitoring mission to the property to evaluate its current state of conservation in respect of the insecurity situation and to finalize in concertation with the States Parties, a group of corrective measures and a DSO CR, for examination by the Committee at its 45th session in 2022;
16. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

ASIA-PACIFIC

90. Great Barrier Reef (Australia) (N 154)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1981

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

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/154/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/154/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2012: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Changes to oceanic waters
- Ground water pollution
- Marine transport infrastructure (Coastal development, including development of ports, shipping lane impacts, grounding of ships)
- Non-renewable energy facilities (Liquefied Natural Gas facilities)
- Marine transport infrastructure (ports)
- Other climate change impacts
- Storms
- Surface water pollution
- Temperature change

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/154/>

Current conservation issues

On 18 December 2018, the State Party submitted a letter regarding the mid-term review of the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) and its results, along with information that a new Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017-2022 (WQIP) had been released. On 18 July 2019, the State Party submitted a position statement on climate change from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). On 6 August 2019, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party raising concerns about the approval of the Carmichael Coal Mine, to which the State Party responded on 6 September 2019, noting that the project's approval is subject to over 180 regulatory conditions and that compliance with these conditions will be monitored.

On 30 August 2019, the State Party submitted the Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2019 (2019 GBR Outlook Report) and the Reef Water Quality Report Card 2017 and 2018.

On 29 November 2019, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/154/documents/>, providing the following information:

- A number of factors have negatively affected the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property since 2015, including mass coral bleaching events in 2016 and 2017;

- The 2019 GBR Outlook Report concluded that the long-term outlook for the ecosystem of the property has deteriorated from poor to very poor and that climate change remains the most serious threat for the property. Other key threats are land-based run-off, coastal development and some direct human uses. It further concluded that accelerated action to mitigate climate change and improve water quality was essential to turn this outlook around. The report also concluded that the OUV of the property remained intact; however, components underpinning it have deteriorated since the inscription. Specifically, it noted a 30% loss of shallow-water coral cover following the 2016 bleaching event and the combined footprint of the 2016 and 2017 bleaching event extending over two thirds of the property. Furthermore, deterioration of the ecological processes underpinning the OUV of the property “has been more rapid and widespread than was evident in the period 2009 to 2014”;
- It is acknowledged that climate change requires effective global action under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015), with the 1,5 °C target widely recognized as a critical threshold for the property;
- A mid-term review of the Reef 2050 Plan was undertaken in 2017, in light of the aforementioned bleaching events in 2016 and 2017. The updated Reef 2050 Plan, published in July 2018, recognizes the impacts of climate change on the property and the importance of global action for climate change mitigation. The next full review of the Plan is currently in progress and was due to be completed in 2020, based on the outcomes of the mid-term review and the 2019 GBR Outlook Report;
- The Reef 2050 Plan Insights Report, an independent assessment, which considered whether the Reef 2050 Plan was effective in achieving its vision, concluded that the Plan “has provided a very sound framework for improving the effective management of the Reef’s values”. An independent assessment of management effectiveness, prepared to inform the 2019 GBR Outlook Report, noted a number of improvements resulting from the Reef 2050 Plan;
- An assessment of progress towards achieving the targets of the Reef 2050 Plan notes that while some of them are being met, significant improvements will be required to meet other targets, including those for biodiversity and water quality;
- A USD 430 million WQIP is being implemented. The Reef Water Quality Report Card 2017 and 2018 concluded that, despite some advancement, progress towards achieving the 2025 targets has been very slow, with property-wide results for sediment reduction and dissolved inorganic nitrogen assessed as “very poor” and results for most of land management targets as “poor” or “very poor”;
- New legislation was approved by the Queensland Government in September 2019 to strengthen the regulatory framework for reducing nutrient and sediment releases. Changes were also introduced to the Queensland’s vegetation management laws in 2018 to prevent clearing of remnant vegetation in reef catchments;
- Additional funding commitments were made since the release of the Reef 2050 Plan Investment Framework in 2016. Total state and federal investment for the Reef 2050 Plan implementation between 2014-2024 has increased from an estimated USD 1,43 billion in 2015 to an estimated USD 1,94 billion in 2020;
- Additional actions have also been undertaken to build the resilience of the property, including through the Reef Restoration and Adaptation Programmes.

On 17 April 2020, the State Party submitted additional preliminary information regarding the coral bleaching events that took place in spring 2020.

The World Heritage Centre and IUCN also received letters and third-party information about the Reef 2050 Plan progress and the effects of climate change on the property.

On 1 February 2021, the State Party submitted additional information, providing an update on the state of conservation of the property:

- The geographic footprint of the 2020 bleaching event was the largest to date; however, there was significant variability in the severity of bleaching;
- The Reef Water Quality Report Card 2019 has been released and demonstrates further progress towards some targets, particularly the one on the dissolved inorganic nitrogen;

- The updated Reef 2050 Plan is expected to be released in 2021, following an extensive consultation process;
- Additional investment in various programmes and projects was announced in 2020.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Since the inception of the Reef 2050 Plan in 2015, the State Party has shown strong commitment to its implementation, including through ensuring unprecedented levels of financial support and the mobilization of inter-institutional collaboration. These efforts should be commended. However, despite these efforts, the OUV of the property has continued to decline. The conclusions of the 2019 GBR Outlook Report are clear in stating that the long-term outlook for the ecosystem of the property has further deteriorated from poor to very poor, and that the deterioration has been more rapid and widespread than was evident during the period 2009-2014. The property has also suffered significantly from coral bleaching events in 2016, 2017 and most recently in 2020, as a result of global warming.

In its Decision **39 COM 7B.7** (2015), the World Heritage Committee decided to review the state of conservation of the property at its 44th session, linked to the findings of the anticipated 2019 GBR Outlook Report. In the five years following this Decision, both the current condition and the long-term outlook for the property have deteriorated. Therefore, there is no possible doubt that the property is facing ascertained danger, according to Paragraph 180 a) of the *Operational Guidelines*.

In its Decision **41 COM 7B.24** (2017), the World Heritage Committee encouraged the State Party to accelerate efforts toward meeting the intermediate and long-term targets of the Reef 2050 Plan, in particular those related to water quality. As confirmed in the State Party's report and previous assessments, improving water quality is central to turning around the further deterioration of the property. The results of the 2017, 2018 and 2019 Reef Water Quality Report Cards, however, confirm that despite some commendable achievements, particularly on the dissolved inorganic nitrogen (as demonstrated by the 2019 Report Card), and although the Reef 2050 Plan has provided a coherent framework to improve the management of the property, progress towards achieving the targets has been very slow in many key areas.

It can be concluded that, despite many positive achievements by the State Party, progress has been insufficient in meeting key targets of the Reef 2050 Plan. The Plan requires stronger and clearer commitments, in particular towards urgently countering the effects of climate change, but also towards accelerating water quality improvement and land management measures. The widespread effects of the consecutive coral bleaching events further add to the significant concerns regarding the future of the property. While the mid-term review of the Reef 2050 Plan has already outlined some considerations concerning climate change, it is crucial that its final form fully incorporate the conclusions of the 2019 GBR Outlook report, provide clear commitments to address threats from climate change, in conformity with the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement, and allow to meet water quality targets faster. It is further essential that the final plan incorporate the necessary measures to fully implement the Plan's overall mission to secure the sustainable conservation of the property for future generations.

Based on the above, and noting, in particular, that both the current condition and the long-term outlook of the property have deteriorated, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that the property is facing ascertained danger according to Paragraph 180 a) of the *Operational Guidelines* and hence recommend that the Committee inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

It is further recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to collaboratively develop a set of corrective measures and a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR). It is recommended that the corrective measures focus on ensuring that the Reef 2050 Plan's policy commitments, targets and implementation adequately address the threat of climate change and water quality and take into account the fact that the State Party on its own cannot address the threats of climate change. It is further recommended that the Committee call with the utmost urgency upon all States Parties and the international community to implement the most ambitious actions to address climate change to meet their obligations to the *World Heritage Convention*, as defined under Article 6 of the Convention and fulfil their responsibility to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.90

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **39 COM 7B.7** and **41 COM 7B.24**, adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015) and 41st (Krakow, 2017) sessions, respectively,
3. Commends the State Party for the strong and continued efforts to create conditions for the implementation of the Reef 2050 Long-term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan), including through unprecedented financial commitments;
4. Notes with the utmost concern and regret the conclusions of the 2019 Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report (2019 GBR Outlook Report) that the long-term outlook for the ecosystem of the property has further deteriorated from poor to very poor, that the deterioration of the ecological processes underpinning the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property has been more rapid and widespread than was previously evident, and that the property has suffered significantly from mass coral bleaching events in 2016, 2017 and 2020;
5. Also notes with the utmost concern that despite many positive achievements, progress has been largely insufficient in meeting key targets of the Reef 2050 Plan, in particular the water quality and land management targets, as evidenced by the conclusions of the 2017-2018 and 2019 Reef Quality Report Cards ;
6. Noting the conclusion of the 2019 GBR Outlook Report that climate change remains the most serious threat to the property, and recognizing that action by the international community and all States Parties to the Convention is urgently required to address threats from climate change, considers that actions to build resilience of the property and address other factors remain of utmost importance;
7. Also considers that the property is facing ascertained danger, according to Paragraph 180 a) of the Operational Guidelines;
8. **Decides to inscribe the Great Barrier Reef (Australia) on the List of World Heritage in Danger;**
9. Urges the State Party to ensure that the revised Reef 2050 Plan, expected to be finalized in 2021, fully incorporates the conclusions of the 2019 GBR Outlook Report that accelerated action at all possible levels is required to address the threat from climate change, in accordance with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015), and to urgently create opportunities for recovery of the property, in particular with regard to water quality;
10. Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to develop a set of corrective measures and a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), centred around ensuring that the revised Reef 2050 Plan addresses the threat posed to the property by climate change and determines a pathway for accelerated actions in other areas affecting the conservation of the property;
11. Also recalling Decision **41 COM 7** in which the Committee “reiterate[d] the importance of States Parties undertaking the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by “holding

the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and by pursuing efforts to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change”, *strongly invites all States Parties to undertake actions to address Climate Change under the Paris Agreement consistent with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances, that are fully consistent with their obligations within the World Heritage Convention to protect the OUV of all World Heritage properties;*

12. *Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

91. The Sundarbans (Bangladesh) (N 798)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1997

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/798/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (2008)

Total amount approved: USD 75,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/798/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: 2008: USD 32,590 from Switzerland following a Special Appeal by the Sector for External Relations of UNESCO; 2017: USD 32,527 from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust for technical support to the property

Previous monitoring missions

December 2007: World Heritage Centre mission; March 2016: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; December 2019: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Pollution of marine waters
- Changes to oceanic waters (High level of salinity, sea level rise)
- Water infrastructure (Reduction in freshwater inflows, dredging of the Pashur River)
- Management systems/management plan (Overall governance and management of the property)
- Storms (Loss of monitoring capacity due to cyclone damage)
- Illegal activities (Tiger poaching)
- Forestry/wood production (Unsustainable harvesting of timber and non-timber forest products)
- Non-renewable energy facilities (Thermal Power Plant project such as the Rampal power plant development project)
- Others: Need for an assessment of cumulative impacts on the property via a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/798/>

Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property took place from 9 to 17 December 2019. The State Party provided additional information and clarifications requested by the mission team on 30 December 2019 and 13 May 2020. The mission report is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/798/documents/>.

On 31 January 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, followed by an update on 25 May 2021. Both are available at [the link above](#) and provide the following information:

- Conservation measures for the property have been strengthened, notably through intensified Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) patrols; implementation of the second-generation Tiger Action Plan (2018-2027); establishment of three additional dolphin sanctuaries in 2020; upscaled co-management with local communities; initiation of “Sundarbans Conservation” Project in January 2021 to establish a long-term ecological monitoring system for the property;
- Efforts have been made to increase freshwater flows into the South-West region including the property, notably through a Gorai River restoration project including dredging to be completed by 2022 in line with the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100;
- The implementation of action points agreed by the two States Parties at the first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Working Group (JWG) in 2016 is in progress. The second meeting scheduled for 2020 was postponed upon request by the State Party of India;
- The State Party has not given environmental clearance or permission for any large-scale industrial/infrastructural development adjacent to the property since the adoption of Decision **41 COM 7B.25**. Of the 154 industrial enterprises within the Sundarbans Ecologically Critical Area (ECA), 24 are categorized as large-scale or Red Category industry, four of which are not operating due to the absence of environmental clearance;
- Dredging activities are ongoing in the Inner and Outer bar Areas of the Pashur River, following the approval of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) by the Department of Environment (DoE), conducted in line with the *IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment*, and include an assessment of potential impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Dredged materials are disposed of in accordance with the Environmental Management Plans (EMPs);
- The National Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCOP), which includes the provision of funding and human resources for its implementation, was approved by the Cabinet in February 2020;
- The construction of the Rampal power plant is in progress after having obtained the requisite and statutory environmental clearances as per the national legislation, and 66% of the project has been completed. An EIA for coal transportation was approved by DoE in January 2018. Mitigation and contingency measures are in place through the implementation of the EMP. Quarterly reports on environmental monitoring results in and around the project area and along Pashur River, including water and air quality and noise levels, are publicly available online;
- Two consulting firms were contracted to conduct a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South-West region of Bangladesh in December 2019. The SEA, covering a total of 89 Policies, Plans and Programmes (PPP) of 28 relevant sectors, is under implementation in compliance with OECD guidelines and the *Operational Guidelines* of the 1972 Convention. Several reports have been published and are available on the dedicated website.

During an online meeting on 15 May 2020, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN received updates on the SEA from a team consisting of the two consulting firms.

On 3 June 2020 and 12 April 2021, the State Party provided information on the damage caused by Cyclone Amphan to the property and on a shipping accident in the vicinity of the property, which had been requested by the World Heritage Centre.

On 2-3 June 2021, an online Masterclass on Sustainable Development and World Heritage Conservation in Bangladesh was organized in the framework of a UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust

(NFIT) project by the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Office in Dhaka, in close cooperation with the State Party and the Advisory Bodies.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Substantial efforts made by the State Party to enhance protection of the property's OUV through the implementation of various measures, including strengthened patrolling and key species conservation, steps taken to increase freshwater flows into the property and to establish a long-term ecological monitoring system in view of building climate resilience, should be welcomed. The positive cooperation between the State Party, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to strengthen proactive planning for better management of the property in the framework of the NFIT project is also appreciated.

However, the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that, while the property's OUV, including its hydrological and ecological processes and its biodiversity, remains present, the property continues to be threatened by possible impacts from large-scale industrial development. These potential impacts could cumulatively result in a high risk for the property's OUV to deteriorate if no further measures are taken based on a comprehensive assessment of existing and possible future negative factors and pressures.

The mission further concluded that it will be essential to ensure that the SEA provides an adequate planning instrument, whose implementation would ensure that no large-scale industrial development would be permitted in the vicinity of the property, and that no further intensification of shipping and dredging would occur if either is considered to have potential negative impacts on the OUV of the property. It noted that, in case such negative impacts cannot be prevented, the property will be facing potential danger, in line with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Therefore, the mission recommended that the Committee review the progress achieved in the development of the SEA at the next session with a view to considering, in the case of absence of substantial progress and if ascertained or potential danger to the OUV is confirmed, the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Transboundary cooperation between the States Parties of Bangladesh and India in the framework of the JWG is also critical and should remain active. The Committee may request the States Parties to undertake a coordinated effort, notably to strengthen integration of the consideration of the hydrology of the property and that of the Sundarbans National Park in India in bilateral cooperation, as recommended by the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission.

It is noted that the State Party has not given any permission to large-scale industrial developments adjacent to the property since Decision **41 COM 7B.25** from 2017, and that the 20 Red Category enterprises currently operating within the ECA are under rigorous compliance monitoring. It is also noted that dredging of the Pashur River is operating in accordance with the EMPs, as per Decision **43 COM 7B.3**. Finalization of the NOSCOP, which includes the provision of funding and human resources for the implementation of the plan to prevent and mitigate negative impacts from shipping operations, is welcomed. An effective localized contingency plan covering the property should be further developed to ensure immediate and coordinated actions to mitigate impacts in case of emergency, as recommended by the 2019 mission.

The efforts made by the State Party to advance the SEA for the South-West of Bangladesh are welcomed. It is noted that the SEA is scheduled for completion in August 2021 due to a delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party, as a matter of the utmost priority, to fulfil all relevant recommendations of the 2019 mission when finalizing the SEA, in order to ensure that the SEA's findings form the basis for future decision making on development, that may impact the OUV of the property, and to submit the final report, including the strategic environmental management plan, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN and for subsequent examination by the Committee at its 45th session.

The ongoing expansion and dredging operations near the Mongla Port, noted by the 2019 mission, are of utmost concern. Bearing in mind that further development upstream of the property would require additional maintenance dredging and is likely to increase traffic on the Pashur River, the State Party should be urged to ensure that no further decision is made for any new large-scale industrial and/or infrastructural developments, which may influence the OUV of the property, including further development of the Mongla Port and any other development that might further increase traffic on the Pashur River, until the SEA for the South-West region of Bangladesh is completed, as recommended by the 2019 mission.

While no update was provided in the State Party's report on the development of the Taltoli and the Kolapara power plants, located outside the South-West region, it is also a source of great concern that the three power plant projects in Rampal, Taltoli and Kolapara continue to advance, while their construction and operations could potentially impact the property's OUV. The 2019 mission noted substantial progress in addressing concerns expressed by the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission over the construction and operation of the Rampal power plant, e.g. through increased transparency in the implementation of mitigation and contingency measures during all phases of the project, and regular monitoring in accordance with the EMP. However, the mission also reaffirmed that, in the absence of a comprehensive assessment of cumulative impacts from the ongoing and proposed large-scale industrial developments, significant concerns remain regarding their possible negative impacts on the property, and therefore the continuation of these developments before the on-going SEA is completed represents a potential danger to the property's OUV.

While appreciating the State Party's efforts to enhance the protection of the property's OUV and make progress with the SEA, a continuation of the current developments, including power plants, the expansion and dredging operations near the Mongla Port prior to the completion of the SEA that would guide decisions so they may be compatible with the protection of the OUV of the property, would constitute a significant threat to the property. Therefore, it is recommended that the Committee review, at its 45th session, whether the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.91

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **41 COM 7B.25** and **43 COM 7B.3**, adopted at its 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Notes the conclusion of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission that, while the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including its hydrological and ecological processes and its biodiversity, remains present, the property continues to be threatened by possible impacts from large-scale industrial developments, which could cumulatively result in a high risk for the property's OUV to deteriorate if no further measures are taken based on a comprehensive assessment of existing and possible future negative factors and pressures;*
4. *Considers that the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South-West region of Bangladesh should provide an adequate planning instrument, the implementation of which would ensure that no large-scale industrial development would be permitted in the vicinity of the property, and that no further intensification of shipping and dredging would occur if either were considered to have potential negative impacts on the property's OUV; and also considers that, in case such negative impacts cannot be prevented, the property would be facing potential danger in line with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;*
5. *Welcomes the substantial efforts to enhance the protection of the property's OUV through the implementation of various conservation measures, including a new initiative to establish a long-term ecological monitoring system with a view to building climate resilience;*
6. *Appreciates the close cooperation between the State Party, UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies in strengthening proactive planning for the management of the property in the framework of the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, and encourages the State Party to continue active dialogue and engagement with UNESCO, the Advisory Bodies and*

other relevant stakeholders to complement its efforts to strengthen management of the property;

7. Also welcomes the State Party's progress in implementing action points agreed at the first meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Working Group in 2016, and requests the States Parties of Bangladesh and India to undertake a coordinated effort, notably to strengthen integration of the consideration of the hydrology of the property and that of the Sundarbans National Park in India in bilateral cooperation;
8. Noting that 20 large-scale (Red Category) enterprises within the Sundarbans Ecologically Critical Area are under rigorous compliance monitoring and that approved dredging activities on the Pashur River are operating in accordance with the Environmental Management Plans, further welcomes the finalization of the National Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCOP), which includes the provision of funding and human resources for its implementation in order to prevent and mitigate negative impacts from shipping operations, and also requests the State Party to further develop an effective localized contingency plan covering the property to ensure immediate and coordinated actions to mitigate impacts in case of emergency;
9. Welcomes furthermore the efforts made by the State Party to advance the SEA for the South-West region, now scheduled for completion in August 2021, urges the State Party, as a matter of the utmost priority, to fulfil all relevant recommendations of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission when finalizing the SEA in order to ensure that the findings of the SEA form the basis for future decision making on development that may impact the OUV of the property, and further requests the State Party to submit the final SEA, including the strategic environmental management plan, to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN and subsequent examination by the Committee at its 45th session;
10. Notes with the utmost concern the ongoing expansion and dredging operations near Mongla Port, which would require additional maintenance dredging and are likely to increase traffic on the Pashur River, and also urges the State Party to ensure that no further decision is made for any new large-scale industrial and/or infrastructural development, which may influence the OUV of the property, including further development of Mongla Port or any other development that might further increase traffic on the Pashur River, until the SEA for the South-West region of Bangladesh is completed;
11. Takes note of the progress made by the State Party in addressing issues raised by the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission over the construction of the Rampal power plant, but expresses its utmost concern that the development of three power plant projects in Rampal, Taltoli and Kolapara, which could potentially impact the property's OUV in the absence of the SEA and a comprehensive assessment of their cumulative impacts, continues to advance;
12. Requests furthermore the State Party to make efforts to fully implement all the other recommendations made by the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission and previous Committee decisions;
13. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, including how the findings of the SEA are ensuring decision making on development in the vicinity of the property that will fully protect its OUV, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022, **with a view to considering, if ascertained or potential danger to the OUV of the property is confirmed, the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.**

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

99. Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine) (N 1133ter)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2007

Criteria (ix)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

October 2014: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to Slovakia; October 2018: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission to Slovakia

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/ management plan (lack of integrated Management Plan, lack of legal protection from logging, and inadequate management of logging in the Slovak part of the property)
- Inappropriate boundary configuration of some parts of the property
- Management and institutional factors (lack of transnational research and monitoring plans, need for capacity building)
- Forestry / wood production

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/>

Current conservation issues

From 13 to 22 November 2019, the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission requested in Decision **43 COM 7B.13** visited Albanian and Romanian components of the property.

On 30 January 2020, the States Parties submitted a joint report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1133/documents/>, reporting the following:

- Regarding boundary modifications, the States Parties of Italy and Slovakia have submitted modification requests as part of an extension nomination, which has undergone the IUCN evaluation process (see Document WHC/21/44.COM/8B.Add). The State Party of Slovakia has amended the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection, which aims to strengthen protection of national parks ensuring undisturbed natural processes in at least 75% of their area comprising the property, including at least 50% subject to a non-intervention regime. The States Parties of Belgium and Croatia are planning to also submit proposals for boundary modification. The State Party of Austria is envisaging an extension of the Wilderness Area of Dürrenstein and the State Party of Slovenia is considering the enlargement of the buffer zone of the Krokav component;
- Regarding the buffer zone management of the transnational property, a draft Guidance document has been developed with the objective to protect component parts from negative impacts of forest management within buffer zones. The draft Guidance foresees a protective buffer zone subsection of at least 100 m, enveloping the components to avoid impacts on the forest stands'

microclimatic regime. The States Parties' report advises that they will ensure that no logging activity with a size larger than the height of a tree is carried out within the buffer zone with a protective function with a minimum width of 100 m;

- Regarding further conservation issues, amongst others, the State Party of Romania noted hydropower infrastructure in Domogled National Park and negative impacts from the potential upgrade of the non-paved national road 66A crossing the property;
- The State Party of Romania also reports that in places where regeneration cuts were performed before World Heritage listing, the completion of the interventions would be required by national legislation. However, until new national legislation dedicated to World Heritage is approved, an internal order preventing trees from being cut within 50 m from the property was issued. Furthermore, approximately 2,000 ha of quasi-virgin forests in the buffer zone were identified, which are from now on exempt from harvesting activities.

According to the minutes of a meeting organized by the States Parties and received by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to discuss the issue of buffer zone management, clear-cuts are possible inside 2 out of 41 assessed component clusters, either through special permission or in specific areas. In buffer zones, clear cuts above 0.3 ha are generally allowed in 2 clusters, and in 5 clusters through special permissions or in specific areas. Clear cuts below 0.3 ha, cutting of firewood, and shelterwood cuts above 0.3 ha are possible in a few components, whilst shelterwood cuts below 0.3 ha, tendering operations in young stands, selective logging and sanitary cuts can be permitted in approximately half of the assessed component clusters. The World Heritage Centre transmitted this information to the States Parties on 22 April 2020 and received a reply on 19 April 2021. According to this response, the information that clear cuts are allowed inside the property was incorrect and all States Parties confirmed that currently no logging is possible inside of any of the property's component parts. For buffer zones however, the States Parties confirm that *"in total 17 cluster/component parts in 6 countries have mentioned that some logging interventions might be possible in the buffer zone."*

On 28 January 2021, the States Parties submitted an update of the States Parties' report noting that no agreement among them was reached regarding the management of the property and buffer zones, but that a roadmap was adopted to reach an agreement that would include consultations with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN. On 25 May 2021, the States Parties submitted the Guidance document on buffer zone management and buffer zone zonation for further advice from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, which is currently under review.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

In the context of various previous Committee decisions requesting the State Party of Slovakia to strengthen the legal protection of its components, the amendment of the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection is welcome as it significantly expands low- and non-intervention regimes in the Poloniny National Park. The submission of the proposed boundary modification of the Slovak component as part of the proposed extension of the property is noted and is dealt with through the Evaluation process.

The 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that the Albanian components exhibit a high level of integrity and benefit from a strict protection regime applicable in the components and their buffer zones, which appear to provide a functional additional layer of protection, in line with the *Operational Guidelines*. This is highly welcome and may inform the revision of buffer zone management in some other components of this transnational property as well as the on-going development of guidelines for the buffer zones of the property.

Regarding the Romanian components, the impacts from potential future projects related to hydropower facilities in the buffer zone and the potential widening and paving of a forest track crossing the property and its buffer zone (national road 66A) is of serious concern. In line with the mission recommendations, it is recommended that the State Party be requested to abandon plans to upgrade this forest track inside and/or nearby the property, due to the potential impact of this project on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including its integrity. The mission also concluded that the current management of the Romanian components' buffer zones may result in negative effects on the integrity of the property and does not meet the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines*. In this respect, the State Party's intention to approve new national legislation dedicated to World Heritage as well as intermediate measures, including the identification and protection of 2,000 ha of quasi-virgin forests are welcome. The designation of virgin forest may support the implementation of the recommendations of the 2019 mission and improve connectivity between the components.

In light of the findings of the 2019 mission and previous Committee decisions, the level of potential forestry operations in several buffer zones across the transnational property remains a serious concern. It is of utmost concern that particularly impactful clear-cuts are possible in several buffer zones of the property. These clear-cuts may be even more impactful and less strictly regulated than those buffer zones affected by shelterwood cuts that were assessed in the 2019 mission and previous missions to Slovakia. Clear-cuts are generally allowed in buffer zones of Hayedos de Navarra (Spain), Groșii Țibleșului, and Strâmbu Băiuț (Romania), and with special permission or in special areas in the buffer zones of Grumsin (Germany), Hayedos de Ayllón - La Mancha, Hayedos d. Picos d. Europa (Spain), Monte Raschio (Italy), and Uzhanski NNPK (Ukraine). To assess the potential impacts on the OUV of the property of clear-cuts and the protection regimes providing for them, it is therefore recommended that the Committee request the States Parties of Spain, Romania, Germany, Italy and Ukraine to provide full and up to date details of these activities in order to make clear all the locations and the full list of potentially affected component parts and buffer zones, and to convene, in conjunction with the other States Parties, a technical workshop with IUCN and the World Heritage Centre to consider the means by which concerns over these activities could be addressed.

The 2019 mission and the draft buffer zone Guidance note significant variation in the management regimes across the transnational property. In order to coherently protect component parts against the negative impacts from forest management, the draft Guidance proposes a zoning largely based on microclimatic indicators as a minimum baseline. While the impacts from forestry on the microclimate are doubtlessly an important aspect, it is of significant concern that other factors decisive for natural processes in Beech Forest ecosystems have not been taken into account in determining the minimum width of the protective buffer sub-zone and its protection regime. While for instance, the role of deadwood is emphasised in the description of the functions of the landscape conservation buffer sub-zone, it would not serve as a decisive factor for the design of the boundaries of the protective buffer sub-zone, in spite of the approach applied in the Belgian components where deadwood habitat connectivity is ensured through strictly protected senescence islets and set-aside-areas in the buffer zone. In this regard, it should also be recalled that Committee Decision **41 COM 8B.7** requested special emphasis on dead and decaying wood in order to support undisturbed natural processes in buffer zones, which require a strict and precautionary approach across wider areas. The approach proposed by the draft Guidance is therefore considered inadequate by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre as it would result in very narrow and uniform strips of protective buffer sub-sections, where interventions as large as one tree height may still be possible, and where factors other than standard widths derived from knowledge on microclimatic effects are not necessarily taken into account. It is therefore welcome that the States Parties intend to seek further guidance from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN in order for the buffer zone Guidance to ensure fully functional buffer zones across all components of the property. In the meantime, it is recommended that the Committee urge the States Parties to ensure that interventions are kept minimal before the adoption of the buffer zone Guidance.

It is noted that a new version of the Guidance document on buffer zone management and buffer zone zonation was approved by the States Parties on 19 April 2021 and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for further advice. Due to the late submission of this document on 25 May 2021, it was impossible to review it as part of the preparation of this report, and the World Heritage Centre and IUCN will revert to the States Parties after a careful analysis of the document in due course.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.99

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **42 COM 7B.71** and **43 COM 7B.13**, adopted at its 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Takes note of the findings of the 2019 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission, and requests the States Parties of Albania and Romania to implement all mission recommendations, and all States Parties of this property to jointly implement the following mission recommendations:*

- a) *Conduct on-the-ground assessments in the buffer zones and component parts where impactful forestry interventions such as clear-cuts and shelterwood cutting have been permitted, to ascertain the extent to which the effective protection of the respective components might be compromised and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) negatively affected,*
 - b) *Enhance the connective and protective functions of the buffer zones and strengthen the integrity of the property by minimizing the use of forestry interventions;*
 - c) *Ensure that any interventions avoid interference with the natural processes of the beech forest ecosystem taking into account the natural expansion of their surface and to strengthen their resilience,*
 - d) *Support undisturbed natural processes in all components and their buffer zones through natural regeneration, pro-forestation, aging of forest stands beyond conventional rotation ages, and to not take any decision that may affect the dynamics of such processes after external natural or anthropogenic events, such as fire, within or near the property's components;*
4. *Welcomes the strict protection applied by the State Party of Albania in its respective components and their buffer zones, and invites other States Parties of this transnational property to consider this approach in the revision of buffer zone management as well as the on-going development of a Guidance document for the buffer zones of the property, in order to ensure that all buffer zones of the property serve as a functional additional layer of protection in line with the Operational Guidelines;*
 5. *Appreciates the identification and protection of 2,000 ha of forests in the buffer zones of the Romanian components, however, noting with utmost concern that the current management of the Romanian components' buffer zones does not meet the requirements of the Operational Guidelines and may have negative effects on the integrity of the property, urges the State Party of Romania to fulfil its intention to limit interventions in buffer zones and approve new dedicated World Heritage national legislation aimed at safeguarding the OUV of the property;*
 6. *Notes with concern the potential widening and paving of a forest track crossing the property and its buffer zone (national road 66A) as well as potential future activities related to hydropower facilities in the buffer zone in Domogled National Park in Romania, and thus also urges the State Party of Romania to abandon plans to upgrade the national road 66A inside and/or nearby the property, due to the potential impact of this project on the property's integrity and its OUV;*
 7. *Also welcomes the amendment of the Act on Nature and Landscape Protection of Slovakia expanding non-intervention regimes, and notes that the State Party of Slovakia has submitted a significant boundary modification for its components of the property, which has been subject to the evaluation process;*
 8. *Notes with serious concern the level of forestry operations which are currently permissible in the buffer zones of the property, and requests the States Parties of Spain, Romania, Germany, Italy and Ukraine to provide full and up to date details of these activities to the World Heritage Centre by **1 December 2021**, in order to make clear all the locations and the full list of potentially affected component parts and buffer zones, and to convene, in conjunction with the other States Parties, a subsequent technical workshop with IUCN and the World Heritage Centre to consider the means by which concerns over these activities could be resolved;*

9. *Reiterates its request in Decision 41 COM 8B.7 that special emphasis shall be given to appropriate buffer zone management in order to support undisturbed natural processes with special emphasis on dead and decaying wood, also notes the submission of the "Guidance document on buffer zone management and buffer zone zonation" for review by the World Heritage Centre and IUCN and further urges the States Parties to ensure that interventions are minimised in the meantime, and that the buffer zone Guidance is based on a strict and precautionary approach;*
10. *Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

100. Białowieża Forest (Belarus, Poland) (N 33ter)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/33/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/33/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

March 2004: Joint UNESCO/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; October 2008: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; June 2016: IUCN Advisory mission; September/October 2018: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Forestry/wood production (logging in the partially protected zones and removal of deadwood)
- Alterations of the hydrological regime
- Border fence impeding mammal movements
- Ambiguity regarding the boundaries of the property (issue resolved)
- Management systems/management plan (Need for a new Management Plan for Białowieża National Park (Poland) (issue resolved); Lack of an integrated planning and management of the property and of a Transboundary Steering Committee with adequate human and financial resources)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/33/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 January 2020, the States Parties of Belarus and Poland submitted a joint report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/33/documents/>, and which presents the following:

- Logging in the Polish part of the property has remained limited and mainly motivated by safety measures, including fire safety. A total of 567.31 m³ of wood was harvested in the active

management zone from July 2018 to September 2019. Forest regeneration activities have been restricted to the active management zone;

- Spruce dieback caused by the bark beetle outbreak in the Polish part is continuing. In 2019, another 109,400 infested trees were identified, and an estimated area of 10,714 ha is affected;
- A “Forest Fire Protection and Forest Fire Extinguishing Plan” is being prepared. 18 wildfires occurred in the Polish part in 2018 and 11 in 2019 (until September), affecting less than 5 ha. In Belarus, one wildfire occurred in 2019, affecting an area of 15.2 ha;
- New annexes to the Forest Management Plans (FMP) were proposed, which would allow for an additional 42,683 m³ of wood to be harvested inside the property by the end of 2021. On 7 November 2019, the State Party submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed annexes, which concluded that the planned additional logging activities will not impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- Work is underway to prepare the Management Plan (MP) for the Polish part of the property and an updated MP for the Belarusian part. Once both MPs are available, work on the Transboundary Integrated Management Plan (TIMP) will commence. Transboundary cooperation was strengthened through two international workshops on tourism, education, and promotion of the property. In Belarus, new legislation now requires that the MP of protected areas is strictly implemented, hence strengthening its legal status;
- The updated EIA for the Narewowska road was submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 2 August 2019 and concludes that there would be no impact on the OUV of the property. The upgrade works have now been finalized;
- No wolf hunting will be carried out in the Belarus part of the property, in accordance with national legislation;
- In order to restore the hydrological regime of the property, 350 ha of the Dzikoje fen mire and the meandering of 3.5 km riverbed of the Solomionka river in Belarus were restored and further restoration works are planned. In Poland, the water reservoir of Gnilec was rehabilitated.

On 7 August 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Belarus requesting clarification regarding third party information about reported drainage works inside the property. To date no reply was received from the State Party.

On 30 March 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Poland, requesting further information on the announcement on the website of the Ministry of Climate and Environment on the approval of new annexes to the FMPs of Bialowieza and Browsk Forest Districts. A reply was received on 15 April 2021.

On 13 April 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Poland transmitting third-party information regarding a planned bicycle path along the road Hajnowka – Bialowieza, a planned photovoltaic farm in the village of Bialowieza and the potential extension of the railway Hajnowka – Bialowieza. At time of drafting this report, no reply was received from the State Party.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is noted that forest management activities, including logging, have remained at a very low scale, and are limited to the active management zone, as recommended by the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission. The substantial increase in logging quota until the end of 2021, which was proposed in the new annexes to the FMP raised renewed concerns. It is recalled that, in its Decision **43 COM 7B.14**, the Committee considered that the existing FMPs should either not be amended, or be amended only in a very restrictive way to allow for strictly necessary safety measures, on the basis of a clear risk evaluation plan. This risk evaluation plan and fire management plan were not submitted and their current status is unclear. The review by IUCN of the submitted EIA of the proposed annexes to the FMP concluded that it does not provide a sufficient basis to be reassured that the measures proposed in the draft annexes will not impact the OUV of the property.

In its recent letter of 15 April 2021, the State Party clarified that only the new annexes for the Bialowieza and Browsk Forest Districts were approved foreseeing no logging in the protection zones and only very limited additional logging in the active protection zone of the Polish part of the property in order to ensure compliance with safety requirements and forest management activities related to Natura 2000 requirements. The amended FMP for the Bialowieza district also repeals the previous annex as had

been requested by the Committee, thereby reducing the authorized additional logging volume from 188.000 m³ to 108.814 m³. The proposed new annex for the Hajnowka Forest District, which foresaw a significant increase in logging volume linked to windfall clean-up has not been approved. The confirmation by the State Party that the approved amendments respond to the Decisions of the Committee is noted.

It is concerning that little progress has been made on the development of the MP for the Polish part of the property, which should define its overarching management objectives centered on the protection of its OUV and should guide the development of other management documents, such as forest management plans, in a more coherent manner. It is therefore recommended that the Committee urge the State Party of Poland to accelerate this process and ensure that the development of the MP involves all relevant experts and stakeholders and to seek further advice from IUCN to support this process if needed. The new MP is crucial to guide the preparation of the new 2022-2031 FMPs to ensure that these are in line with the protection of the OUV of the property and with the forest management prescriptions of the 2014 Nomination file as well as the recommendations of the 2018 mission. It is recommended that the State Party seeks further advice from IUCN on the proposed new FMP to ensure that these requirements are met, before approving them.

The work on updating the MP of the Belarusian part, and strengthening of its legal status, is noted and should be finalized. It is recommended that the States Parties agree on the formulation of a common goal and objectives for the TIMP based on the OUV, which then can be integrated in the MP of both parts of the property. Furthermore, it is recommended that the States Parties seek to engage technical expertise from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to support the process through appropriate mechanisms, such as an Advisory mission. The draft MPs and TIMP should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before approval.

With regards to the upgrade of the Narewowska road, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party of Poland to ensure that the necessary follow-up measures are put in place, including monitoring of the number of vehicles using the road, and, if any negative impacts from the increased use of the road are observed, that further consideration is given to establishing the necessary restrictions to minimize the impacts.

The assurances provided by Belarus that no wolf hunting will be carried out in its part of the property is welcome. While the on-going efforts to restore the hydrological regime of the property are encouraging, third party reports about drainage works inside the property are of high concern and the State Party of Belarus should be requested to provide further information on this matter.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.100

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.14**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Notes with satisfaction that forest management activities in the property, including logging, have remained at a very low scale, and only limited to the active management zone, as recommended by the 2018 Reactive Monitoring mission;*
4. *Notes the confirmation by the State Party of Poland that the recently approved amendments to the Forest Management Plans (FMPs) for the Bialowieza and Browsk Forest Districts are in line with the recommendation of the 2018 mission and only allow for limited forest management activities in the active management zone for strictly necessary safety measures and for measures necessary to implement Natura 2000 requirements;*
5. *Urges the State Party of Poland to accelerate the development of an overall Management Plan for its part of the property, which places the protection of the property's*

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) as its central objective, taking into account the recommendations of the 2018 mission, and stresses that this Management Plan should guide the development of other management documents, including the new 2022-2031 FMPs, to ensure that they are in line with the protection of the OUV of the property;

6. Also urges the State Party of Poland to ensure that any forest operations in the property, including those that might be envisaged in the new 2022-2031 FMPs, comply with the management prescriptions included in Decision **43 COM 7B.14**, in line with the 2014 Nomination file and the recommendations of the 2018 mission, and encourages the State Party of Poland to seek further advice from IUCN on the development of the new FMP to ensure that these requirements are met, before approving them;
7. Requests the State Party of Belarus to finalize the updating of the Management Plan for its part of the property, to submit a draft to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN before its final approval and, noting with satisfaction the strengthening of its legal status, to ensure that the relevant wildlife and forest management plans are updated, based on the updated MP;
8. Also requests the States Parties of Belarus and Poland, to define a common goal and objectives for the entire property based on the protection of the property's OUV as part of the preparation of a Transboundary Integrated Management Plan (TIMP), which should be subsequently integrated in the Management Plans of both parts of the property;
9. Also encourages the States Parties to engage technical expertise from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to support the development of the TIMP and the Management Plans for the Polish and Belarusian parts of the property through appropriate mechanisms, such as an Advisory mission;
10. Welcomes the assurances provided by the State Party of Belarus that no wolf hunting will be carried out in its component of the property, as well as the on-going efforts to restore the hydrological regime of the property but expresses concern about reported new drainage works inside the property and further requests the State Party of Belarus to provide updated information on this matter;
11. Requests furthermore the State Party of Poland to ensure that the necessary follow-up measures are put in place for the Narewowska road, including monitoring of the number of vehicles using the road, and, if any negative impacts from the increased use of the road are observed, that further consideration is given to establishing the necessary restrictions to minimize the impacts;
12. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property, on the implementation of the above and the recommendations by the 2018 mission, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

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

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1996

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

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/765/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/765/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

February 2001: UNESCO mission; May 2004: UNESCO-IUCN mission; April 2006: IUCN Retrospective Inventory mission; August 2007: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; August 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Illegal activities (Illegal salmon fishing)
- Mining (Gold mining)
- Major linear utilities (Gas pipeline)
- Renewable energy facilities (Development of a geothermal power station)
- Fires
- Management and institutional factors (Boundary changes)
- Ground transport infrastructure (Construction of the Esso-Palana road)
- Legal framework (Need for the development of a comprehensive national legal framework for the protection and management of natural properties)
- Decline in populations of wild reindeer and snow sheep
- Governance (Lack of management structure and coordination system)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/765/>

Current conservation issues

On 2 December 2019, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/765/documents/>, providing the following information:

- Anti-poaching activities within the property have been expanded, including the improvement of all-year-round and seasonal patrolling by special anti-poaching task groups, and patrolling vessels within the 'Kronotsky State Biosphere Reserve' (KSBR) and 'South Kamchatka State Wildlife Sanctuary' (SKWS);
- An agreement has been issued between the KSBR and the 'Association of Fishery Enterprises of Ozernovsky District' in order to address potential threats of fish poaching to KSBR coming from outside its boundaries;
- The zoning regime for the nature parks 'Nalychevo', 'Bystrinsky', 'Kluchevskoy' and 'Southern Kamchatka' has been submitted including activities permitted in each zone and maps showing the geographical coverage of the zones;
- Information is provided on monitoring and research activities, including of key species. It is confirmed that the reindeer population is severely threatened, while Kamchatka brown bear populations are healthy in spite of increased pressures. Some information is also provided on salmon populations in the different components of the property and the report states that populations of Sockeye salmon are increasing following measures taken to limit their catch;

- An Integrated Management Plan (IMP) has not been developed but each component has its individual management plan. A Coordination Committee has been created to facilitate integrated management;
- No mining activities are being conducted inside boundaries of the property and that mining activities near Bystrinsky and South Kamchatka are not impacting on its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
- In May 2019, the Chinese company Harbin Zhong Ji Guo Neng (HZJGN) confirmed its plan to invest in the construction of the hydro-electric power station in the vicinity of KSBR. The dam project would flood large areas including wintering pastures for the remaining reindeer population and facilitate access to the reserve;
- The revival of a proposal for the construction of a fish channel to link Kronotskoye Lake with the sea constitutes a renewed threat to the property;
- Data are also provided on the surface area and delimitation of the different components of the property.

The joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property took place from 8 to 14 August 2019 and the report is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/765/documents/>.

On 17 February 2020, a meeting was held between the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and representatives of the State Party and of the company “Rosa Khutor” who presented plans for a tourism resort and theme park “Three Volcano Park”, which would be partly located in the property. On 31 January 2020, the State Party also submitted a request for a minor boundary modification linked to the resort project.

On 12 and 22 October 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent letters to the State Party conveying information received from third parties regarding a potential pollution event in the marine environment surrounding the property, specifically concerning the KSBR and SKWS components and requesting further information on this issue.

On 1 April 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent an additional letter to the State Party requesting information on the reported signature in June 2020 by the Governor of Kamchatka Region of a resolution changing the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park. The State Party replied on 14 April 2021, informing that an analysis of the boundaries of the property had been undertaken resulting in the elaboration of a proposal for a Minor Boundary Modification (MBM) submitted by the State Party in February 2020. The boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park have been then adjusted through national procedures based on the provisions of the legislation of the Russian Federation, as the results of the MBM evaluation were not yet available due to the postponement of the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that the threats and management issues to the property, which were identified by the 2007 monitoring mission, have not diminished and that little progress has been achieved in implementing previous mission recommendations. While these threats have not yet impacted the OUV of the property, decisive action is urgent to stop poaching and control and limit tourism, and specific recommendations are included in the 2019 mission report.

In addition, the OUV is increasingly threatened by a number of large-scale projects. Of specific concern is the planned development of the “Three Volcano Park”, which according to the information presented to the mission and during the meeting with the World Heritage Centre would be partially constructed inside the South Kamchatka Nature Park in the property and include a marine terminal for cruise ships in Viluchinskaya Bay, a pristine fjord included in the property; a resort with 1.000 rooms, rope ways and ski slopes as well as a new highway to connect the marine terminal to the resort. The presented project plans, as well as the analysis of the mission, lead to the conclusion that, if this project is allowed to proceed, it would result in a severe deterioration of the natural beauty and scenic value of a part of the property, and therefore constitute an ascertained threat to the OUV of the property in line with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines* and warrant an inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The mission also recalled that any proposal to change the boundaries of the property to accommodate this project would have to be considered as a significant boundary modification in line with Paragraph 165 of the *Operational Guidelines*, given the potential impacts on the OUV. However, the State Party has submitted it as a minor boundary modification which has been subject to a separate evaluation by IUCN.

The confirmation by the State Party that the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park have already been modified at national level is of high concern, as this has removed the legal protection of part of the property before the Committee has made a decision on this proposed boundary modification. Protection being one of the pillars of the OUV, such removal of the legal protection of part of the property constitutes a clear potential danger to the property in line with Paragraph 180(b) (i) of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is therefore recommended that the Committee inscribes the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

A number of other issues also continue to be of concern. The 2019 mission did not receive any further details on the proposed construction of a hydro-electric power station in the vicinity of KSBR and it is of outmost concern that the State Party report notes that this project is proceeding. The dam project will flood the winter pasture lands of the already severely threatened reindeer population and therefore directly impact on the OUV of the property. It is recommended that the Committee reiterates its Decision **42 COM 7B.79** and urges the State Party to unequivocally abandon these plans in line with the commitment it previously expressed in its report presented to the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee.

It is also of concern that the State Party report mentions again the possibility of construction of a fish channel in KSBR to connect Kronotskoye Lake with the sea, despite the fact that during the 2019 mission, it was stated that the project would not be pursued. The report by the State Party clearly lays out the negative impacts this project would have by connecting the lake, which has developed a unique ecosystem over a long period of isolation, with the sea, including ecological implications as well as direct physical impacts. It is therefore considered that the channel would also constitute an ascertained danger to the OUV of the property and it is recommended that the Committee urges the State Party to reconfirm the information given to the mission that the project will not proceed.

The new zoning of the different components of the property, as submitted in the State Party report and to the 2019 mission, have greatly diminished the area of the property benefiting from a strict protection regime, in spite of the recommendation of the 2007 mission to increase the strict protection zones. The current zoning does not meet the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines* with respect to protecting the OUV and needs to be strengthened significantly.

The lack of an integrated management plan covering the property also remains a concern and the need to develop a holistic IMP including a common vision and goals in order to guarantee a harmonization of the management of all components needs to be reiterated again.

The potential pollution of marine waters causing mass mortality amongst benthic organisms in the waters surrounding the property is of concern due to the potential negative impacts on important attributes of the property's OUV, notably populations of sea otter and Steller's sea eagle. It is therefore recommended the Committee requests the State Party to provide more information on the issue to be able to evaluate its potential impacts on the property's OUV.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.109

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **40 COM 7B.100** and **42 COM 7B.79**, adopted respectively at its 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 42nd (Manama, 2018) sessions,
3. Notes with concern the conclusions of the 2019 Reactive Monitoring mission that the threats and management issues to the property, which were identified by the 2007 monitoring mission, have not diminished and that little progress has been achieved in implementing previous recommendations and considers that urgent measures are therefore needed to avoid impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;

4. *Expresses its utmost concern about the confirmation by the State Party that the boundaries of the South Kamchatka Nature Park have been modified at national level, thereby removing the legal protection of part of the property, and recalls that such removal of the legal protection of part of the property constitutes a clear potential danger to the property in line with Paragraph 180(b) (i) of the Operational Guidelines and therefore a case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger;*
5. ***Decides to inscribe Volcanoes of Kamchatka (Russian Federation) on the List of World Heritage in Danger;***
6. *Requests the State Party to develop a set of corrective measures and a proposal for a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR), focused around restoring the appropriate legal protection regime throughout the entire property and addressing other urgent requests regarding various development projects outlined further below;*
7. *Also expresses its utmost concern about the proposed tourism resort project “Three Volcano Park”, which is planned to be partially constructed inside the South Kamchatka Nature Park component of the property and further considers that if this project is allowed to proceed, it would result in a severe deterioration of the natural beauty and scenic value of part of the property, and therefore also constitute an ascertained threat to the OUV of the property in line with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines;*
8. *Further expresses its utmost concern about both the proposed construction of a hydro-electric power station in the vicinity of the Kronotsky State Nature Reserve (KSNR) and the proposed construction of a fish channel in KSNR to connect Kronotskoye Lake with the sea, urges the State Party to unequivocally abandon these projects in line with the confirmation it had previously expressed at the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee and to the 2019 mission, and considers furthermore that both projects would also constitute an ascertained danger to the OUV of the property;*
9. *Notes with concern that the new zoning of the different components of the property has greatly diminished the area of the property benefiting from a strict protection regime and also requests the State Party to reconsider this zoning approach and to substantially increase the area within the property under a strict protection regime in order to meet the requirements of the protection of the OUV, as recommended by the 2019 mission;*
10. *Further requests the State Party to also fully implement all other recommendations of the 2019 mission, including in particular:*
 - a) *Develop an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) to guarantee a holistic and integrated management approach for the entire property, and ensure that all components have a management plan, including a zoning plan and a buffer zone, which guarantee the protection of the OUV,*
 - b) *Take immediate measures to address uncontrolled tourism in the property and to better regulate tourism,*
 - c) *Develop a Tourism Development Master Plan including considerations for alternative areas outside of the property for touristic leisure activities in order to channel the tourist inflow,*
 - d) *Ensure that all projects planned in or near the property, including potential mining projects, are subject to a rigorous Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and fully assess the potential impacts in relation to the OUV in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment and submit these to the World*

Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before a decision is taken which is difficult to reverse,

- e) Further strengthen efforts to combat any form of poaching in the property, including illegal salmon poaching,*
 - f) Continue to develop baseline ecological monitoring information on key wildlife populations such as salmon, brown bear, snow sheep and reindeer;*
- 11. Also notes with concern the potential pollution event in the marine environment surrounding the property and requests furthermore the State Party to provide more information regarding the issue in order to be able to evaluate its potential impacts on the OUV of the property;*
- 12. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

110. Western Caucasus (Russian Federation) (N 900)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1999

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

April 2008: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; May 2009: High-level visit by Director of the World Heritage Centre and the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee; May 2010: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; September 2012: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; November 2016: IUCN Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/management plan (Lack of Management Plan)
- Legal framework (Weakening of conservation controls and laws)
- Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation (Impacts of proposed tourism infrastructure development)
- Ground transport infrastructure (Road construction)
- Illegal activities (Deforestation)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/>

Current conservation issues

On 31 January 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/900/documents/>, providing the following information:

- The rejection of plans to build large ski facilities in the property in the basins of the Mzymta, Urushten and Malaya Laba rivers is confirmed. However, the construction of a mountain resort on the Lagonaki Plateau is being considered provided that the construction and operation of this resort will not affect its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Detailed plans and the results of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the project were planned to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre by 5 April 2020. The intention to invite an Advisory mission is also mentioned;
- By order No. 586-R of 30 March 2017, a lease of lands provides for the implementation of a large-scale investment project in the territory of Sochi National Park and the Sochi Federal Wildlife Refuge. The nature protection regime of both protected areas is reported to be maintained in the leased areas and no economic or construction activities have yet been implemented. Such activities would only be considered based on an EIA that would include an assessment of impacts on the OUV;
- For the purpose of fire protection, the State Party conducted in 2018 works on a forest road to Lunnaya Polyana that existed until 1999 along the western boundary of the property. Roadworks were discontinued in 2019;
- Inspections detected 81 violations of the protection regime in the Caucasus Strict Nature Reserve, mostly related to illegal visitation and in some cases illegal fishing and gathering of plants. The populations of protected plant and animal species are stable or increasing, with the exception of Colchic Boxwood being deleteriously affected by the invasive boxwood firefly. The negative impact from insect infestations on the OUV of the property is confirmed and expected to increase. The State Party is currently preparing proposals in view of assessing damage and developing restoration measures in collaboration with IUCN's Invasive Species Specialist Group.

On 17 February 2020, a meeting was held between the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and a State Party delegation including representatives from the company interested in developing the proposed project in Lagonaki. No further details of the project were provided other than that it would be different from previous proposals. It is also noted that so far no EIA for the project has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in spite of the date mentioned in the State Party report.

On 13 July 2020, the World Heritage Centre transmitted third-party information to the State Party, according to which, new Resolution No. 97 of the Government of the Republic of Adygeya of 21 May 2020 enables the establishment of an economic zone inside the property where logging and the construction of linear facilities would be possible. The third-party argued that this resolution would legalise the construction of the above-mentioned road to the Lunnaya Polyana Biosphere Centre.

On 22 September 2020, the State Party submitted information to the World Heritage Centre confirming that the 'Headwaters of Rivers Pshecha and Pshechashcha' and 'River Tsitsa headwaters' Nature Monuments, which constitute part of the property, had been reorganised as Natural Parks. On 6 October 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party requesting further details of the legal implications of the changed status resulting from the announced reorganisation in order to be able to evaluate potential impacts on the OUV of the property. At the time of writing of this report, no further information has been received regarding this matter.

On 2 February 2021, the State Party submitted an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, including an explanatory note on the clarification of the boundaries of the property. The explanatory note delineates, among other minor deviations from the boundaries as inscribed, three enclaves to be excluded from the property in the Lagonaki Plateau area.

On 26 March 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party requesting further details regarding an order creating and approving the boundaries of the Lagonaki Biosphere Polygon within the property, based on concerns that the creation of this biosphere polygon might pave the way for the installation of ski facilities inside this property. On 13 April 2021, the State Party replied stating that the goal of the order is to update the legal status of the biosphere polygon to comply with current legislation, whilst also delineating precise boundaries of the biosphere polygon, and expanding these to include the Fisht-Oshten mountain massif. The letter also further confirmed that proposals remain under consideration for the development of a ski resort in the Lagonaki Plateau, stating that the location of the proposed resort is situated within the biosphere polygon, but outside the boundaries of the property, as per the boundaries delineated by the State Party in the explanatory note on the clarifications of the boundaries submitted to the World Heritage Centre on the 2 February 2021.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

While the confirmation that plans to build large ski facilities in the Mzymta, Urushten and Malaya Laba river basins in the property have been rejected is welcomed, the proposed development of a “mountain resort” at Lagonaki is of serious concern. It is recalled that the World Heritage Committee has repeatedly stated its position that the construction of large-scale infrastructure within the property, including on the Lagonaki Plateau, would constitute a clear case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in line with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is therefore recommended that the State Party urgently provides more details on the planned resort, ensure that no infrastructure is planned within the existing boundaries of the inscribed property and that an EIA assessing the potential impacts on the OUV of the property be submitted to the World Heritage Centre before any decisions are made, in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

The information contained within the explanatory note on the clarification of the boundaries provided by the State Party is noted with concern. Considering this proposes the exclusion of enclaves in the Lagonaki Plateau area, it is clear that such a reduction of the property's boundaries cannot be considered through the boundaries clarification procedure but would have to be considered through a significant modification of the boundaries in line with paragraph 165 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It needs to be noted that the proposed boundaries would create fragmentation of the property, and would be likely to have a direct negative impact on the property's OUV, including its integrity. It also needs to be recalled that Annex 11 of the *Operational Guidelines* states that “boundary modifications should serve better identification of World Heritage properties and enhance protection of their Outstanding Universal Value”. It is further recommended that the Committee requests the State Party to clarify the current legal protection regime of these areas in order to ensure that all areas within the World Heritage property as inscribed benefit from appropriate level of protection.

The confirmation that land has been leased in Sochi National Park and the Sochi Federal Wildlife Refuge with the objective to implement a large-scale investment project is of concern, especially after the State Party in its report last year affirmed that no such plans existed. It should be recalled that in its Decision **42 COM 7B.80**, the World Heritage Committee reiterated its concern that large-scale infrastructure projects in the Sochi National Park and Sochi Federal Wildlife Refuge could have negative impacts on the OUV of the property, including on efforts to reintroduce the Persian leopard and the consequent disruption to the habitat connectivity of this endangered species. It is recommended that the Committee reiterates its request to the State Party not to permit any construction of large-scale infrastructure in any of the protected areas immediately adjacent to the property without submitting the EIA to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN.

The confirmation of further works on a road to the Lunnaya Polyana road is also of concern. While noting the clarification by the State Party that the works concern a re-opening of an existing forest road for park management purposes, it is considered that these works could result in erosion and also could facilitate access to the property, including to the Biosphere Centre. It is recalled that the 2012 Reactive Monitoring mission, when reviewing the question of this road stressed that it should be ensured that all infrastructure facilities, even if deemed necessary for management and research purposes, have no negative impacts on the OUV and that an EIA should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre before any final decision is taken on this development, in line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

The confirmation of the reorganisation of protected areas that comprise part of the property is noted. However, in relation to third party information received expressing concern that the reorganisation aims to establish economic areas inside the property, allowing for logging and for the construction of linear facilities, and in doing so, permitting the construction of the road to Lunnaya Polyana, it is recommended that the State Party should also be requested to clarify the legal implications of the changed status resulting from the announced reorganisation in order to be able to evaluate potential impacts on the protection of the property.

Finally, the reported negative impact from invasive alien species (IAS) on the OUV of the property is of serious concern and, whilst the envisaged collaboration with IUCN's Invasive Species Specialist Group in combating the outbreak is welcome, this should continue to be encouraged.

Overall, it is of great concern that large-scale infrastructure projects continue to be proposed within and immediately adjacent to the property, despite the very clear position adopted by the World Heritage Committee. It is also unclear whether and how cumulative impacts of these proposed developments have been or would be assessed. It is therefore recommended that the Committee requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to a) assess the scale of impacts from IAS on the OUV of the property and whether they represent an

ascertained danger, b) assess whether the creation of the biosphere polygon and the changes in status of the nature monuments included in the property have affected the legal protection of these areas and c) assess whether envisaged infrastructure and road development projects inside and near the property, including their cumulative impacts, represent a potential danger to the OUV of the property, in line with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines* and to evaluate whether the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.110

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **32 COM 7B.25**, **42 COM 7B.80** and **43 COM 7B.18**, adopted at its 32nd (Quebec City, 2008), 42nd (Manama, 2018) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,
3. Welcomes the confirmation that plans to build large ski facilities in the property in the basins of the Mzymta, Urushten and Malaya Laba rivers have been rejected but notes with concern that the construction of a “mountain resort” at Lagonaki Plateau is being considered and requests the State Party to provide more details on the planned resort, and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre before any decisions are made, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;
4. Reiterates its position that the construction of large-scale infrastructure within the property, including on Lagonaki plateau, would constitute a case for inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in line with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines and urges the State Party to confirm that no infrastructure is planned within the inscribed property;
5. Noting with concern the exclusion of enclaves in the Lagonaki Plateau area of the property detailed in the clarification of the boundaries submitted by the State Party, recalls that any amendment of the property as currently inscribed, and in particular any amendment that would result in the exclusion of any areas of the property and could negatively affect its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), must be submitted as a significant boundary modification in conformity with Paragraph 164 of the Operational Guidelines, and such a reduction of the property’s boundaries can therefore not be considered through a boundary clarification procedure, taking into account that such boundary modifications should serve for better identification of World Heritage properties and enhance protection of their OUV;
6. Also requests the State Party to clarify the current legal protection regime of the whole Lagonaki Plateau, in order to ensure that all areas within the World Heritage property as inscribed benefit from the required level of protection;
7. Noting with serious concern that land plots, located in the Sochi Federal Wildlife Refuge and Sochi National Park, continue to be leased for a large-scale investment project, reiterates its request to the State Party not to permit any construction of large-scale infrastructure in the Sochi Federal Wildlife Refuge and Sochi National Park immediately adjacent to the property, given the high likelihood that such construction could have a negative impact on the property’s OUV, and further requests the State Party to submit an EIA, in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, for review by IUCN before any investment project is considered;

8. *Requests furthermore the State Party to provide clarification on Resolution No. 97 of the Government of the Republic of Adygeya of 21 May 2020, which allegedly enables the establishment of an economic zone inside the property where logging and the construction of linear facilities would be possible;*
9. *Also urges the State Party not to conduct any further works on the road to Lunnaya Polyana and reiterates the assessment of the 2012 mission on this road project, which stressed that it should be ensured that all infrastructure facilities, even if deemed necessary for management and research purposes, have no negative impacts on the OUV and that an EIA should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre before any final decision is taken on this development, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;*
10. *Requests moreover the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate whether the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger with regards to the following issues, in line with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines:*
 - a) *The scale of impacts from invasive alien species (IAS) on the OUV of the property and whether they represent an ascertained danger to the OUV of the property,*
 - b) *The creation of the biosphere polygon and the changes in status of the nature monuments included in the property has affected the legal protection of these areas,*
 - c) *Whether the envisaged infrastructure and road development projects inside and near the property and their cumulative impacts represent a potential danger to the OUV of the property;*
11. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022, **with a view to considering, in case of confirmation of potential or ascertained danger to its OUV, the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.***

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

114. El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve (Mexico) (N 1410)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2013

Criteria (vii)(viii)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Factors identified at the time of inscription of the property:

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

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/>

Current conservation issues

Following information received from third parties, the World Heritage Centre wrote to the State Parties of the United States of America (USA) and Mexico on 4 October 2019 and 2 March 2020 requesting information in relation to the project of construction of a wall along the border between the USA and Mexico and its potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, which is located on the territory of Mexico along the border.

On 15 August 2020, the State Party of the USA confirmed that a construction of a new border barrier was currently underway on the border separating the property from the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument (OPCNM) and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (CBNWR) protected areas located in the USA. The construction is being coordinated by the US Department of Homeland Security with the US Army Corps of Engineers and is being placed along the entire length between the property and the above-mentioned protected areas. The State Party of the USA noted that discussions were ongoing to understand and mitigate, where possible, any potential environmental impacts from the barrier, such as on wildlife movements.

On 10 April 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Mexico expressing strong concern regarding information received from various sources that the construction of the wall project along the border of the property had already been started by the USA. The letter informed the State Party of Mexico that this issue will be examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session.

In response, on 5 October 2020, the State Party of Mexico submitted a State of conservation report available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1410/documents/>. The report confirms that the border wall construction is complete along 3 out of 4 sections, with sections in other areas still under construction

at the time of reporting. The new structures consist of a solid metal wall combined with another parallel wall of mesh, barbed wire and service and surveillance roads and replace the existing physical structures in the border area, which were permeable to wildlife. It is reported that these new structures will inevitably have impacts on the biodiversity and the OUV of the property, as a result of loss of ecological connectivity, degradation and fragmentation of habitat, reduced access to resources, isolation and fragmentation of populations, among other aspects.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The negative impacts of the border wall on the biodiversity and conservation of the property is of utmost concern. The border wall will constitute a physical barrier between the property and the adjoining OPCNM and CPNWR and will result in direct negative impacts on the wider ecological connectivity and movements of key wildlife populations, such as the Sonoran Pronghorn and the Bighorn Sheep, which constitute important attributes of the OUV of the property. Such conclusion is also confirmed by the preliminary assessment of potential impacts on the property provided by the State Party of Mexico.

It needs to be recalled that the IUCN 2013 Evaluation of the nomination for the inscription of the property on the World Heritage List had already noted that the property's ecological connectivity with the OPCNM and CPNWR as well as the Barry M. Goldwater Range in the USA was an important condition for the integrity of the property. The evaluation also pointed out that while the international border presented no obstacles in the past, newly erected physical barriers would present a potential threat to the state of conservation of the property.

It is of particular concern that no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of this project has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in line with the requirements of the *Operational Guidelines*, given the potential impact of the wall on the OUV of the property, and that construction works are underway and been partially completed.

It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party of the USA to halt any further works on the border wall adjacent to the property, and request, in line with Paragraph 118bis of the *Operational Guidelines*, the States Parties of Mexico and the USA to cooperate in conducting an assessment of impacts that the construction works might have already had on the OUV of the property and to develop appropriate measures to ensure the restoration of ecological connectivity and submit information on this to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN.

In line with the spirit of the *World Heritage Convention*, there is a need to reinforce transnational cooperation to ensure the proper protection and conservation of the property and maintain ecological connectivity. In this respect, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate its Decision **37 COM 8B.16** which encouraged the States Parties of Mexico and the USA to strengthen cooperation on the conservation and management of the shared Greater Sonoran Desert Ecosystem, building upon the existing agreements and working relationships at all levels, with a view of the possible formal establishment of a transboundary protected area.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.114

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.add,
2. Recalling Decision **37 COM 8B.16**, adopted at its 37th session (Phnom Penh, 2013),
3. Expresses its utmost concern with regard to the construction of a border wall by the State Party of the United States of America between the property and the adjoining Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge located on the territory of the United States of America;
4. Considers that the construction of the border wall will have negative impacts on the integrity of the property and that the presence of a physical barrier will negatively affect the wider ecological connectivity and movement of key wildlife populations, such as the

Sonoran Pronghorn and the Bighorn Sheep, which constitute important attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;

5. *Notes with great concern that construction works on the wall are underway and have been partially completed and that no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of this project has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;*
6. *Also recalling Paragraph 15 of the Operational Guidelines, urges the State Party of the United States of America to halt any further works on the border wall between the property and the adjacent protected areas in the United States of America and requests the State Party of the United States of America to collaborate with the State Party of Mexico, in conformity with Paragraph 118bis of the Operational Guidelines, in order to conduct an assessment of impacts that the construction works might have already had on the OUV of the property, and to develop appropriate measures to ensure the restoration of ecological connectivity and also requests the State Party to submit a progress report to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;*
7. *Reiterates its Decision 37 COM 8B.16, which encouraged the States Parties of Mexico and the United States of America to strengthen cooperation on the conservation and management of the shared Greater Sonoran Desert Ecosystem, building upon the existing agreements and working relationships at all levels, with a view to the possible formal establishment of a transboundary protected area;*
8. *Finally requests the State Party of Mexico, in cooperation with the State Party of the United States of America, to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, a report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

II. REPORTS ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF PROPERTIES INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST INITIALLY FORESEEN TO BE EXAMINED BY THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE IN 2021

CULTURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

117. Asmara: a Modernist City of Africa (Eritrea) (C 1550)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2017

Criteria (ii)(iv)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1550/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 2016-2021)

Total amount approved: USD 89,950

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1550/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided: USD 44,038 under the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Unfinalized Urban Conservation Master Plan and Asmara Planning Norms and Technical Regulations
- Lack of strategies to ensure a steady influx of financial resources, substantial qualified human resources, and considerable institutional and technical capacity
- Need to set up the central management body

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1550/>

Current conservation issues

On 15 January 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1550/documents/> and provides the following information:

- The State Party indicates that it was not possible to finalize the Urban Conservation Master Plan (UCMP) and the Asmara Planning and Technical Regulation (APTR) by the date foreseen in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other unforeseen circumstances. Work is ongoing, however, and the Asmara Heritage Project (AHP) and its consultants will finish the UCMP for submission to the World Heritage Centre by November 2021;
- The Eritrean Cultural and Natural Heritage Proclamation is being implemented with the hiring of a Managing Director and the establishment of the Eritrean Cultural and Natural Heritage Board. Nevertheless, there have not yet been any specific protective designations for the property. The

State Party understands the concerns of the Committee expressed in its previous decision (**43 COM 7B.104**) and intends to facilitate the urgent declaration of Asmara as a Protected Site;

- The AHP has initiated the development of a Local Economic Development Plan (LEDP), which will update a baseline study dating to 2015 to align it with the provisions of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL). The LEDP will be developed in 2021 and will include financial development strategies and the establishment of a conservation fund;
- Capacity building workshops have been implemented, and a project has been developed with the Politecnico di Milano for further capacity building. Other activities at the property have included the celebration of African World Heritage Day and the participation in the Modern Heritage of Africa initiative. Discussions have also commenced with UNESCO, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the European Union and the Getty Foundation to seek international financial and technical assistance.

The State Party further reports that, as a result of the current conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, several rockets were launched at Asmara. It reports that none landed in the World Heritage property and no damage to the OUV resulted.

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

The World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies recognize the complexity of the work to develop the UCMP and APTR, and especially since the 2020 complications arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The State Party underscores the importance of continuing the work on both documents, which is appreciated. It will be important for the State Party to work with their consultants to finalize these documents and to submit them to the World Heritage Centre for examination by the Advisory Bodies as soon as possible. Furthermore, it is considered that the designation of the property as a Protected Site within the framework of the Cultural and Natural Heritage Proclamation of 2015 is also of fundamental importance to providing the framework for the implementation of the plan and for the safeguarding of the property.

Some additional clarification is needed in regard to the various stakeholders involved in management and conservation of the property, including the newly created Eritrean Cultural and Natural Heritage Board, the Department of Public Works Development (DPWD), the Asmara Heritage Project (AHP), the Urban Planning Division, the Building and Supervision Division, the Road and Maintenance Division, the Commission of Culture and Sports (CCS), the Municipality of Asmara, and others. It will be important to provide structure to the various roles and responsibilities of these parties in the UCMP, presumably with the AHP in the lead role in implementing the plan and coordinating the activities of all stakeholders towards the safeguarding of its OUV.

In regard to the development of a financial strategy for funding the necessary conservation and management activities, it is important that the LEDP being developed be linked to the overall UCMP to ensure coordination. The State Party could, as guidance, refer to similar work being developed for buffer zones by other States Parties.

The steps taken for capacity building are to be congratulated, and the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies would encourage the State Party to continue in these efforts both in regard to managing the historic urban landscape and to the physical conservation of this important modern heritage. The State Party also mentions that it continues to search for external funding to meet many of these needs. A focus on ensuring the necessary locally generated resources will be important as future work on management and conservation continues. The work towards completing LEDP should also look at this matter.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.117

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision 43 COM 7B.104, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*

3. Commends the ongoing activities aimed at building the capacity of stakeholders at the property in order to enhance the skills and knowledge to safeguard its OUV;
4. Acknowledges the progress made on the Urban Conservation Master Plan (UCMP) and the Asmara Planning and Technical Regulation (APTR), but requests the State Party to work with its consultants to finalize these documents in order to submit them as soon as possible to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
5. Also requests the State Party to complete the process of designation of the Property as a Protected Site within the framework of the Cultural and Natural Heritage Proclamation of 2015 in order to provide a framework for the implementation of the UCMP and for the safeguarding of the property;
6. Further reiterates its request for the development of a financial strategy through the foreseen Local Economic Development Plan, linked to the UCMP, for funding the necessary conservation and management activities;
7. Congratulates the State Party for the steps taken for capacity building, and encourages it to continue in these efforts both in regard to managing the historic urban landscape and to the physical conservation of this important modern heritage;
8. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022** an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

118. Rock-Hewn Churches, Lalibela (Ethiopia) (C 18)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1978

Criteria (i)(ii)(iii)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1980-2000)

Total amount approved: USD 93,300

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 800,000 for the « Conservation Action Plan for Lalibela » - Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Norwegian Funds-in-Trust).

Previous monitoring missions

2004, 2005, 2008, 2009: World Heritage Centre follow-up missions; 2006, 2007, 2008: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring missions; May 2018: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Absence of a Management Plan for the property (issue resolved)
- Lack of clearly defined boundaries for the property and the buffer zone
- Impact of the four temporary shelters constructed in 2008

- Insufficient urban and architectural regulations
- Urban development and encroachment around the property
- Impact of rainwater and humidity
- Impact of earthquakes
- Geological and architectural characteristics of the property
- Demolition of most of the traditional "tukul" dwellings

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/>

Current conservation issues

On 4 December 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/18/documents/>. Further details on the church shelters were submitted on 11 December 2020. Progress in several conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions is indicated, as follows:

- An Ethiopian-French bilateral project is developing a long-term conservation strategy for the churches. Options have been suggested for the shelter design based on the updated norms governing the structural calculation of the existing shelters, requiring anchors into the natural rock;
- The bilateral projects also encompass a three-year funded partnership agreement (the Sustainable Lalibela Project), securing resources for additional actions on archaeological heritage research, material conservation and capacity building based on previous ICOMOS advice, as well as the intention to promote the enhancement of the property with an open-air museum. The following work has been undertaken:
 - Monitoring report of the results of a one-year cycle of crack monitoring,
 - Installation report on the placement of 16 electronic fissure-meters on the foundations of the existing shelters in 2019,
 - Detailed maps of Group 1 and 2 with identification of voids and tunnels with 3D laser scanning,
 - Development of a dismantling methodology for the existing shelters;
- Final reports of the 2016/2018 US-funded (US Government's Ambassadors Fund for the Cultural Preservation) conservation on the uncovered Bete Gabriel Rafael and Bete Golgotha/Mikael churches have been submitted
- Information is provided on the Council of Ministers of Ethiopia regulation No. 344/2015 of August 2015, which defines the churches and their surroundings as a Reserved Area, operationalizes an Advisory Committee for local site management, and identifies the World Heritage property and buffer zone boundaries with GPS coordinates. Integration of these boundaries into a cadastral system through the Federal Mapping Agency is planned;
- The Structural Plan regulating the urban growth of Lalibela is currently being revised to direct the urban expansion to lower-lying parts of the town, though further details were not specified.

Information on the bilateral Ethiopian-French collaboration is regularly exchanged with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for comment and review.

ICOMOS prepared two extensive technical reviews of the above-mentioned material, and meetings were held with representatives of the State Party, the French authorities, the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and others on 2 December 2020, 4 February 2021 and 12 May 2021.

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

In 2008, four temporary protective shelters were erected over five of the eleven rock-hewn churches to protect them from weathering and to allow conservation and repairs to be carried out. The Committee agreed reluctantly to their construction and only subject to parameters that included their ultimate dismantling.

The conservation work envisaged when the shelters were erected has not materialized in any adequate form and no monitoring of the condition of the rock was undertaken. Recently, the engineering norms that are relevant to these shelters have been revised to reflect local climatic conditions, with the result that these structures no longer have sufficient structural integrity to meet these norms. The Statement

of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) acknowledges that these structures have a visual impact on the integrity of the property. Moreover, the church authorities and the local community have never approved of these structures because of their visual intrusion into holy spaces, but also for the frightening noise resulting from vibration that can interrupt ceremonies and cause panic.

The objectives of the current French-initiated bilateral project are to be welcomed in terms of the long-term protection of the churches and their restoration, and the training and capacity building components and other improvements to the property under the "Sustainable Lalibela Project". A Steering Committee consisting of national and international authority representatives has been established to oversee this project.

The project also addresses the feasibility of improving/replacing the shelters. Based on studies of the mineral structure of the rock into which the churches are carved and its susceptibility to water penetration, the feasibility study recommends complete external protection of all churches by permanent shelter constructions. In order to meet the new engineering norms, such shelters would either need to be bound to the ground by massive counterweights or anchored into the rock. Three options for the design of the shelters are being explored. The Steering Committee concluded that as the anchoring option enables lighter shelter constructions, UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies should be requested to support in principle the use of anchors. Yet, the data so far provided on rock analysis is insufficient to allow a clear understanding of the causes of the cracks within the churches or of how they might have changed over time. The current analysis that has been provided is more of a general analysis of the rock type and does not provide specifics or comparators with other churches. What is also lacking is any detailed analysis of the traditional practices that were in place some fifty years ago for sheltering the roofs of the churches in the rainy season, of any negative impacts of drier conditions under shelters, or of detailed comparisons of weathering between sheltered and unsheltered churches.

The reports from the previous 2016-2018 conservation projects of two churches not covered by shelters suggested a conservation strategy based on a minimal intervention approach using sustainable stone conservation techniques with local craftsmanship to actively pursue regular seasonal maintenance to counteract the rain and sun's erosive effects.

Requested to assess whether anchors for new shelters were acceptable or not, ICOMOS considers that this question implies an acceptance of shelters as the preferred solution to address the conservation concerns. On the basis of current knowledge, the Advisory Bodies do not consider that enough data exists to rule out other options or to choose the shelter option. More information is needed on the efficacy of alternative, less-invasive protection approaches to preventing water penetration and its protective contribution to weathering effects before generally ruling such treatment strategies out. All potential options need to be explored as a basis for developing a conservation plan. Moreover, while the shelter option might bring some benefits to the physical fabric, the negative impacts that the shelters would bring to the architecture and symbolism of this extraordinary fragile, holy ensemble of churches, also needs to be considered. The 2018 joint UNESCO/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission to Lalibela highlighted the importance of ensuring that all interventions are sensitive to the entire property's living heritage and the churches' sacred character.

The information provided by the State Party on the operationalization of the Local Advisory Committee's involvement introduced with the national reserve act to the property (proclamation Nr. 344/2015) is not sufficient to conclude that effective local management of the property has yet been put in place. Furthermore, the report does not provide any information on how the improvement of living conditions near the churches is being addressed in ongoing urban planning processes since no vision statement on a sustainable development perspective for the urban condition of Lalibela has been presented, as requested by the World Heritage Committee.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.118

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.105**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),

3. *Acknowledges the information provided on the restoration projects implemented at the Bete Gabriel-Rafael and Beta Golgotha/Mikael churches, particularly the successfully applied minimal intervention approach for roof conservation on these churches not covered by shelters;*
4. *Welcomes the overall aims of the Sustainable Lalibela Project being developed as part of a bilateral Ethiopian-French project, particularly the focus on capacity building and formal scientific education in conservation-restoration and archaeological research;*
5. *Also welcomes the development of a dismantling methodology for the existing shelters, notes that the existing shelters do not meet the new engineering norms and need considerable strengthening of counterweights; and urges the State Party to apply modifications to the existing protective shelters to comply with the revised national construction norms, keeping the temporary character of these shelters until their subsequent dismantling;*
6. *Also notes that the bilateral Ethiopian-French project is recommending, on the basis of studies of the mineral structure of the rock into which the churches are carved and its susceptibility to water penetration, the complete external protection of all churches and their immediate surroundings by permanent shelter constructions; and that such shelters would either need to be bound to the ground by massive counter weights or anchored into the rock;*
7. *Further notes that three options for the design of shelters are being explored and that the Steering Committee has requested UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to support in principle the use of rock anchors for new shelters;*
8. *Considers that on the basis of current knowledge, not enough data exists to support the shelter option or rule out other options; and that a long-term conservation plan, based on adequate analysis of all potential options, needs to be agreed before decisions are taken on shelters;*
9. *Requests the State Party, in order to allow adequate comparisons of all potential options as a basis for developing a conservation plan, to:*
 - a) *Explore the efficacy of alternative, less-invasive protection approaches to preventing water penetration and its protective contribution to weathering effects before generally ruling out such treatment strategies,*
 - b) *Undertake a detailed analysis of traditional practices that were in place some fifty years ago for sheltering the roofs of the churches in the rainy season,*
 - c) *Analyze the negative impacts of drier conditions under shelters,*
 - d) *Provide detailed comparisons of weathering between sheltered and unsheltered churches;*
10. *Further welcomes the dialogue that has developed between the State Party, the French authorities and the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies on the emerging bi-lateral project, and encourages the State Party to continue this dialogue to support the development of a conservation plan;*
11. *Also requests the State Party to present a people-centered approach to preserving the property, including participatory management in the church structures' conservation-restoration, and acknowledging the active role the churches have as a living heritage for the local communities;*

12. Further requests the State Party to submit all relevant data on the mitigation measures and modifications applied to the existing temporary shelters, including a comprehensive study for the conservation of the Group II area that allows for removing the current shelter at Bete Lebanos;
13. Also urges the State Party to ensure the operationalization of the Local Advisory Committee, according to the Reserved Area regulation, to revise the 2014 Management Plan, and to submit it to the World Heritage Centre, along with the cadaster maps and with a request for Minor Boundary Modification, including all management and planning provisions for the property;
14. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, a Vision Statement on growth and development, in line with the 2015 Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention, that reflects and respects the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and serves as a guiding principle for the revised Structure Plan of Lalibela and a Local Development Plan for the property and its buffer zone, issued by the national and regional authorities, which should both be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
15. Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

ARAB STATES

126. Ancient Thebes with its Necropolis (Egypt) (C 87)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (i)(iii)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/87/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (in 2001; not implemented)

Total amount approved: USD 7,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/87/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 1,131,000 from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, 2002-2004 and 2008 (wall paintings restoration in the tomb of Amenophis III); Special Account for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Egypt: USD 931,674 for 'Hassan Fathy New Gournà', and USD 310,381 for 'Memphis and Thebes Sites Management Support'; Euro 150,000 from the Government of France for Enhancing Capacities for the Protection of World Heritage Properties in Egypt (2020).

Previous monitoring missions

2001: ICOMOS mission; 2002: hydrology expert mission; July 2006 and May 2007: World Heritage Centre missions; April 2008, May 2009 and April 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS missions; January/February 2021 UNESCO Advisory mission.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system
- Deliberate destruction of heritage (Demolitions in the villages of Gournà on the West Bank of the Nile and transfer of the population)
- Flooding: Risks of flooding (Valleys of Kings and Queens)
- Housing and agricultural encroachment on the West Bank of the Nile
- Human resources: Limited available technical and human resources
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation: Absence of strategy to manage and control tourism sustainably
- Lack of a Conservation Plan for the property
- Major infrastructure and development projects taking place or scheduled
- Management Activities
- Management systems/management plan: Absence of a comprehensive Management Plan
- Natural decay and structural problems
- Neglect of important modern heritage, namely Hassan Fathy's buildings in New Gournà
- Uncontrolled urban development
- Water (rain/water table): Rising underground water level

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/87/>

Current conservation issues

On 17 December 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation, a summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/87/documents/> and reports on progress in implementing Committee Decisions and current projects, as follows:

- The Supreme Committee for the Management of World Heritage Sites continues to develop and implement a strategic vision for management and protection of Egypt's World Heritage properties;
- Responses to some of the recommendations of the 2017 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission;
- Information about works undertaken at the Temple of the Apt, the Temple of Medinet Habu, the Ramesseum, and the Temple of Seti I;
- Information about improved access for the disabled at the temples of Karnak, and, archaeological excavations and restoration work at the Avenue of Sphinxes as well as other areas;
- Information regarding the lighting and security cameras, completion of the underground water project, and the contingency plan for flooding in the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens;
- Work on the implementation of the Karnak plaza that began in 2006 as part of the comprehensive development plan for the city of Luxor.

In relation to the Management Plan for the property, the State Party advises that each component is managed in an appropriate yet separate way to preserve the attributes and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), such as in the management of restoration plans, periodic maintenance, tourism, human resources management, community engagement, and other activities and components of the management plan. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities proposes to use studies and proposals prepared by the supervisors of the missions working on the sites, to prepare a unified site management plan.

A UNESCO Advisory mission to Egypt took place from 30 January to 4 February 2021. The mission considered several issues related to the conservation of World Heritage properties, including Ancient Thebes with its Necropolis. High level meetings, onsite consultations and a workshop with site managers and focal points were held, in addition to a short online workshop prior to the mission, to provide a detailed introduction to the *World Heritage Convention* and the *Operational Guidelines* for its implementation.

One of the tasks of the mission was to review the situation of the relocation of four ram-headed sphinxes from Karnak Temple to Tahrir Square in Cairo. In the view of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, this action has no impact on the OUV of the property. The subject sphinxes were not directly visible at the site owing to their location at the far end of the row of sphinxes, and also as they were covered with rubble remaining from the construction of the temple walls.

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

The State Party has undertaken a number of excavation and restoration works and has provided responses to some of the issues addressed by the Committee and to some of the recommendations of the 2017 mission. The report presents some technical information about this work, but still lacks detailed illustrated and graphical material, which is important for its assessment in terms of quality and scope. The Committee has previously urged the State Party to implement and report on the recommendations of the 2017 mission, and to expedite preparation of an integrated Management Plan, and the revision of the 2030 Masterplan to integrate the conservation of OUV across all projects, mitigate the adverse effects of tourism and consider an integrated development approach, in addition to the elaboration of a conservation plan setting out priorities and needs. More information is needed on the lighting and security camera project, the (completed) underground water project, and the Flood Emergency Plan. The 2021 mission was informed by the site management team that work is ongoing for the lighting and security projects as well as the integrated Management Plan and the 2030 Masterplan revision. Furthermore, the mission observed that an overall project to improve interpretation and enhance some visitor services was ongoing. It is crucial that the State Party implements the recommendations of the 2017 and 2021 missions. The site management and national authorities should inform the World

Heritage Centre if any technical support for the monitoring of the climatic conditions for the tombs in the Valley of the Kings is required.

The State Party had not provided information to the World Heritage Centre regarding the intention to move the four sphinxes located within the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and its state of conservation report does not include detailed information on the transfer or the restoration work, although it included information on the conservation of other sphinxes. The 2021 mission was advised that such relocations take place regularly, in accordance with Egyptian antiquities protection law. The mission noted that other statues and sphinxes are nearby in the garden of the Egyptian Museum, and that the sphinxes had been previously moved in the Pharaonic Era and during the 1970s. A preliminary report on the conservation of the sphinxes was provided to the mission.

As noted by the 2021 mission, the most critical issue is the continued conservation and physical protection of the sphinxes, and the mission was able to see the major ongoing conservation project. Humidity, pollution, vibration and vandalism, may pose a concern to their state of conservation, and close monitoring is needed. Detailed scans could provide a necessary baseline against which any future delamination, decay or granular disaggregation can be measured accurately. It is recommended that dialogue is continued with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies on the approach to the monitoring and conservation of the relocated sphinxes, as well as the overall approach to the conservation work undertaken at the property. The mission recommended that an evaluation of the conservation of the four sphinxes should be undertaken after six months. It is welcome that a project for the rehabilitation of the five main public buildings built by the architect Hassan Fathi has been initiated by the UNESCO Office in Cairo. The State Party's intention to consider a unit whose tasks will be focused on preparing Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) is also welcome and, it is recommended that such initiatives build upon the 2019 and 2021 HIA workshops and the forthcoming detailed technical discussions to be addressed in the framework of the capacity building initiative that the World Heritage Centre will implement with support from France in 2021.

In light of the above, and the outcomes of the 2021 mission, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, to evaluate the property's state of conservation, assess implementation of the recommendations from the 2017 and 2021 missions, review ongoing and planned projects, and assess how they may affect the property's OUV.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.126

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.43** adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Welcomes the intention of the State Party to consider establishing a unit focused on preparing Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) and encourages the State Party to build upon the 2019 and 2021 HIA workshops in the framework of the capacity building initiative that the World Heritage Centre will implement with support from France during 2021;*
4. *Notes the findings and recommendations of the 2021 UNESCO Advisory mission and requests the State Party to implement its recommendations, and to prepare a unified and comprehensive Management Plan for the property, addressing risk preparedness and sustainable tourism;*
5. *Regrets that four sphinxes from the Karnak Temple were transferred to Tahrir Square in Cairo, without prior preparation of a HIA, and without notification of the World Heritage Centre in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and also*

requests the State Party to conduct an evaluation of the situation of the four sphinxes after six months, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2021 mission;

6. Reiterates its requests to the State Party to complete HIAs for proposed projects, following the 2011 ICOMOS Guidelines on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties, prior to carrying out any further work within the property, which may affect it, and to submit these HIAs and relevant project documentation to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, in conformity with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse;
7. Also notes information provided by the State Party regarding implementation of the recommendations of the 2017 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission, and urges the State Party to fully implement and report on the mission recommendations as a matter of urgency, and to advise whether technical support for the monitoring of the climatic conditions of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings is required;
8. Also regrets that the State Party has not fully complied with requests expressed by the Committee in its previous Decisions and considers that the continuing absence of the Management Plan, and pressures of tourism are exerting a growing impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and therefore also urges once again the State Party to expedite the finalization of the Management Plan, incorporating a Conservation Plan and a comprehensive Tourism Management Plan, and to revise the 2030 Masterplan for the property to integrate conservation of OUV across all projects within the property;
9. Also reiterates its previous requests for the State Party to provide:
 - a) Comprehensive documentation on the lighting and security cameras project, with full details regarding its implementation,
 - b) A detailed report on the completed underground water project, including design and implementation,
 - c) A report on the flood channeling and Flood Emergency Plan established for the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens,
 - d) Full details of restoration and rehabilitation works at the Temple of the Apt, the Temple of Medinet Habu, the Ramesseum, and the Temple of Seti I,
 - e) Full details of works undertaken to facilitate access for the disabled at Karnak,
 - f) Details of any other infrastructure, development or conservation projects proposed within property or its buffer zone prior to making any irreversible decisions or commencing works;
10. Further requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property, to evaluate the property's state of conservation, assess implementation of the recommendations from the 2017 and 2021 missions, and, review ongoing and planned projects and assess how they may affect the property's OUV;
11. Encourages the State Party to continue the exchanges with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre to finalize the Retrospective Statement of OUV;
12. Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and

the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

127. Memphis and its Necropolis – the Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur (Egypt) (C 86)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

Criteria (i)(iii)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1991-2007)

Total amount approved: USD 81,450

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 100,000 for the Sphinx of Giza; Special Account for the safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Egypt; USD 310,381 for 'Memphis and Thebes Sites Management Support'; USD 45,871 from the Netherlands Funds in Trust for strengthening national capacities for the implementation of World Heritage impact assessments; EUR 150,000 from the Government of France for Enhancing Capacities for the Protection of World Heritage Properties in Egypt (2020).

Previous monitoring missions

1993, 1994, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001: missions concerning the conservation of the site and the Cairo Ring Road project. November 2014: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; July 2015: ICOMOS Advisory mission; March 2017: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission; January-February 2021: UNESCO Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Deterioration of the monuments (issue resolved)
- Development and Urban Infrastructure projects (including Ring Road project and the Pyramids Security Project)
- Growing number of visitors (issue resolved)
- Housing
- Interpretative and visitation facilities
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure: Infrastructure and tourism developments
- Management System/Management Plan: Absence of a single integrated Plan of Management for the property
- Uncontrolled development of the nearby village (issue resolved)
- Underground transport infrastructure: Tunnel construction project
- Urban encroachment

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/>

Current conservation issues

On 17 December 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, a summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/> and presents progress with conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions, as follows:

- The Supreme Committee for the Management of World Heritage Sites continues to develop and implement a strategic vision for management and protection of Egypt's World Heritage properties;
- Significant progress has been made with opening archaeological sites to the public and establishing new museums;
- A central database has been established for artefacts and the first phase of the "Antiquities of Egypt" website is complete;
- Many new archaeological discoveries have been made, including highly significant finds at Saqqara;
- Regular maintenance and conservation work has been undertaken at the property;
- Implementation of the proposed Cairo Ring Road tunnel through the Giza plateau has been postponed owing to perceived dangers of using a tunnel, and pending further studies;
- The Pyramids Plateau Rehabilitation Project, which aims to preserve archaeological and cultural heritage and improve visitor experience is complete and a report is provided as an annex;
- Works for the proposed Pyramids Security Project, which aims to protect the site, its collections and visitors, are to be outside the site itself;
- The possibility of using international expertise to examine the property boundaries and to prepare a report on alternatives for the Ring Road project is under consideration, as is a new unit focused on preparing Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) following training courses organized in coordination with UNESCO;
- The State Party welcomed a high-level Advisory mission and would be pleased to welcome a joint UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission.

A UNESCO Advisory mission to Egypt took place from 30 January to 4 February 2021. The mission considered several issues related to the conservation of World Heritage properties, including Memphis and its Necropolis – the Pyramid Fields from Giza to Dahshur. High level meetings, onsite consultations and a workshop with site managers and focal points were held, in addition to a short online workshop prior to the mission to provide a detailed introduction to the 1972 *World Heritage Convention* and its *Operational Guidelines*.

The mission report (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/86/documents/>) makes specific findings and offers recommendations regarding the proposed Ring Road connection, the Pyramids Security Project, the Giza Pyramids Plateau Development project, visitor management, boundary adjustments, including possible reduction of the current boundaries of the property, defining buffer zones, and proposed further capacity building initiatives.

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

The State Party continues to make progress in relation to capacity building and compliance with the requirements and processes of the *World Heritage Convention* and *Operational Guidelines*, with assistance from the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre. The 2021 UNESCO Advisory mission identified a number of significant issues, and the State Party should implement the mission recommendations, including the need for a unified and comprehensive Management Plan for the whole property. The improved state of conservation of Saqqara and the continued archaeological research, excavations and discoveries, which underscore the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and the comprehensive work undertaken by the Egyptian authorities to open new museums, should be acknowledged.

The 2021 mission noted that works for the Ring Road as an open road appeared to be progressing and recalled that the necessary documentation, with the related HIA, has not been submitted to the World Heritage Centre. In addition, the construction of another road in the Saqqara area appears to be underway. The World Heritage Centre has requested detailed information from the State Party.

The State Party advice that a tunnel is considered to have security issues for users is noted, but strong concern remains at the potential impact of any open tunnel or the Ring Road itself. The State Party should be encouraged to review the reasons and necessity for the road projects, and to complete necessary studies so that alternatives can be fully considered. The project should not move forward before a full review of technical reports and engineering designs to be submitted for review by the

Advisory Bodies, and before being subject to a comprehensive HIA, prepared in accordance with the 2011 ICOMOS *Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties*.

The completion of the Giza Pyramids Plateau Development Project without referral to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and prior to consideration of the potential buffer zone for the Giza component of the property, is regretted. Nevertheless, the outcome of this initiative may improve protection of the property and visitor experiences. The 2021 mission noted that through initiatives such as electric buses, environmental considerations have also been addressed. The previously expressed concerns about the Pyramids Security Project remain and it is again recommended that the World Heritage Committee request the State Party to submit more comprehensive information on the proposed project, even though the works will be outside the property.

Consultation should be undertaken with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS regarding any proposed modification of boundaries, for both the property and the buffer zone. A Minor Boundary Modification may be necessary for the Giza component of the property, to provide protection from increasing urban pressures in Cairo, in line with Paragraphs 163-164 of the *Operational Guidelines*. This matter might be addressed during the foreshadowed Reactive Monitoring mission, or through a separate process. The determination of any boundary revision of the property or the buffer zone should also have regard to the Retrospective Statement of OUV and should be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review, as previously requested by the Committee.

The State Party's intention to consider a unit whose tasks will be focused on preparing HIAs is welcome, and it is recommended that such initiatives build upon the 2019 and 2021 HIA workshops and the forthcoming detailed technical discussions to be addressed in the framework of the capacity building initiative that the World Heritage Centre is implementing with support from the Netherland Funds in Trust project and the Government of France.

In light of the above, and the outcomes of the 2021 mission, it is recommended that the Committee welcome the State Party's invitation for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to evaluate the property's state of conservation, review the ongoing and planned projects, particularly the Cairo Ring Road project, and assess how they may affect the property's OUV. It is further recommended that the State Party should provide the detailed HIA for each project to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to the mission and that the State Party should expedite this mission as a matter of urgency.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.127

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.45** adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Commends the State Party on the progress made in relation to capacity building and compliance with the requirements and processes of the World Heritage Convention and Operational Guidelines, the improved state of conservation of Saqqara including continued archaeological research, excavations and discoveries, which underscore the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and the comprehensive work undertaken by the Egyptian authorities to open new museums;
4. Notes the findings and recommendations of the 2021 UNESCO Advisory mission and requests the State Party to implement the recommendations of the mission report, including the preparation of a unified and comprehensive Management Plan for the property;
5. Also notes with concern that, works are proceeding on the Ring Road project through the Giza Plateau, and reiterates its request to the State Party to review the reasons and necessity for the project, and to complete necessary studies so that alternatives can be

fully considered, and further notes strong concern at the potential impact of any solution outside a tunnel;

6. Notes furthermore the previous Committee Decision that any project should only progress once all requested technical reports and subsequent Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) have been positively reviewed by the Advisory Bodies and appropriate mitigation measures and procedures for monitoring have been agreed, and reiterates its previous request to the State Party to:
 - a) Complete a comprehensive archaeological assessment, incorporating results from remote sensing,
 - b) Ensure that, following the review by the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, the final comprehensive 'archaeological assessment report' and the previous technical reports on traffic management and design details, inform the preparation of the engineering designs for the tunnel project,
 - c) Finalize the HIA for the project, following the ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties;
7. Expresses regret that the Giza Pyramids Plateau Development Project has been completed without referral to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, and prior to consideration of the potential buffer zone for the Giza component of the property, but acknowledges that the project may improve protection of the property and visitor experiences;
8. Also reiterates its previous request to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, as soon as possible and in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, a detailed document providing comprehensive information about the proposed Pyramids Security Project;
9. Further reiterates its previous request to the State Party to further strengthen the protection and management of the property, with particular regard to its Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV), and by reviewing its boundaries, defining a buffer zone and submitting a Minor Boundary Modification request, in line with Paragraphs 163-164 of the Operational Guidelines;
10. Also requests the State Party to consult the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS regarding any proposed modification of boundaries, for both the property and the buffer zone, which should also have regard to the RSOUV, and to submit the above-mentioned Minor Boundary Modification request;
11. Takes note with satisfaction that the State Party would welcome a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission to the property as soon as possible to evaluate the property's state of conservation and to review the ongoing and planned projects, including road projects, and assess how they may affect the property's OUV, having particular regard to:
 - a) The Pyramids Security Project,
 - b) The proposed Ring Road project through the Giza Plateau,
 - c) The Giza component of the property, and the impact of increasing urban pressure in Cairo,
 - d) The appropriate boundary and buffer zone for the Giza component of the property,

and further requests the State Party to provide the relevant documentation on all planned and ongoing projects, including a detailed HIA for each project, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies prior to the mission;

12. *Welcomes the intention of the State Party to consider establishing a unit focused on preparing HIAs and encourages the State Party to build upon the 2019 and 2021 HIA workshops in the framework of the capacity building initiatives that the World Heritage Centre is implementing with the support of projects funded by Netherlands Funds in Trust and the Government of France;*
13. *Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

128. Baptism Site “Bethany Beyond the Jordan” (Al-Maghtas) (Jordan) (C 1446)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2015

Criteria (iii)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1446/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1446/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Buildings and Development: Lack of design and construction guidelines for the Churches to be constructed in the buffer zone
- Management systems/ management plan: Lack of integration of the management procedures on maintenance, visitor management and disaster response in the management system
- Need to ensure the protection of the western banks of the Jordan River to preserve important vistas and sightlines of the property

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1446/>

Current conservation issues

On 26 November 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, an executive summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1446/documents/>, and presents progress in a number of conservation issues addressed by the Committee at its previous sessions, as follows:

- An Earthquake Response Preparation Plan has been developed and is appended to the State Party's report;
- Updated Procedures of the Design and Construction Guidelines for New Churches and Existing Churches to protect the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) have been submitted and

include measures to address the height and scale of new buildings, and to protect vistas and sightlines. A schedule of existing and proposed churches has been provided;

- All Christian denominations at the property buffer zone have formally committed to a range of provisions (a moratorium), including the Design and Construction Guidelines for New Churches and Existing Churches, the need to obtain all approvals for new buildings before commencing construction, preservation of the landscape, agreement on the main goal for new facilities, and adherence to the decisions of the Board of Trustees and the World Heritage Committee. The denominations with proposed churches reported to the World Heritage Committee in 2018 should modify their proposals to comply with the new guidelines;
- The Master Plan for the buffer zone is not yet finalised and will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee when complete. As part of this process, protection of the landscape, natural vegetation and the setting have been considered, and additional land has been expropriated in and around the buffer zone for a natural reserve zone;
- Information is provided regarding tree planting around proposed churches and their borders to help preserve the OUV;
- The State Party reports that it is unable to protect the west bank of the Jordan River as it is outside of its jurisdiction. It continues to monitor and preserve the site and its surroundings and report about any activities. In 2016, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre that the management of the property had noted high electricity towers being planted just opposite the property, which are of concern;
- Brief information is provided on the state of conservation of a range of attributes.

On 18 December 2020, the State Party submitted plans for two proposed churches - the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church and the Saint Maroun Maronite Church - to the World Heritage Centre for review.

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

The submission of an Earthquake Response Preparation Plan is noted. While this generally appears to be adequate, its scope is not very clear. The title and action program refer to earthquakes but other parts of the plan refer to all disasters including floods and earthquakes. The action program contains timeframes for a number of training actions, although the State Party reports that several of these could not be undertaken as scheduled because of the COVID-19 pandemic and that the training programme would be resumed at an appropriate time.

No information is provided as to how this plan is integrated within the property's Management Plan, as requested by the Committee.

The World Heritage Committee previously requested the State Party to revise the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for completed and new buildings in the buffer zone (Decision **43 COM 7B.46**). The State Party has provided re-assurances about the protection of OUV through a range of measures such as the updated Procedures of the Design and Construction Guidelines for New Churches and Existing Churches to address both proposed and existing churches, where the latter are subject to alterations or extensions, and which were submitted for approval by the World Heritage Committee. The signed commitments from the Christian denominations at the property should ensure compliance with the guidelines, including regarding the construction of boundary walls. The guidelines appear satisfactory and their implementation and effectiveness should be monitored. The ICOMOS technical review (March 2021), however, expressed concern that the success of the guidelines might be compromised as they do not consistently offer measurable advice. It is also noted that no revised HIA has yet been provided.

The updated guidelines reduce the maximum building height from 35 to 20 metres. While this is a very substantial change, it would be helpful to understand the basis for this reduction (e.g. through a Visual Impact Assessment). The extent to which the tree plantings around the new churches will visually replicate the landscape values of the Jordan River landscape and hide the mass and height of the churches is not tested, and some visual analysis is called for. The question of cumulative impacts of the new church developments should also be a matter for HIA.

It is noted that the revision of the Master Plan for the buffer zone is still to be completed. The information provided regarding enhancement of protection for the property through expanding landscape protection within and beyond the buffer zone is also noted. However, the accompanying map suggests that areas previously designated for hotel/touristic activities, and the area of the new churches have been re-

labelled 'nature reserve' with no indication of any proposed changed land uses in these areas. The assumption might be that new plantings around buildings will be sufficient to provide the 'wilderness' landscape aesthetic, but this has not been tested. The revision of the location of the proposed convention centre, raised by the Committee, has not been addressed. It is expected that these issues will be clarified in the buffer zone land use plan under preparation.

The comments of the State Party regarding the continuing need to ensure preservation of important vistas and sightlines related to the western banks of the Jordan River and its efforts to report on issues relating to protection of the OUV of the property are noted.

The report provides an overview of conservation and other works undertaken at the property, such as maintenance and cleaning of mosaic floors and other attributes, and consolidation of walls. These works appear satisfactory.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.128

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **39 COM 8B.10**, **40 COM 8B.50**, **41 COM 7B.79**, **43 COM 7B.46** adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Commends the State Party on the development of the Earthquake Response Preparation Plan, updated design and construction guidelines for the buffer zone, signed formal commitments with the Christian denominations, and expanded landscape protection within and beyond the buffer zone;*
4. *Requests the State Party to clarify the scope of the Earthquake Response Preparation Plan and whether it is intended to address all disasters such as floods as well, which may require additional measures, and advise as to how this plan is integrated within the property's Management Plan;*
5. *Also requests the State Party to submit the Master Plan for the whole buffer zone, addressing the issues noted in Decision **43 COM 7B.46**, when completed, for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and urges the State Party to consider undertaking a visual landscape analysis of the potential impacts on the Jordan River landscape area (the nature reserve) of various development options for the new churches to clarify the decisions on building height, mass and revegetation strategies;*
6. *Further requests the State Party to submit the revised Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for completed and new buildings in the buffer zone in accordance with Decision **43 COM 7B.46**, based on the adopted Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and considering the updated design and construction guidelines, the visual landscape analysis requested above, the reduction of the maximum building height limit, and the cumulative impacts of building development;*
7. *Welcomes the State Party's efforts to report on issues on the western bank of the Jordan River relating to protection of the OUV of the property, however, reiterates the need to ensure the preservation of important vistas and views by all concerned parties;*
8. *Requests furthermore the State Party to update the Management Plan to reflect the adopted Statement of OUV, as well as other matters that have changed since the plan was developed, such as the Earthquake Response Preparation Plan;*

9. *Requests moreover the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 December 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

134. Rabat, Modern Capital and Historic City: a Shared Heritage (Morocco) (C 1401)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2012

Criteria (ii)(iv)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1401/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1401/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

May 2018: joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing
- Major urban projects for the city and for the Bouregreg Valley and the lack of impact assessments in order to guarantee the integrity of the property and its surrounding areas

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1401/>

Current conservation issues

On 2 June 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report and other documents in response to the Committee Decision adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019). The report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1401/documents/>, presents the following:

- A summary of the programme “Rabat ville lumière, capitale culturelle du Royaume” (2014-2018);
- Detailed documentation on the two projects: The Rabat-Ville Railway Station, located within the property, and the Mohammed VI Tower (formerly O Tower), located immediately outside the buffer zone;
- The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) studies for the Rabat-Ville Railway Station, and the Mohammed VI Tower projects, as well as the related adopted measures and their implementation;
- Information on restoration and development projects within the property and in its buffer zone;
- Implementation of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach;
- Information on capacity building workshops organised in November 2019 and February 2020, bringing together managers, professionals, specialists and national and international experts, focusing on HIAs and the HUL approach;
- Documents requested by the Committee were provided, comprising a study of the urban profile of the property, a 3D model of the property and its volumes in its setting in the Bouregreg Valley, spatial and 3D studies of the potential individual and cumulative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and evidence of the integration of the Management Plan

of the property into the City Development Plan and in the architectural design guidelines, in accordance with the HUL approach.

Following ICOMOS technical reviews of the development projects and recommendations provided, the State Party submitted a complementary report on 31 March 2021, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1401/documents/>, and presents the following:

- Architectural specifications and information on the 'dematerialisation' of the Mohammed VI Tower, as well as additional photomontages with no wide-angle views of the Mohammed VI Tower from the left bank of the Bouregreg;
- Further information on the Rabat-Ville Railway Station, as well as information on Bab Chellah and Bab El Had parking, and the rehabilitation of the river facade of the medina of Rabat. Information on projects planned in the buffer zone was also provided;
- Details of a restoration project for the Café Maure.

ICOMOS subsequently provided a further Technical Review of the Café Maure.

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

The State Party has taken substantive steps in addressing the recommendations of the Committee and of the ICOMOS Technical Reviews, through providing comprehensive reports with HIAs, design details and view studies for the Mohammed VI Tower and Rabat-Ville Railway Station.

The State Party has also provided detailed information about ongoing and planned projects within the property and its buffer zone with related HIAs, including for the Morocco Mall Rabat project, Appart Hotel Strelysia Rabat, as well as the Café Maure restoration project. Technical Reviews of these projects were also provided by ICOMOS.

The integration of the objectives of the Management Plan into the new spatial development plan (PAS) is to be welcomed as both plans will facilitate the identification, conservation and enhancement of the architectural heritage and the historic landscape. So, too, are the workshops that have been organized focusing on HIAs and the HUL approach, including a virtual workshop on Heritage Impact Assessment as a tool for the protection and safeguarding of World Heritage, with the participation of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies (26 November 2020), and the launch of a capacity building programme, which includes the organization of scientific conferences and workshops on conservation and restoration methods.

For the Mohammed VI Tower, in line with the recommendations of the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission, the design profile and façade cladding material of the tower have been modified to enhance the effect of evanescence of the north façade in the landscape, in order to achieve a 'dematerialization' effect that could mitigate its adverse impacts in the landscape. Photomontages of the tower (correctly produced without wide-angle views) have been provided to assess the potential visual impact of the tower on the integrity of the property. While these indeed demonstrate a certain attenuation of the visual impact on the Bouregreg Valley landscape, they do not confirm a real 'dematerialization' and cannot allay overall the concerns relating to the inappropriateness context and scale of this project.

Concerning the extension of the Rabat-Ville Railway Station, information has been provided on the architectural solution for the interference of the new complex with the historic wall, the solution for rainwater drainage, and plans to connect the inner square to the Ibn Toubert garden as well the proposal for having several types of passages or doors, allowing to respect the current topography. The proposed solution for the key interface with the wall appears to be the most 'honest' and most appropriate way forward that is available in the current situation from a methodological and architectural point of view. The future restoration project of the original station building is undergoing consultations, and once finalised, it will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

While further details, including HIAs have been provided for these two projects after their initiation in order to address the concerns that were raised about adverse impacts, it has become clear that enhanced processes are needed for future development and conservation projects in order to minimise any potential impact. Such measures will need to include strengthening of the overall management and planning framework, and the adoption of timeframes that allow the production of HIAs and timely submission of proposals in advance of decisions being made. The steps taken so far in these directions are to be welcomed in relation to the integration of the Management Plan into the Spatial Development Plan, and the workshop on HIAs.

The State Party extended an invitation for a joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission, which has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is recommended that the Committee reiterates its recommendation for the mission to take place as soon as the situation allows, in order to strengthen dialogue with the State Party on approaches to the protection of the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.134

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.44** adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Expresses its appreciation for the efforts undertaken by the State Party in addressing its previous recommendations, and the recommendations of the 2018 joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/ICCROM Advisory mission, particularly with regard to providing full details of ongoing and planned major restoration and development projects with related Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) studies;*
4. *Welcomes the Technical Workshop that was held to provide training and capacity reinforcement on tools and guidance for implementing the Historic Urban Landscape approach and the elaboration of HIAs;*
5. *Notes the measures taken to minimise the impact of the Mohammed VI Tower as recommended by the 2018 mission, and acknowledges that these have delivered some benefits, although not sufficient to mitigate the overall scale and context of this development;*
6. *Considers that solutions proposed for the interface between the extension of the Rabat-Ville Railway Station and the historic wall are the most appropriate in architectural and technical terms, and notes that details of the project to restore the original station building will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
7. *Also acknowledges that enhanced processes are needed for future development and conservation projects to minimise potential impacts, and also welcomes the steps taken so far, such as the integration of the Management Plan into the Spatial Development Plan, and the workshop held on HIAs;*
8. *Encourages the State Party to continue the ongoing exchange and dialogue established with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, and requests it to continue to submit information on ongoing and planned projects which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;*
9. *Notes with appreciation the invitation from the State Party for the requested World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Advisory mission to the property, scheduled to be carried out in March/April 2021, but postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and recommends that this mission be carried out as soon as circumstances permit;*
10. *Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

135. Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine) (C 1433)

See Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add.2

ASIA-PACIFIC

139. Angkor (Cambodia) (C 668)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1992

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

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

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

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1992-1998)

Total amount approved: USD 113,595

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

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: Approximately USD 52 million through various international partners (1992--present)

Previous monitoring missions

September 2005: Technical advisory mission concerning the protection of Zones 1 and 2 of Angkor; in addition, the *ad hoc* experts of the International Coordinating Committee (ICC-Angkor) carry out monitoring of the property and of ongoing projects in the complex of Angkor, twice per year, on the occasion of the ICC technical and plenary sessions.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Uncontrolled urban expansion;
- Lack of an appropriate management system;
- Lack of clarity regarding property rights, ownership and building codes;
- Poor law enforcement;
- Lack of capacity of management agency.

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/>

Current conservation issues

Since November 2020, the World Heritage Centre received communications through media and civil society groups concerning the proposed construction of a tourist complex of 75 hectares in the immediate vicinity of the property and requested the State Party to provide technical documents for review by the Advisory Bodies. In the meantime, the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Sustainable Development of Angkor (ICC-Angkor), during its plenary session of 27 January 2021, examined the project proposal and advised the State Party to reconsider it.

On 29 March 2021, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/668/documents/> and presents conservation issues raised in the Committee's previous decisions as follows:

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both tourism and conservation activities on the property have significantly diminished since March 2020, but the APSARA National Authority, the managing body of the property, has continued its activities, such as monitoring based on the risk map and necessary conservation works on numerous structures including Angkor Wat, Bayon, Sra Srang and Preah Khan. Important new discoveries of structures and artefacts were also reported;
- Work has also been ongoing to safeguard or restore natural and combined elements of the property, which are integral part of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including measures for the hydraulic system, composed of *barays* (reservoirs), dykes and ancient canals, prevention

against flooding and restoration of Siem Reap river, as well as the plantation of nearly 15,000 trees in 2020 to maintain the dense forest of the property;

- Considering that 13.5% of the State Party's GDP is derived from tourism, improvements to the infrastructure have been implemented with strict preventive archaeological measures;
- Considering the 90% decrease in tourism visitation in 2020, the authority commissioned a development plan (2020-2035) to diversify offers, alleviate impacts to the property, increase local benefits and prepare for the post-COVID period;
- Concerning a reported project for the construction of a tourist complex on the area immediately outside the buffer zone of the property, the State Party considered the technical views of the Ad Hoc experts of the ICC-Angkor and declared officially on 23 March 2021 through a press release of the Ministry of Culture and Arts of Cambodia that this project "*cannot be implemented in this current context*".

In a letter addressed to the World Heritage Centre on 24 March 2021, the APSARA National Authority also declared that the planned expansion of the international airport in Siem Reap, studied by ICOMOS with circumstantiated views in 2020, is not to be pursued.

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

Since the property's inscription on the World Heritage List in 1992, in the aftermath of a regional conflict, the State Party has strived to manage the large and complex property, receiving important support from the international community. The ICC-Angkor, the Secretariat of which is entrusted to UNESCO, holds two sessions yearly in order to guide the conservation and management policies and to coordinate efforts of various partners. Nearly 30 years after the end of the conflict, the APSARA National Authority is now equipped with considerable national expertise to ensure proper protection and management of the property.

While the State Party has been seriously affected by a 90% of decrease in tourism visitation in 2020, it reports a variety of conservation activities led by its national staff, in numerous major temples and hydraulic structures and in their surrounding environment.

The Committee may wish to recognize the progress made by the State Party and the contribution of the ICC-Angkor over three decades as a model of international coordination mechanism, providing a neutral forum to discuss a variety of projects in a scientific and objective manner.

The Committee may also wish to commend the State Party, which, at the request of the World Heritage Centre and following the ICC-Angkor's technical review, took prompt action to address the concern of the proposed project for the construction of a tourist complex of 75 hectares immediately outside the buffer zone of the property, and concluded that the project cannot be pursued in the current context. The State Party is therefore encouraged to seek advice from the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/>) and to update the Sustainable Tourism Development Plan for the property to provide over-arching principles that would guide the scale, scope and nature of future tourism projects in relation to how they might support the integrity and authenticity of the property, and offer potential to deepen understanding and appreciation of the Angkor archaeological park and its wider setting. The Tourism Development Plan, under preparation, should reflect these principles, make a clear statement on this primary objective and set out an appropriate course of action.

The Committee may further wish to appreciate the authorities' decision not to approve the expansion of the current international airport of Siem Reap, but note that a new airport is under construction 40km away from the property. For this and any other important projects and activities that may have an impact on the property and its OUV, the Committee shall request the State Party to provide technical documents to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

Considering that the Committee's last review of the state of conservation of the property dates back to 2014, and that numerous new management and conservation issues have arisen since then, the Committee shall request the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre a succinct report on the overall framework of the currently applied management tools (e.g. Zoning Plans, Integrated Management Plans, Conservation Plans, Tourism Development Plan, conservation charters) for review by the Advisory Bodies.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.139

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.add,
2. Recalling Decision **38 COM 7B.8**, adopted at its 38th session (Doha, 2014),
3. Takes note with satisfaction that the national authorities have been undertaking activities in the field of conservation and management for numerous archaeological and hydraulic structures and for the natural environment of the property, benefitting from the expertise of the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Sustainable Development of Angkor (ICC-Angkor) and strong support of a number of international partners;
4. Commends the State Party for not pursuing the reported project for the construction of a tourist complex on the area immediately outside the buffer zone of the property, following the technical review of the ICC-Angkor, and acknowledges with satisfaction that the extension project of the existing International Airport of Siem Reap has not been approved, noting however that the State Party opted for a new International Airport far from the property, and requests the State Party to provide technical documents to the World Heritage Centre, if alternative proposals are to be considered for both cases, for review by the Advisory Bodies, at the earliest opportunity;
5. Also requests the State Party to provide the World Heritage Centre with information about any major restoration and proposed project with potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, in line with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines, including detailed information on Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) prepared in conformity with the 2011 ICOMOS Guidelines on HIAs for World Heritage cultural properties, for review by the Advisory Bodies, before any decision is made that would be difficult to reverse;
6. Also notes the elaboration of the Tourism Development Plan in order to diversify the tourism offer; encourages the State Party to seek advice from the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme and update the sustainable Tourism Development Plan for the property to provide an over-arching principles to guide the scale, scope and nature of future tourism projects in relation to how they might support the integrity and authenticity of the property; and further requests the State Party to submit the draft Tourism Development Plan, and the updated sustainable Tourism Development Plan, to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;
7. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, including the overall situation of the management framework, presenting the major management tools, guidelines and plans under application, and the implementation of the above, for review by the Advisory Bodies.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

152. The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement (Argentina, Belgium, France, Germany, India, Japan, Switzerland) (C 1321rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2016

Criteria (i)(ii)(vi)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1321/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1321/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems / management plan (Need to introduce Heritage Impact Assessment procedures for proposed development at all component sites; Lack of monitoring indicators for all component sites and of agreed overall conservation approaches and procedures for the series (issue resolved); Need to complete the Management and Conservation Plans for Chandigarh)
- Governance (Need to refine the power of the Standing Conference to allow full understanding by all States Parties of major development proposals in all component sites, in relation to their potential impact on the overall series) (issue resolved)
- Legal framework (Unclear protection of the buffer zone for Maison Guiette; Unclear implications of the new Heritage Law in France (issue resolved))

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1321/>

Current conservation issues

On 9 December 2020, the States Parties submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1321/documents/>. Progress with a number of conservation issues identified by the Committee at its previous session is presented in this report, as follows:

- A number of States Parties are now using Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to analyze possible impacts of development on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- Through its Secretariat, the Foundation Le Corbusier, the Standing Conference has continued to expand the Restoration Archives and set up a forum to exchange knowledge and documentation between States Parties. The Secretariat participates in local and national steering committees for monitoring and is consulted whenever development projects may have an impact on the OUV of the property;
- India has submitted architectural plans and photographs of the Geometrical Hill project, completed in 2015. Work is still in progress at the Martyrs Memorial, where sculptures will be installed in line with Le Corbusier's original drawings, and for which India submitted a status report;

- The Chandigarh Conservation and Preservation Plan, initially scheduled for completion in 2020, is still in progress. India has submitted an updated timeline with respect to the monitoring indicators;
- The restoration of the Maison Guiette is being prepared, based on the 2019 approved management plan. The relevant authorities are continuing their discussions with a view of revising the buffer zone. To date, the protection regime for the buffer zone does not include any measures based on the OUV of the component;
- A Management and Public Use Plan for the Casa Curutchet is in preparation. A Draft Ordinance of Areas of Historical Protection for the District of La Plata was prepared by the Government of the City of la Plata, and its pending for final approval. Works on the neighbouring property have been put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- In line with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, States Parties have reported on a number of major restorations and/or new constructions which may affect the OUV of the property:
 - France: Additional information regarding the construction of a heritage interpretation space in the vicinity of the Saint-Dié Manufactory will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre. Planned development in the vicinity of the Unité d'habitation has been put on hold and a feasibility study is in preparation. An impact assessment for the Corbusier Museum in the buffer zone of Villa Savoye is in preparation,
 - India: A number of interventions are planned within the property and buffer zone of the Capitol Complex, including an underground multi-level parking structure,
 - Switzerland: Visitor information facilities have been set up in a former keeper's lodge at the Immeuble Clarté,
 - Japan: The renovation of the JR Ueno Station is being carried out, following exchanges with ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre, and is scheduled for completion in 2021.

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

The initiative of the Standing Conference to further expand the Restoration Archives and to create a forum of knowledge and documentation exchange is welcomed, as it further strengthens the capacity of the Standing Conference to inform decisions on monitoring, conservation and potential impacts of development projects.

While a number of States Parties are now using HIAs to analyze potential effects and consequences of development on the OUV of the property, the use of HIAs is not yet universally adopted for all components of the property. It is therefore recommended that the Committee encourage the States Parties to strengthen and harmonise approaches across all components by introducing HIA procedures, in line with the 2011 *ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties*, to assess potentially adverse impacts on the OUV of the series as a whole. The Standing Conference could play a significant role in advocating for a consistent approach by all States Parties.

It is noted that a number of interventions are planned within the boundaries and buffer zone of the Capitol Complex component (India), such as the construction of an underground multi-level parking structure. Although some project documentation has been provided by the State Party through its state of conservation report, it is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit any additional available information on these projects, namely on the Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Ancillary Structure, the "Holistic development of the Punjab and Haryana High Court" and the multilevel basement parking, by 1 February 2022 for review by the Advisory Bodies, and prepare an HIA to assess the potential cumulative impacts of all planned developments within the boundaries and buffer zone of the Capitol Complex, including a multi-level parking, on the OUV of the property, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies before any final decision is taken concerning these proposals. In this regard, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies consider that the World Heritage Committee should also encourage the finalization of the Conservation Plan for Chandigarh.

The approval of the management plan of Maison Guiette (Belgium) is welcomed. However, the continued lack of protection measures in the buffer zone specifically focused on the attributes of the Maison Guiette to the OUV of the series should be addressed. The options that are currently being considered by the local authorities should target a protection tailored to the specific needs of the component.

Given that several development or restoration projects are being considered in or near components of the property, it is recommended that the Committee request the States Parties to inform the World Heritage Centre of ongoing or planned projects or activities within and surrounding the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and to submit associated documentation for review by the Advisory Bodies before making any decision that would be difficult to reverse.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.152

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.18** adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),
3. Welcomes the creation of a forum of knowledge and documentation exchange by the Standing Conference, which further strengthens its capacity to inform decisions on monitoring, conservation and potential impacts of development projects;
4. Notes that a number of States Parties are currently using Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) to analyse possible impacts of development projects on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and encourages States Parties to strengthen the impact assessment approach across all component sites by introducing HIA procedures, in line with the 2011 ICOMOS Guidance on HIAs for Cultural World Heritage Properties, in order to assess any potentially adverse impact on the OUV of each component site and on the OUV of the serial property as a whole;
5. Requests the State Party of India to submit any additional available information on the Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Ancillary Structure, the “Holistic development of the Punjab and Haryana High Court” and the multi-level basement parking projects, by **1 February 2022** for review by the Advisory Bodies, and to develop an HIA to assess the potential individual and cumulative impacts of all planned developments within the boundaries and buffer zone of the Capitol Complex, including the multi-level parking structure, and to submit it to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies along with the project documentation; and also encourages the State Party of India to finalize the Conservation Plan for Chandigarh;
6. Also notes the continued lack of specific protection measures for the Maison Guiette buffer zone and also requests the State Party of Belgium to put in place protection that is tailored to the specific needs of the component;
7. Further requests the States Parties to inform the World Heritage Centre of ongoing or planned projects or activities within and surrounding the property, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and to submit associated documentation for review by the Advisory Bodies before making any decision that would be difficult to reverse;
8. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

162. Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System (Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru) (C 1459)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2014

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

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1459/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 2005-2005)

Total amount approved: USD 60,000

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1459/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 450,000 for the project "Support to the reinforcement of the participative management structure of the Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System" (UNESCO/Japanese Funds-in-Trust for World Heritage -JFIT-) (approved by the Donor in June 2016 and successfully concluded in 2019)

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems (some management plans still pending).
- Lack of risk preparedness and risk management plans.
- Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) common framework needed.
- Developing of a more effective and sustainable monitoring system.

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1459/>

Current conservation issues

On 12 March 2021, the States Parties submitted a joint state of conservation report available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1459/documents/>, providing the following information:

- The States Parties reported on the final actions implemented for strengthening the Transnational Management system with the support of the UNESCO/Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage (JFIT) that lasted 36 months between 2017 and 2020;
- The two main axes developed in the project were addressed through participatory workshops and meetings between all the stakeholders, National Technical Secretariats, indigenous peoples communities and other local actors. The first axis aimed to develop a monitoring system of the property focused on the state of conservation, disaster risk management and intangible cultural heritage; and the second to strengthen capacities of the six States Parties on management, public use, Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) and conservation strategies;
- The "Manual for the Conservation of Archaeological Structures in Earth and Stone" was submitted as part of the tools developed within the framework of the project;
- Virtual and face-to-face meetings of the Technical Committee were held in order to address the coordinated management challenges of the *Qhapaq Ñan* imposed by the sanitary restrictions linked to COVID-19 emergency;

- Also reported as part of the activities was the partnership with the International Italian-Latin American Organization (IILA) for presenting the exhibition “Qhapaq Ñan, The Great Way of the Andes” (currently postponed), and meetings with the European Cultural Itineraries;
- In July 2019, the Pro Tempore Secretariat was transferred from Argentina to Bolivia, underlining the importance of a technical and transnational coordinated work;
- The six States Parties continue to strengthen the International Management System based on the recommendations provided by ICOMOS in its technical review of the Management Plans presented previously. The Technical Committee is currently working on an updated document to reinforce the International Management System, which is in its final stage of preparation;
- The “Permanent Monitoring Matrix on the progress of the application of Management Plans” is also being updated to clarify the minimum contents that the Management Plans should include;
- The Management Plans of four sections of Peru were submitted. It is stated that the processes, contents and formats of the Management Plans will be different according to the legal provisions, management practices and reality of each State Party;
- Two mobile applications, the first called *Kamayuq* aimed at monitoring and evaluating risks, and the second called *AYLLU* aimed to be part of the Conservation Status Monitoring System gathering information *in situ*. User manuals of the two applications were attached to the report;
- Regarding the HIA framework, a matrix systematizing the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) attributes was prepared for each serial component, and the basic document for the Common Guidelines for the development of the HIA was submitted. The work aiming at the identification of projects with potential impacts on the OUV is under preparation;
- The joint document 'Action Program for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Qhapaq Ñan' with respect to the monitoring of the intangible components of the property was also submitted.

The States Parties informed of three major projects that might affect the OUV of the property: 1) the Chinchero-Cusco International Airport, 2) the South Peruvian Gas Pipeline and 3) the improvement of the public tourist services of the Choquequirao Archaeological Park. Four smaller projects are also mentioned. Furthermore, impacts on some sections of the property in Chile due to heavy rains were described.

In April, the State party of Peru transmitted to the World Heritage Centre general information concerning the current status of the construction of the Chinchero-Cusco international airport project and the situation with regard to the development of Heritage and Environmental Impact Assessments.

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

The States Parties highlight in their report the significant work and progress made for the reinforcement of the Integral Management System of the property in the framework of the JFIT. The successful implementation of this project has greatly contributed to responding to the recommendations made by the Committee at the time of the inscription of the property, and this should be commended. The participatory approach and the involvement of the communities throughout the development of the two main axes of the collaborative work should be also highlighted. It is noteworthy that the participative and collaborative work have been conducted based on field workshops/meetings held between the Technical Secretariats of the six countries, representatives of the local communities and other local actors involved. The “Manual for the Conservation of Archaeological Structures in Earth and Stone” is a good example of the important tools developed through this collaborative process.

The meetings of the Technical Committee undertaken, despite the ongoing pandemic situation, are appreciated, as well as the transfer of the Pro Tempore Secretariat from Argentina to Bolivia in 2019, acknowledging it as a sign of the coordinated and integrative work between the States Parties. It is recommended that the States Parties and the Technical Committee continue these efforts of collaboration for the long-term conservation of the property.

It is noted that through the Technical Committee, the States Parties carried out a diagnosis of the progress of the implementation of the Management System in each country, underpinning the achievements and analysing the limitations encountered. Under the coordination of the Technical Secretariat of Argentina, a “Glossary of Concepts and Technical Terms of Management for the Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System, World Heritage” (2020) was prepared in order to standardize a common

vocabulary and offer an overview of the main concepts and technical terms for the management of the Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System.

It is also noted that the updated document of the International Management System is already in the final stage of formulation, pending the final review by the cultural authorities of each State Party. It is recommended that the World Heritage Committee request the States Parties to finalize and validate the updated International Management System document, and to send it for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies once completed.

As a continuation of the work on the development of Conservation and Management Plans, the Committee should acknowledge the receipt of the Management Plans of four sections correspondent to the Cusco region of Peru (Puente Q'eswachaka; Cusco - La Raya Section (Cusco - Desaguadero); Ollantaytambo. Lares - Valle Lacco section; and Vitkus Section -Choquequirao). Differences of the Management Plans due to the different legal provisions and management practices of the countries are noted, nevertheless the Plans should follow a similar methodology and a general overall framework, as suggested by ICOMOS in its technical review of the Management Plans previously submitted.

As for the two mobile applications developed, *Kamayuq* for monitoring and evaluations of risks, and *AYLLU* for monitoring the state of conservation of the property, the States Parties should be commended for their development and encouraged to continue testing the mentioned technological tools to improve their functioning.

Regarding the intangible heritage aspects, the "Action Program for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural heritage Associated with Qhapaq Ñan" document foresees the involvement of local communities in the monitoring system of the intangible elements and in the process of implementation of measures to monitor the state of conservation of the property and the States Parties should be commended for that approach.

It is also noted the systematization work in view of the definition of attributes of the OUV for the property and the definition of Terms of Reference for contracting HIAs. The States Parties are requested to submit the "Common Guidelines for realization of Heritage Impact Assessments" once developed, for its review by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre, and should be also encouraged to finalize the identification of projects with potential impacts on the OUV to mitigate those potential impacts as an urgent matter.

Regarding the specific major interventions mentioned on the state of conservation report, it is noted that in 2020, ICOMOS undertook a technical review of the documentation submitted by the State Party of Peru concerning the potential impact of the construction of the Chinchero-Cusco international airport. The review pointed out that major infrastructural works, even if they would not have a direct impact, could have quite pronounced indirect impacts on the setting and context of the property and, in the case of Qhapaq Ñan, on the traditional practices of local societies, as a result of indirect and cumulative impacts in relation not only to the construction work of the airport but to operational practices such as flight routes and visual and acoustic impacts, to larger number of visitors to the area, and particularly to any new associated infrastructure and new tourist accommodation. In this regard, the State Party of Peru informed, in the additional information provided in April 2021, that the HIAs are currently under development taking into consideration the guidelines and recommendations of the 2020 ICOMOS technical review. These HIAs are expected to be finalized by June 2022. It would however be essential to recall to the States Parties that appropriate HIAs should be undertaken for this and any other major project planned to be developed within or in the surrounding areas of the property, in order to take into consideration the potential impacts to its OUV, including integrity and authenticity. These studies should be submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before any projects are approved or works undertaken.

Finally, the outcomes of the collaborative work done with the support of the JFIT project are remarkable, also the Committee should note with appreciation the reinforced cooperation between the six States Parties for the sustainable conservation and integral management of the property, understanding that one major challenge that the *Qhapaq Ñan* faces is the level of coordination required between regions and States Parties due to the extension and complexity of the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.162

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.33**, adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),
3. Commends the six States Parties for their work, with collaboration and support of the UNESCO/Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage (JFIT), particularly for the high level of participation of the indigenous peoples and local communities on the activities conducted, through the workshops and meetings held, and, the tools developed such as the “Manual for the Conservation of Archaeological Structures in Earth and Stone”;
4. Expresses its appreciation for the commitment of the Technical Committee and its continuous coordinated work despite the ongoing pandemic circumstances, and acknowledges the transfer in 2019 of the Pro Tempore Secretariat, from Argentina to Bolivia, as an expression of political coordination to guarantee the long-term management of the property;
5. Notes with appreciation the diagnosis on the progress of the implementation of the Management System undertaken by the six States Parties and the preparation of the “Glossary of Concepts and Technical Terms of Management for the Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System, World Heritage” concerning a standardization of common vocabulary, and strongly encourages the six States Parties to continue working in a coordinating manner, to address the management challenges of the property;
6. Requests the States Parties to finalize and validate the updated document of the International Management System, and submit it for review by the World Heritage Center and the Advisory Bodies as soon as it is available;
7. Also takes note of the finalization of the Management Plans of 4 sections corresponding to Peru (Puente Q’eswachaka; Cusco - La Raya Section (Cusco - Desaguadero), Ollantaytambo. Lares - Valle Lacco section, and Vitkus Section –Choquequirao), and also requests the States Parties to follow a common methodology and framework for the remaining local management and conservation plans that need to be submitted;
8. Also commends the States Parties for the development of two mobile applications: “Kamayuk” for the monitoring and evaluation of risks, and “AYLLU” for the monitoring of state of conservation, as strategies towards a comprehensive conservation and management system of the property, and also encourages them to continue with their development and to adopt and implement them when the tools are fully tested;
9. Further requests to fully implement the documents approved and adopted at the international workshop on risk preparedness and disaster management, held in Cusco in October 2018;
10. Takes note of the ‘Action Program for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Associated with Qhapaq Ñan’ document, and similar actions that strengthens the monitoring system for the property, and further encourages the States Parties to continue their efforts towards the implementation of a complete operating monitoring system;
11. Also takes note of the advances on the definitions of attributes that are the base of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and the Terms of Reference for the

elaboration of Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs), and requests furthermore the States Parties to submit the document “Common Guidelines for the realization of Heritage Impact Assessments” for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies;

12. *Recalls that any major infrastructure or major project need to be properly assessed in terms of their possible impacts on the property’s OUV, authenticity and integrity, and the necessity to develop and submit the corresponding Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) of the projects for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before any projects are approved or works undertaken, and recommends to the State Party of Peru to consider the recommendations made by ICOMOS regarding the construction of the Chinchero-Cusco International Airport;*
13. *Requests moreover the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

166. Humberstone and Santa Laura Saltpeter Works (Chile) (C 1178ter)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2005

Criteria (ii)(iii)(iv)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2005-2019

- Extremely fragile nature of the industrial buildings
- Lack of maintenance for 40 years
- Vandalism due to looting of re-usable materials
- Damage caused by the wind

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1178/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 2007-2015)

Total amount approved: USD 135,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1178/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 30 000 for the development of Risk Management Plans in Humberstone and Santa Laura Saltpeter Works, Historic Quarter of the Seaport City of Valparaíso and Rapa Nui National Park financed by the German Foreign Office in 2018

Previous monitoring missions

May 2007: World Heritage Centre site visit; April 2010: Joint World Heritage Centre / ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; November 2018: ICOMOS Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Management systems/management plan
- Wind
- Extremely fragile nature of the industrial buildings that were constructed using local materials such as timber for frames, corrugated iron sheets for roofs and some walls, in addition to stucco and lightweight construction
- Lack of maintenance over the past 40 years as well as vandalism at the property
- Corrosion of metal cladding and dismantlement of some of the structural elements
- A few buildings such as the Leaching House are liable to structural collapse if no support is given

- Damage caused by earthquakes and the wind (damages due to the 2014 earthquake addressed)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1178/>

Current conservation issues

On 2 December 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1178/documents/>. The State's Party report provides an assessment of the activities and measures undertaken, regarding the implementation of the pending corrective measures and recommendations stated in the 2018 ICOMOS Advisory mission report, as follows:

- The State Party provided direct support to national World Heritage properties through the 'Social Program for World Heritage Sites', implemented consecutively through the years (2018-2021);
- The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage continued its work to strengthen heritage institutions in the country's regions through Regional Ministerial Secretaries of Culture, Arts and Heritage; the National Service for Cultural Heritage's Regional Directorates; and the National Monuments Council's Regional Technical Offices;
- Legal work to amend the Law on National Monuments is ongoing, with the aim of establishing a Law on Cultural Heritage informed by a holistic and updated approach on heritage conservation;
- The updated Management Plan 2021-2025 was completed and submitted, taking into account the recommendations addressed in the 2018 ICOMOS Advisory mission report;
- Formulation of the Disaster Risk Management Plan for the property was completed within the framework of the project "Strengthening Disaster Risk Management at Three World Heritage Properties in Chile," implemented by the National Service for Cultural Heritage and the Federico Santa María Technical University, with the financial support of the government of Germany;
- The "Priority Interventions Program" (PIP) was fully implemented, including the intervention of the Santa Laura Foundry, which constituted the last pending intervention;
- Conservation activities were undertaken, in line with the Conservation Plan and PIP, such as works carried out at the Leaching Plant, Iodine House, and Santa Laura Foundry; and the formulation of designs for the Hospital, Quarters for Unmarried Workers, Houses for Professional Staff and Humberstone Coeducational School No. 35;
- Other activities were reported regarding museum exhibitions, including four new permanent exhibitions: the Memorial House of the Pampinos and Pampinas, the General Store, the One-room house of the Oblate Fathers and the San Mauricio School;

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

The continuous work of the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage, created in 2018 to strengthen heritage institutions and technical teams in the country's regions is noted, with the support of Ministerial Secretaries of Culture, Arts and Heritage; the National Service for Cultural Heritage's Regional Directorates and the National Monuments Council's Regional Technical Offices.

In its report, the State Party has addressed advances made in all the recommendations for the property contained in the 2018 Advisory mission report, having completed and submitted the updated Management Plan 2021-2025, taking into account the recommendations underlined by the Advisory mission. ICOMOS will undertake a Technical Review of the Management Plan that will be transmitted to the State Party.

Conservation activities have been reported in the framework of the Conservation Plan and completion of the PIP, such as the intervention of the Santa Laura Foundry, which constituted the last pending intervention, as well as refacing works at the Santiago Humberstone Hospital, conservation works at the Iodine House; restorations of the Quarters for Unmarried Workers; restorations at the Coeducational School No. 35; structural reinforcement works at the Houses for Professional Staff, Works at the Leaching Plant, among others.

Furthermore, the Disaster Risk Management Plan for the property has been completed and submitted in the framework of the project "Strengthening Disaster Risk Management at Three World Heritage Properties in Chile," implemented through a collaboration agreement between the National Service for Cultural Heritage and the Federico Santa María Technical University, with the financial support of the

government of Germany. ICOMOS will also provide a Technical Review of the Disaster Risk Management Plan for transmission to the State Party.

It is also noted that legal work continues on the project to amend the Law on National Monuments, with the aim of establishing a Law on Cultural Heritage informed by a holistic and up-to-date approach to heritage conservation. The continuous implementation of the 'Social Program for World Heritage Sites' (2018-2021), which provides direct grants and technical assistance to site managers of national world heritage properties, should be welcomed, particularly in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the State Party should be encouraged to continue providing this support as much as possible.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.166

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7A.49**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Welcomes the efforts undertaken for the conservation and sustainable management of the property, and takes note with satisfaction of the measures carried out by the State Party to finalize the Management Plan 2021-2025 and pending conservation measures/actions as addressed in the 2018 ICOMOS Advisory mission report;*
4. *Encourages the State Party to continue its efforts to strengthen heritage institutions in the country's regions, and to establish a Law on Cultural Heritage with an updated approach to heritage conservation in order to ensure the conservation of the World Heritage property;*
5. *Requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for review by the Advisory Bodies.*

MIXED PROPERTIES

AFRICA

170. Maloti-Drakensberg Park (Lesotho, South Africa) (C/N 985bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2000

Criteria (i)(iii)(vii)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 2014-2018)

Total amount approved: USD 34,792

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 50,000 in 2015 through the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism programme (Flanders Funds-in-Trust); USD 40,000 in 2016-2017 for COMPACT community conservation programme (Netherlands Funds-in-Trust), USD 145,000 from the Government of Norway in 2020 for continued COMPACT activities

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Interpretative and visitation facilities: Need to improve presentation of cultural aspects, in particular the San rock art sites within the Environmental Centre
- Legal framework: Revisions, amendments and enactment of relevant laws pertinent to the property not yet finalized in Lesotho
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure, particularly a proposed cable car and a proposed petrol filling station within the property's newly proposed buffer zone in South Africa
- Management activities: Continuation of a cautious approach to conservation interventions on rock art sites (except where rock art would otherwise become very fragile and vulnerable)
- Management systems/management plan: Need to strengthen the Lesotho heritage management, including adoption of a comprehensive management plan, annual budget allocation, risk preparedness and disaster response plan, monitoring indicators, staff training and transnational collaboration
- The buffer zones surrounding the property are not yet formalized
- Need for research and documentation to establish an inventory of rock art in Sehlabathebe National Park (issue resolved)
- Need for an assessment of the potential cultural contribution of other landscape elements to the cultural values of Sehlabathebe National Park (issue resolved)
- Renewable energy facilities: Proposed development of wind farms in areas neighboring the Sehlabathebe National Park (issue resolved)
- Oil and gas exploration: proposed shale gas, gas and oil exploration within the property's newly proposed buffer zone in South Africa

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985/>

Current conservation issues

On 2 December 2020, the States Parties submitted a joint state of conservation on the property, which is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/985/documents/>, reporting the following:

- The annual budget for the property includes support for staff training and community activities. In addition, a Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Programme (COMPACT) continues at the property, with financial support from the Government of Norway to the World Heritage Fund;
- The Joint Management Plan of the property is still being finalized. It is confirmed that risk preparedness and disaster response planning will be incorporated into the Plan;
- The States Parties are awaiting the review of the management plans for fire, invasive alien species, cultural heritage and the sustainable tourism strategy;
- The State Party of South Africa has submitted a request for a Minor Boundary Modification to formalize the buffer zone to the south of the Sehlabathebe National Park in South Africa;
- The formal application for the proposed shale gas, gas and oil exploration within this buffer zone has not yet been received and hence no development has yet taken place. Similarly, there has been no development of the proposed cableway in South Africa. The State Party of South Africa confirms that Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments (EIAs/HIAs) for these projects will be undertaken and submitted to the World Heritage Centre once they are available;
- Any conservation interventions for the rock art sites will be limited to addressing immediate and urgent vulnerabilities only;
- The appeal lodged by the management authority of the property in South Africa over the proposed petrol filling station in the buffer zone, was rejected. This was also confirmed through a State Party letter submitted to the World Heritage Centre on 30 September 2020, which also noted the State Party's commitment to monitor the engagements to ensure the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property is not compromised. The project has since been completed;
- The State Party of Lesotho commits to expediting the finalization of the Biodiversity Management Bill, which is undergoing final review.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

The confirmation by the State Party of South Africa to undertake impact assessments for the two development proposals and for submitting them to the World Heritage Centre is appreciated. Recalling that the cableway is proposed in the immediate vicinity of the property and the exploration is within the property's buffer zone, there is high potential for impacts on the OUV. It is therefore recommended that the State Party keep the World Heritage Centre informed of the progress and to ensure the impact assessments are undertaken in line with the ICOMOS and IUCN guidelines.

The continued efforts to finalize the Joint Management Plan and the Biodiversity Management Bill are appreciated but the significant delay is also notable. Considering that their completion has been pending for some time, every effort should be made to expedite the process to the extent possible. The continued confirmation by the States Parties that any conservation interventions for the rock art sites will be limited to addressing immediate and urgent vulnerabilities only is welcome.

It is recalled that the management authority of the property in South Africa in previous reports expressed its concerns for the visual and sense-of-place impacts of the petrol filling station in the buffer zone. The state of conservation report submitted by the States Parties does not provide any details and taking note that the project has now been completed, it is recommended that the Committee request the States Parties to provide information on how the potential impacts on the OUV of the property were mitigated during construction, and what measures are being applied during the operational phase to ensure the OUV continues to be protected.

The communication that the State Party of Lesotho is finalizing its Biodiversity Resources Management Bill, is welcome, and it is reminded that a copy of the final Bill is provided to the World Heritage Centre once it is approved.

The submission of a request for a Minor Boundary Modification is acknowledged, however, the World Heritage Centre has requested the States Parties to complement their request with a joint letter, ensuring that the request is endorsed by the two States Parties, in order to transfer it for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.170

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **39 COM 7B.33**, **41 COM 7B.38** and **43 COM 7B.38**, adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Appreciates the confirmation by the States Parties that conservation interventions for the rock art sites will be limited to addressing immediate and urgent vulnerabilities only, and the commitment by the State Party of South Africa to undertake Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments in line with IUCN and ICOMOS guidelines for the proposed cableway in the immediate vicinity of the property and for a proposed shale gas, gas and oil exploration within the newly proposed buffer zone in South Africa, and to submit the impact assessments to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies before making any decisions that may be difficult to reverse in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines;*
4. *Takes note that the appeal lodged by the management authority over the petrol filling station within the property's buffer zone in South Africa was rejected, but also recalling the concerns that were raised in relation to the potential negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), requests the State Party of South Africa to provide further details on how the potential impacts of the petrol filling station were mitigated during construction and the measures that have been put in place during the operational phase to ensure the continued protection of the OUV;*
5. *Reiterates its request to the States Parties to complete the revision of the Joint Management Plan of the property, using it as an umbrella to harmonize the management system, to submit the Plan to the World Heritage Centre for review, and to report on its implementation;*
6. *Also reiterates its request to the State Party of Lesotho to expedite the finalization of the Biodiversity Resources Management Bill and to submit a copy to the World Heritage Centre;*
7. *Notes the submission of a request for a Minor Boundary Modification to formalize the buffer zone to the south of the Sehlabathebe National Park in South Africa, and also requests the States Parties to formalize this submission with a joint letter by both States Parties, so that it can be transferred for evaluation by the Advisory Bodies;*
8. *Further requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above. for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

171. Ngorongoro Conservation Area (United Republic of Tanzania) (C/N 39bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1979

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

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 1984-1989

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/39/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 16 (from 1979-2014)

Total amount approved: USD 290,386

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/39/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount provided to the property: USD 50,000 from Switzerland, USD 35,000 from the Netherlands, USD 20,000 from the United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP) and USD 8,000 self-benefitting funds from the United Republic of Tanzania for community consultative process in 2013-2014; USD 50,000 from the Flanders Funds-in-Trust for sustainable tourism strategy in 2014-2015

Previous monitoring missions

April 1986: IUCN mission; April-May 2007 and December 2008: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions; February 2011: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission; April 2012: World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; August 2017: ICOMOS/IUCN Advisory mission; March 2019: Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Geothermal energy development project (issue resolved)
- Buildings and Development (potential impact of lodge development project on the crater rim, proposed museum building at Laetoli)
- Transportation infrastructure (impact of project for upgrading Lodoare Gate to Golini Main Road, construction of the southern bypass road and access road to Olduvai museum)
- Biological resource use/modification (poaching, grazing pressure)
- Social/cultural uses of heritage (relevance of Maasai traditional knowledge to management of the area, increased human population, tourism pressure, challenges facing community livelihoods)
- Invasive/alien species (spread of invasive species)
- Management System/Management Plan (including governance of the property and community involvement/collaboration, condition and conservation of the Laetoli hominid footprints)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/39/>

Current conservation issues

On 8 February 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, a summary of which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/39/documents/>. The report includes a work plan for the implementation of the recommendations of the 2017 ICOMOS/IUCN Advisory mission, the 2019 World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission and the World Heritage Committee Decision **43 COM 7B.39**, amongst other updates, summarised as follows:

- No poaching incidents were recorded at the property. The budget for community awareness on conservation saw a small increase in 2019, with awareness-raising workshops held in 2020 and community-based beekeeping and agricultural activities (outside the property) supported;
- The State Party restates the selection of the Mbulu route as identified through the feasibility study of the southern bypass road;
- Works on the upgrading of the Lodoare Gate to Golini main road through the property have been suspended because of financial constraint linked to the drop in tourism numbers as a result of the

COVID-19 pandemic. Detailed pre-construction surveys and studies, included in the supervision and construction contracts, will be undertaken before site works begin and will be submitted when the project resumes;

- A framework for enhanced stakeholder engagement, integrated policies and guidance on tourism carrying capacity and monitoring and enforcement measures are to be included in a multiple land use model (MLUM), which will also review voluntary resettlement schemes;
- Mechanisms for traffic monitoring, including regulation of speed and driving behaviour will be developed when the Lodoare Gate to Golini route road project resumes;
- A digital database of cultural sites, archaeological sites and attributes in the property is operational;
- The Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) has established a monitoring and evaluation unit to monitor compliance with the impact assessment studies and assist in maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- All projects undertaken or planned within the property are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be undertaken when the financial situation improves;
- The draft General Management Plan (GMP) will be finalized in consultation with stakeholders by July 2021.

An expert meeting on the conservation of the Laetoli footprints and the museum project was held at UNESCO, Paris, in March 2019, with representatives of the State Party, the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and ICCROM. The State Party reports that an update on implementation of recommendations concerning the Laetoli Footprints will be provided to the World Heritage Centre in December 2021.

On 24 January 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party regarding a four-zone Management and Resettlement Plan developed as a response to the 2019 mission, and which, according to the third-party information, would marginalize the land rights of the local communities. No response has been received at the time of writing this report.

On 12 May 2021, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN were sent copies of a letter from Indigenous Peoples Rights International (IPRI) to the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, regarding what were stated to be the impending eviction of 73,000 indigenous pastoralists from the property. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies met with both the State Party and IPRI. The State Party stated that the eviction of 73,000 pastoralists is not planned but confirmed the increasing challenges of ensuring the conservation values of the property in the light of increased resident populations since the creation of the conservation area. The State Party further reiterated its commitment to identify adequate solutions to this issue.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

Welcome progress has been reported by the State Party including continued engagement with local communities and the establishment of a digital database and a monitoring and evaluation unit within NCAA. The development of an EIA/HIA compliance monitoring tool for this unit as recommended by the 2019 mission is positive, and it will be important that it is utilised by all relevant stakeholders.

The submission of a work plan for the implementation of the 2017 and 2019 mission recommendations and previous Committee Decisions is acknowledged. The workplan indicates that there are significant delays in the implementation of some of the mission recommendations and certain recommendations are either not addressed in detail or require further work and clarification, including a Cultural Heritage Conservation Strategy, reconsideration of the current compartmentalized approach to governance and an Interpretation Strategy.

The reported absence of poaching since the previous report is welcome. However, it is unclear to which species this statement applies. Also, no information is provided on the efforts to control the spread of invasive alien plants.

In relation to the two road projects, there is an urgent need for the feasibility study for the southern bypass route to be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies as urged by the Committee in Decision **43 COM 7B.39**, including maps of the considered route options. The suspension of the works on the Lodoare – Golini road through the property is noted and it is important to reiterate the need to implement all the 2017 Advisory mission recommendations, including the

development of an action plan to manage road use, and the submission of the results of archaeological investigations and baseline ecological and environmental data before starting any construction.

The February 2021 ICOMOS/ICCROM technical review of the EIA and Cultural HIA for the Laetoli Hominin Footprints Museum concluded that there will be considerable impact on the OUV of the property from any construction near the footprints and from the proposed science/education centre site some 6km away, and recommended that a clearer conservation approach needs to be defined for the footprint site and for the overall archaeological landscape before any decisions are made. The review reiterated the recommendation of the March 2019 expert meeting that the State Party focus on exploring different conservation approaches before consideration of a detailed museum project.

It is important that the finalisation of the GMP ensures consultations with local communities, including opportunities to fully understand its proposals and provide meaningful input to its content, and free, prior, informed consent as appropriate of local stakeholders and rightsholders. No clarity on progress is given for developing integrated policies and guidelines on interpretation strategy, tourism carrying capacity and monitoring framework, recommended by the 2019 mission. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit the draft GMP to the World Heritage Centre for review before final approval, together with the complementary material requested in Committee Decision **43 COM 7B.39**. The State Party should also be requested to report on the current status of agricultural development in the property.

The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies note the confirmation by the State Party that no large-scale evictions of residents are being planned but reiterate their concern on the continued conflicts with the communities living in the property as well as the increasing pressure on the OUV as a result of the steep increase in the number of people residing in the property since its inscription. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies reiterate the need for a consultative process to identify long-term sustainable solutions to address these issues, with participation of all rightsholders and stakeholders, consistent with international norms and the policies of the Convention.

The State Party should be requested to submit the review of MLUM to the World Heritage Centre for comments by the Advisory Bodies. In the context of the complex history of this property in relation to challenging and fragile harmony between conservation and communities, relating to increasing numbers of people living in the property, there is an urgent need to review the effectiveness of the MLUM, the proposed voluntary resettlement scheme, and the zonation of the property in relation to competing requirements, and identify long-term interdisciplinary solutions based on international best practice through dialogue and in consultation with relevant rightsholders and other stakeholders. It is recommended that the State Party invite an Advisory mission by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies as an opportunity for dialogue with all relevant rightsholders and stakeholders including the local indigenous communities and the International Indigenous Peoples Forum for World Heritage (IIPFWH) to review the above, to consider whether the current approaches are sufficient to address these crucial issues, and to provide advice on.

While recognising the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is unfortunate that the requested SEA has been deferred. Taking note of the concerns raised by the 2019 mission of the cumulative and gradual intensification of threats to the OUV, the SEA will serve as a valuable tool to evaluate the current and future impacts of developments across all sectors in the region, including the property and the Serengeti ecosystem, so that the findings can inform management.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.171

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.39**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Welcomes the efforts of the State Party to combat wildlife poaching, the establishment and maintenance of a digital database for cultural and archaeological sites and attributes, continued engagement with local communities and support for alternative livelihoods, and the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation unit in the Ngorongoro*

Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) to focus on ensuring compliance of impact assessment processes;

4. Also welcomes the development of the work plan for the implementation of the 2017 and 2019 mission recommendations and previous Committee Decisions, but regrets that activities are only partially represented and that they lack detail on their implementation status, therefore requests the State Party to revise the work plan to include all recommendations of previous missions and keep the World Heritage Centre informed of its progress with implementation;
5. Also requests the State Party to provide information on the spread of invasive species, the status of agricultural activities in the property and on its efforts to address these threats to the property, including through stakeholder awareness-raising;
6. Reiterates its request to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre the feasibility study for the southern bypass route including maps of the considered route options;
7. Notes the current suspension of the upgrading of the Lodoare Gate to Golini main road through the property and also reiterates its request to the State Party to fully implement the 2017 mission recommendations concerning the road and submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, the action plan to manage road use, and the results of archaeological investigations and baseline ecological and environmental data before starting the upgrading works;
8. Notes with concern the results of the ICOMOS/ICCROM technical review concluding that the Laetoli Hominin Footprints Museum and proposed new science/education centre would impact adversely on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), further requests the State Party to define clearer conservation approaches for the footprint site and for the overall archaeological landscape before any decisions are made on presentation of the footprints or a museum building, and requests furthermore that an update be provided on progress made;
9. Requests moreover the State Party to ensure the General Management Plan (GMP) for the property is finalized in consultation with, and with the free prior and informed consent as appropriate of local stakeholders and rightsholders, and also reiterates its requests to the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre the draft GMP for review by the Advisory Bodies, including:
 - a) A Cultural Heritage Conservation Strategy, in particular for the palaeo-anthropological sites, including providing human and financial resources for this process,
 - b) Reconsideration of the current compartmentalized approach to the governance of the property to ensure that the natural and cultural attributes of the property will be managed, protected and presented in an integrated approach, with a framework for stakeholder engagement,
 - c) An Interpretation Strategy for the property with a clear vision to ensure the protection of the OUV, integrity and authenticity of the property and that contributes to conservation activity,
 - d) Integrated policies and guidelines on tourism carrying capacity,
 - e) Specific monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with the conclusions and mitigation measures of validated impact assessment studies,

- f) *Mechanisms for traffic monitoring, including regulation of speed and driving behaviour,*
 - g) *The proposed Multiple Land Use Model (MLUM) Review;*
10. *Reiterates its concern over the continued conflicts with the communities living in the property, including the challenges resulting from the significant increase in the number of people residing in the property since its inscription, and considers that there is the need for an equitably governed consultative process to identify long term sustainable interdisciplinary solutions to address these issues, with participation of all rightsholders and stakeholders, consistent with international norms and the policies of the Convention;*
 11. *Recommends that the State Party invite an Advisory mission by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to the property to consider, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders and rightsholders, the proposed review of the MLUM, as well as the voluntary resettlement scheme, and the zonation of the property, and consider whether the current approaches are sufficient to address these crucial issues and to provide advice on the way forward;*
 12. *Also recalling that the 2019 mission noted concerns for the cumulative and gradual intensification of threats to the OUV of the property, further reiterates its request to the State Party to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to evaluate the current and future impacts of developments across all sectors in the region, including the property and the Serengeti ecosystem so that the findings can inform management, and submit the SEA to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies;*
 13. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

172. Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru) (C/N 274)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1983

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

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

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

International Assistance

Requests approved: 11 (from 1986-2001)

Total amount approved: USD 166,625

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

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

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

Previous monitoring missions

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

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

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

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

Current conservation issues

On 11 January 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/274/documents/>, which reports the following:

- From January 2019, entry times and the length of the visit are regulated via a ticketing system according to carrying capacity, and transportation is coordinated with entrance and exit times.

From June 2019, access to vulnerable monuments is regulated, and from 2020 the admission to the Ilaqta of Machu Picchu is set at 2,244 visitors per day according to the carrying capacity defined to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);

- In response to the request for the Study of Alternative Transportation to the Ilaqta to be undertaken once the carrying capacity is defined, the terms of reference (ToR) for two studies were developed but put on hold until the preparation of a new study of admission capacity when the Machu Picchu Visitor Center is in operation;
- In July 2019, the State Party submitted documentation on the new Visitor Centre to be built on the lower stretch of the slope of Machu Picchu Mountain, near the Ruins Bridge (*Puente Ruinas*). According to the document on carrying capacity (July 2020), the archaeological survey of the area proposed for the construction is not yet terminated and the environmental compatibility is not yet approved;
- A working document on the Comprehensive Strategy of the Amazonian Access was completed in 2019, which devises guidelines for the future comprehensive management of the property and wider area. Furthermore, a working document on the Strategic Vision for the future management of the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu / National Archeological Park of Machu Picchu (SHM-PANM) was prepared, which proposes guidelines and strategies for the management of the property and will guide its conservation and sustainability;
- Regarding the requested review of the SHM Public Use Plan 2017-2021 (PUP), technical-regulatory instruments to strengthen the public and social management of the property are listed: the PUP, Site Plan of the Intiwatana Sector - Ruins Bridge and sanction measures;
- Progress on a Machu Picchu-Choquequirao Biosphere Reserve proposal included a cultural and socio-economic characterization study by the Decentralized Directorate of Culture of Cusco (DDC-Cusco) and natural characterization by the National Service of Protected Natural Areas (SERNANP). Discussions with local municipalities will resume when COVID-19 allows;
- Following COVID-19 closure of the property to tourism in March 2020, actions were reoriented to the conservation and investigation of cultural heritage, maintenance of service infrastructure and implementation of biosecurity measures. Entrance fees were waived in November and December to stimulate visitation, disaster risk management activities undertaken for forest fire prevention in the PANM, and virtual training and awareness raising. The update of the 2015-2019 Master Plan was initiated and a new Master Plan is planned for approval in September 2021.

On 5 August 2019, the World Heritage Centre transmitted a letter to the State Party requesting information on the construction of the International Airport Chinchero-Cusco located 60 km from the property, covering 40,000 m². On 23 September 2019, the State Party responded with numerous documents, for which an ICOMOS technical review was transmitted to the State Party in February 2020. On 18 March 2021, the State Party submitted a report on the *Implementation of the Recommendations of the "Study of Carrying Capacity and Limits of Acceptable Change for the Machu Picchu Historic Sanctuary – 2015" and results obtained from 2016-2019*, completed in July 2020.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

The development of strategies and guidelines for the overall strategic management of the property, including a Comprehensive Strategy of the Amazonian Access and a Strategic Vision for the future management of the SHM-PANM, is welcome. Noting the planned approval of a new Master Plan in September 2021, it is recommended that the new Plan is effectively harmonized with the various existing strategies, visions, operational plans, regulations and sanction measures, and to ensure its effective implementation to protect and manage the cultural and natural heritage of the property.

It is welcomed that the review of the 2015 carrying capacity study was completed in 2020, and that visitor limits for the property have been established based on the carrying capacity in relation to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). It will be important for the State Party to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of visitor management measures in relation to the defined carrying capacity. In this regard, it is also recalled that all infrastructure developments should be fully considered in the context of the OUV of the property. This includes the potential indirect and cumulative impacts of the new International Airport Chinchero-Cusco documented in the ICOMOS technical review, in particular from construction work, operational practices such as flight routes and visual and acoustic impact, increased numbers of visitors to the area, as well as new associated infrastructure and tourist accommodation. All of these points should be appropriately considered through Heritage Impact

Assessment (HIA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes. Specifically, noting the projected potential increase in airport capacity to 5 million passengers in 2031 and 5.7 million in 2044, and increase in visitors to the property from 1.5 million in 2018 to 2.1 million in 2044, it is important that the maximum number of visitors to the property is determined not by the capacity of tourism infrastructure, but by the visitor limits defined as part of the property's carrying capacity.

The information on the project for the new Visitor Centre, submitted by the State Party in July 2019, was reviewed in a very positive manner by ICOMOS. However, the HIA and the EIA for the prospective construction site have yet to be approved. Finally, it is of some concern that the local population is still against the construction plan.

Acknowledging that the State Party halted the Studies of Alternative Transportation to the Ilaqta following the Committee's request to base these on a defined carrying capacity, now that this capacity has been set at 2,244 visitors per day, it is recommended to proceed with these studies as soon as possible, since the transportation to and from the Ilaqta is an important variable for all aspects related to the management of the property. It is strongly recommended that the projects and study results (e.g. Visitor Centre, carrying capacity and transport) be coordinated prior to taking any action. All plans for interventions should be assessed via Impact Assessments (HIA and EIA) and should also be submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies.

The further progress towards a proposal for a Biosphere Reserve is noted, recalling the potential for nature-based tourism alternatives to diversify visitor experiences and activities in the region. It is also noted that the COVID-19 closure of the property has allowed for activities related to the investigation and conservation of cultural heritage (including the installation of stone blocks and wooden stairs in order to protect original surfaces), maintenance of service infrastructure and disaster risk management for forest fire prevention.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.172

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **37 COM 7B.35**, **39 COM 7B.36**, **41 COM 7B.36** and **43 COM 7B.37**, adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Welcomes the development of strategic management documents for the property, including a Comprehensive Strategy of the Amazonian Access and a Strategic Vision for the future management of the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu/National Archeological Park of Machu Picchu (SHM-PANM);*
4. *Noting the planned approval of a new Master Plan for the property in 2021 and the need for a new SHM Public Use Plan for 2022, requests the State Party to ensure their development is effectively harmonized with existing strategies, visions, operational plans, regulations and sanction measures, and to ensure their effective implementation to protect and manage the cultural and natural heritage of the property;*
5. *Also welcomes the completion of the review of the 2015 carrying capacity study and the setting of visitor limits based on the defined carrying capacity to preserve the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and also requests the State Party to implement measures to effectively manage visitation, in line with the carrying capacity to ensure the OUV of the property;*
6. *Also welcomes the information on the new Visitor Centre and encourages the State Party to finalize the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and the Environmental Impact*

Assessment (EIA), and to continue the information campaign in order to gain the support of the local population;

7. Also noting the development of the International Airport Chinchero-Cusco 60 km from the property, further requests the State Party to ensure that the potential impacts of all infrastructure developments, including indirect and cumulative impacts such as increased tourism pressure, are appropriately assessed, in line with ICOMOS and IUCN impact assessment guidance documents, and also that visitation to the property is regulated based on the established carrying capacity of the property;
8. Requests furthermore the State Party to undertake the Studies on Alternative Transportation to the Ilaqta based on the established carrying capacity and OUV of the property, prior to any decisions regarding new transportation projects;
9. Reiterates its request for the State Party to ensure that any major infrastructure transport project, such as airports, railways, cable cars, tunnels and roads, are rigorously assessed at an early stage of planning in terms of their impact on the property's OUV, on its wider setting and on the proposed future Machu Picchu-Choquequirao Biosphere Reserve, and that the corresponding Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) of the projects be submitted for review by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies before any projects are approved or works undertaken;
10. Notes further progress towards a proposal for a Machu Picchu-Choquequirao Biosphere Reserve and also encourages the State Party to continue this process when COVID-19 conditions allow;
11. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

NATURAL PROPERTIES

AFRICA

173. Dja Faunal Reserve (Cameroon) (N 407)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1987

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/407/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 4 (from 1987-1997)

Total amount approved: USD 84,700

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/407/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 60,000, UNESCO Netherlands Funds-in-Trust; USD 263,700 from Franz Weber Foundation (2012 to 2017); USD 600,000 in the framework of the Central Africa World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI) (2017 to 2021); and USD 250,000 from the Government of Norway for the period 2021-2023.

Previous monitoring missions

March 1998: UNESCO monitoring mission; June 2006, December 2009, February-March 2012 and November-December 2015: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring missions, February 2019: and January 2020: UNESCO advisory missions organized in the framework of CAWHFI to evaluate the ESIA of the Hévéa SUDCAM plantation and the Mekin hydroelectric dam.

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Mining exploitation project close to the property
- Lack of implementation and full approval and of the management plan
- Agricultural and forest encroachment
- Industrial agriculture of Hévéa in the contiguous zone
- Threats exerted by commercial hunting and deforestation around the property
- Mekin hydroelectric dam
- Poaching
- Risk of loss of ecological connectivity

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/407/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2020, the State Party submitted a report of the state of conservation of the property, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/407/documents/>, which provides the following information:

- Although some methodological biases remain between the census data of 2015 and 2018, the results confirm a significant decrease in the numbers of elephants, gorillas or chimpanzees compared to the data of 1995. The 2018 results are considered as the new benchmarks;
- Indices of human pressure are mainly recorded in the north-west of the property, which is correlated with the low rate of wildlife encounters in this area;

- The renewal of the management team associated with the strengthening of the surveillance system made it possible to increase the patrol effort by integrating the hotspots, the rehabilitation of surveillance posts, the provision of the teams with equipment as well as the arrest and the conviction of poachers. And this, In addition to awareness-raising actions for the communities, the signing of Reciprocal Environmental Agreements and discussions for the creation of community hunting areas in the periphery of the property as an alternative to poaching;
- The progress of the ISO 9001 certification of the Sud-Cameroun Hévéa company (SUDCAM) is evaluated at 70% and the company is strengthening its actions to reduce its environmental impacts;
- The property and its periphery have a Development Plan for the period 2020-2024. Consultations are continuing on the regime for the use of concessions retroceded by SUDCAM. The buffer zone of the property has not been created but is envisaged within the framework of the implementation of the Development Plan in consultation with the local populations and the various entities involved. The State Party confirms that the Forest Management Units adjacent to the property remain permanent forests;
- Forest cover decreased from 94% to 85% between 2010 and 2020 in the peripheral zone of 20km around the property;
- A site for the relocation of people impacted by the Mekin hydroelectric development has been identified;
- New projects, notably the Integrated Planning and Development Programme for the Dja Mining Loop and the Adjacent Border Area (PADI-DJA) are being developed near the property. The State Party undertakes to ensure that the guidelines of the IUCN Advice Note on environmental assessments at natural World Heritage sites are taken into account, to closely monitor the implementation of Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP) of these projects and to inform the World Heritage Centre of any new project. The Strategic and Social Environmental Evaluation (SSEE) of development projects around the property is still ongoing.

As part of the Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI), the World Heritage Centre organized from 24 January to 1 February 2020 an advisory mission to assess the impacts of the activities of the Mekin hydroelectric dam on the property and define adequate corrective or mitigation measures.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The efforts made by the State Party and its partners to improve the management of the property are welcomed. The support of the CAWHFI programme funded by the European Union and the funding of the Government of Norway are very important in this regard. However, the low density of characteristic species of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), including threatened and endangered species, combined with the persistence of signs of poaching within the property remain of great concern. It is recommended that surveillance, law enforcement, community awareness-raising and the development of community-based alternatives to poaching be intensified. In addition, on the basis of the methodology used in 2018, it is recommended that the State Party plans for a new wildlife census in 2023 to assess the trends of these flagship populations.

The finalisation of the Development Plan (2020-2024) for the property and its peripheral zone is noted. However, the document does not respond to several requests from the Committee, notably the clarification of the zoning of the property and the creation of a functional buffer zone. While noting that the Forest Management Units (FMU) adjacent to the property remain permanent forests, the forest cover around the property has decreased by 9% in 10 years. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party for the creation of a functional buffer zone around the property that is in line with the recommendations of the International Advisory Board on Biosphere Reserves, as well as the classification of the concession returned by SUDCAM in the State forest domain. It is also recommended that efforts to maintain ecological connectivity with the other protected areas of the Dja-Odzala-Minkébé tri-national landscape (TRIDOM) be continued in order to guarantee the integrity of the property in the long term, in particular through the implementation of the tentative agreement to take into account the migration corridors of large mammals in the preparation of the Regional Planning and Sustainable Development Scheme (SRADDT) of the South and East Regions, and development plans and ESMPs of private sector operators crossed by the corridors.

While noting that the current ISO 9001 certification of SUDCAM is not an environmental certification, it is advised that the recommendations of the 2019 UNESCO advisory mission, included in Decision

43 COM 7B.29, continue to be implemented. In particular, it is important to ensure independent certification of the latex processing plant in order to meet international environmental standards.

It is worrying that the 2020 UNESCO Advisory mission to the Mekin hydroelectric dam indicates that the ESIA did not assess the project's impacts on the OUV, and that the construction of the dam generated numerous environmental damages. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to implement all the recommendations of the mission.

On 18 December 2019, the World Heritage Centre contacted the State Party regarding the resumption of mining activities by the mining company GEOVIC near the property. No response was received. The World Heritage Committee, in its decisions **36 COM 7B.1**, **35 COM 7B.1**, **34 COM 7B.1** and **33 COM 7B.1**, had expressed concern about the GEOVIC project and requested the State Party to suspend mining works in order to assess any negative impacts on the OUV of the property. It is regrettable that no information was provided and it is recommended that the Committee reiterates its request to the State Party to provide all the documents relating to this project (Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, maps and assessment reports on the sites of high conservation value located in the project area).

Finally, in relation to the developments of new structuring projects around the property, it is regrettable that the SSEE recommended by the Committee, and recalled in Decision **40 COM 7B.79**, has still not been finalized, as is the case for the SRADDT of the South and East Regions. It is recommended that the State Party accelerate the development of these strategic documents which will be important to ensure that the cumulative impacts of the envisaged projects will not affect the OUV of the property and will not jeopardize its ecological connectivity, and to submit them to the World Heritage Centre for evaluation by IUCN, prior to approval of any project.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.173

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling decisions **33 COM 7B.1**, **34 COM 7B.1**, **35 COM 7B.1**, **36 COM 7B.1**, **40 COM 7B.79** and **43 COM 7B.29** adopted at its 33rd (Seville, 2009), 34th (Brasilia, 2010), 35th (UNESCO, 2011), 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively;*
3. *Welcomes the efforts made by the State Party and its partners to improve the efficiency of the management of the property;*
4. *Thanks the donors who continue to support the conservation of the property, in particular the European Commission through the Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI) and the Government of Norway through its contribution to the World Heritage Fund;*
5. *Reiterates its greatest concern at the low numbers of characteristic species of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the persisting signs of poaching within the property, and requests the State Party to intensify surveillance efforts, law enforcement of wildlife crime, community awareness and popularization of community alternatives to poaching, and initiate a new wildlife census no later than 2023 by considering the same methodological approach as in 2018 to assess trends in these flagship populations;*
6. *Welcomes the efforts undertaken to implement the recommendations of the UNESCO advisory mission to assess the impacts of the activities of the Sud-Cameroun Hévéa company (SUDCAM) on the property, and urges the State Party to ensure that SUDCAM continues to implement sustainable and responsible production standards in the rubber*

sector, in particular independent certification of the latex processing plant in order to comply with international environmental standards;

7. Expresses its great concern regarding the conclusions of the UNESCO advisory mission on the Mekin hydroelectric dam according to which the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) did not consider all of the infrastructure related to the project and were not undertaken in accordance with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and that the construction of the dam has generated significant environmental damage; and urges the State Party to implement all the recommendations of this mission;
8. Takes note of the finalization of the Development Plan (2020-2024) for the property and its peripheral zone, and reiterates its request to create a buffer zone for the property, in consultation with the local populations and the various entities involved, in line with the recommendation of the International Advisory Council on Biosphere Reserves to include the rural complexes and forest concessions which adjoin most of the property, as well as the classification of the concession returned by SUDCAM in the forest domain of the State while observing sustainable usage regimes;
9. Also urges the State Party and its partners to continue efforts to maintain ecological connectivity with the other protected areas of the Dja-Odzala-Minkébé tri-national landscape (TRIDOM) in order to guarantee the long-term integrity of the property, in particular through the implementation of the tentative agreement to take into account the migration corridors of large mammals in the process of drawing up the Regional Planning and Sustainable Development Scheme (SRADDT) for the South and East Regions, and development plans and environmental and social management plans (ESMP) of private sector operators crossed by the corridors;
10. Notes with concern that no information has been provided on the status of the GEOVIC mining project in the vicinity of the property, reiterates its request to the State Party not to authorize this project before an evaluation of its potential impacts on the OUV of the property, in accordance with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, and reiterates its request to the State Party to transmit all available documents relating to this project to the World Heritage Centre for consideration by IUCN;
11. Expresses concern about the proliferation of development projects near the property, in particular the Integrated Development and Planning Programme of the Dja Mining Loop and the Adjacent Border Area (PADI-DJA) and further urges the State Party to ensure that no exploration or mining permits around the property are granted without carrying out an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, to finalize the Strategic and Social Environmental Evaluation (SSEE) confirmed in Decision **40 COM 7B.79** as well as the SRADDT of the South and East Regions, and submit them to the World Heritage Centre for examination by IUCN;
12. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

174. Sangha Trinational (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo) (N 1380rev)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2012

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1380/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1380/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: 250,000 Euros from 2008 to 2013 and 700 000 Euros from 2016 to 2021 through the Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI) funded by the European Union

Previous monitoring missions

October 2016: World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to Congo and Central African Republic component of the property

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Civil unrest
- Poaching
- Mining
- Road and river transport project
- Optical fibre project in the vicinity of the property
- Forestry exploitation permits in the buffer zone

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1380/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 November 2020, the States Parties submitted a joint report on the state of conservation of the property, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1380/documents>, which provides the following information:

- Improvement in the management of the property by harmonizing the use of SMART and IMET tools, operationalizing the control room and a rapid intervention team, increasing the number of staff dedicated to the anti-poaching fight, capacity building and swearing-in of 25 eco-guards, monitoring of legal proceedings against poachers as well as the development of an integrated multi-actor anti-poaching strategy;
- In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, surveillance and police efforts have declined as unemployment and insecurity increase pressure on the property;
- The updating of development plans continues in Cameroon and the Central African Republic while validation is awaited in Congo. Cross-border cooperation is being strengthened through the tri-national structures put in place;
- The integrity of the property is maintained despite agricultural pressure, illegal gold mining, poaching and illegal logging. The annual rate of loss of plant cover is estimated at 0.03%;
- In the buffer zone of the property, no mining permits exist in Congo and permits have not been renewed in Cameroon. In the Central African Republic, an artisanal mining zone is being created in the buffer zone with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) accompanied by an environmental and social management plan have been produced;

- Cooperation efforts with indigenous populations have intensified. In Congo, six decrees were issued in application of Law No. 5-2011 promoting the rights of indigenous peoples. In Cameroon, the multi-stakeholder body responsible for implementing the memorandum of understanding with the Baka communities has been operational since September 2019. In the Central African Republic, a memorandum of understanding for the creation of a conflict management mechanism was signed in November 2020. Within the property, efforts to train staff on indigenous peoples' rights and good behaviour have intensified;
- In Cameroon and Congo, all forest concessions in the buffer zone are certified OLB and TLTV in Cameroon and FSC in Congo. The two forest concessions in the buffer zone in the Central African Republic are not certified, but management agreements have been signed and EIAs drawn up. States Parties have committed to defining strategic guidelines to minimize the effects of forestry activities on ecological connectivity;
- No follow-up has been given by the Economic Community of Central African States to the development project for the waterway on the Sangha;
- A memorandum of understanding for tourist traffic in the property was signed on 17 October 2019 and human and financial resources are being mobilized to establish an ecotourism strategy.

On 24 March 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of the Central African Republic requesting information on the aforementioned artisan mining project. On 20 May, the Embassy of the United States of America in the Central African Republic indicated that the project is located outside the buffer zone of the property, that it is not a new mining operation but a multi-stakeholder activity aimed at improved management of the natural resources and reduced pressure on the protected areas of Dzangha-Sanga.

In November 2020, the report "Embedding human rights in nature conservation: from intent to action - report of the Independent Panel of Experts of the Independent Review of allegations raised in the media regarding human rights violations in the context of WWF's conservation work" was published and highlights human rights concerns with reference to the management of the property.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Improvement of management efficiency by consolidating cross-border cooperation, updating the property's development plans, harmonizing management and monitoring tools, strengthening monitoring capacities, monitoring legal proceedings and the signing of a memorandum of understanding for tourist circulation is all positive.

Continuing dialogue with indigenous and local populations, training staff in human rights issues and indigenous peoples, putting in place legal and operational provisions for the recognition of their rights as well as their involvement in management of the property are welcomed. Recalling the concerns raised in the independent review initiated by WWF International, it is recommended that States Parties be requested to ensure that any concerns are addressed in accordance with relevant international standards, the World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy, and taking into account the recommendations of the independent review.

The decrease in patrol efforts linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, together with the persistence of illegal activities such as poaching, gold panning and logging are of concern, and it is recommended to intensify surveillance efforts to control any illegal activity within the property and ensure the ecological restoration of degraded sites.

The limited decrease in vegetation cover is noted. However, faunal censuses remain sparse and variable in the property and do not allow an assessment of the state of conservation of populations, especially mammals. It is recommended to harmonize these censuses in order to obtain precise and comparable data over time on the characteristic species of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

In the buffer zone of the property, the rescinding of the three mining permits in Cameroon and the absence of mining activities in Congo are welcomed. The reported establishment of a new artisanal mining area with support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) near the property in the Central African Republic is a cause for concern. However, noting the clarification provided by the Embassy of the United States of America that the project aims to better manage natural resources and reduce pressure on protected areas, it is recommended that the State Party provide clarifications on the potential impacts of this project on the OUV of the property.

In addition, the World Heritage Centre has received information on the allocation of oil exploration blocks in the northern region of the Congo. One of them could encroach upon the Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, an integral part of the property. A letter, which has remained unanswered to date, was sent to the State Party on 1 August 2019 to obtain information in accordance with paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is recommended that the Committee recall the incompatibility of oil, mining and gas exploration and exploitation with World Heritage status and that it urges the State Party of Congo to immediately revoke any permits that would infringe on the property.

The lack of progress in the development project for the waterway on the Sangha is noted. Furthermore, it is regrettable that the States Parties have not provided any information regarding the EIA and the progress of the Ouesso-Bangui road project. It is recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to States Parties not to undertake these projects until EIAs are completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN.

The certification of forest concessions in the buffer zone of the property in Cameroon is a step forward, however this certification only targets the legality of production and does not provide for measures to ensure the conservation of biodiversity. The situation of the two forest concessions in the buffer zone of the property in the Central African Republic remains of concern. Only the EIA of the Operating License for a concession has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre but it does not adequately assess the impacts of the activity on the OUV of the property and points to the increase in environmental damage locally. It is recommended to request the State Party of the Central African Republic to provide adequate assessments of the impacts of these activities on the OUV of the property, to avoid any activity incompatible with the preservation of the OUV and to prioritize the certification of these two concessions. The commitment of States Parties to define strategic directions to minimize the effects of forestry activities on ecological connectivity is welcomed and it is recommended to promote certification that minimizes the impacts on biodiversity by all forest concessions in the buffer zone.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.174

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision 43 COM 7B.30, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Welcomes the efforts made by the States Parties and their partners with a view to improving management efficiency through the consolidation of transboundary cooperation, the updating of the development plans for the components of the property, the harmonization of management and surveillance tools, capacity building of surveillance teams as well as monitoring of legal proceedings;*
4. *Warmly welcomes the continuation of dialogue with indigenous and local populations, the training of personnel responsible for the application of the law in the issues of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples, the establishment of several legal and operational provisions. for the recognition of their rights as well as their involvement in the management of the property, and taking note of the concerns raised in the independent review of human rights issues launched by WWF International, requests the States Parties to ensure that any concerns are addressed in accordance with relevant international standards, the World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy, and taking into account the recommendations of the independent review;*
5. *Notes with concern the decrease in patrol efforts due in part to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the persistence of illegal activities, including poaching, gold panning and illegal logging, and also requests the States Parties to continue current efforts to protect mammal species, to strengthen its actions to eliminate any illegal activity within the property and to ensure the ecological restoration of degraded sites;*

6. Further requests the States Parties to harmonize the census of animal populations in order to obtain, in accordance with the scale of the property, precise and comparable data over time on the characteristic species of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);
7. Also welcomes the decision of the non-renewal of the three mining permits by the State Party of Cameroon in the buffer zone, expresses its concern with regard to the reported creation, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), of an artisanal mining area near the property in the Central African Republic, and while noting the clarification from the Embassy of the United States of America that the project is located outside the buffer zone of the property and aims to reduce the pressure on the protected areas, further requests the State Party of the Central African Republic to urgently clarify the potential impacts of this project on the OUV of the property;
8. Recalls its established position on the fact that oil and gas exploration and / or exploitation are incompatible with World Heritage status, a policy supported by the commitments made by industry leaders, such as Shell and Total, not to undertake such activities at World Heritage properties, and also urges the State Party of Congo to immediately cancel any petroleum permits that would encroach on the property;
9. Notes the status quo of the development project of the waterway for navigation on the Sangha and further requests the States Parties not to undertake this activity without a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) being carried out in accordance with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note: Environmental Assessment, and submitted to the World Heritage Committee before any project approval;
10. Regrets that the States Parties have not provided any information concerning the EIA of the Ouesso-Bangui road and the state of progress of the said project, and reiterates its request to the States Parties to ensure that the construction of the road does not begin until the EIA is completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
11. Also welcomes the commitment of the States Parties to define strategic guidelines to minimize the effects of forestry activities on ecological connectivity and encourages the States Parties to promote certification that minimizes the impacts on biodiversity of all forest concessions in the area;
12. Reiterates its deep concern regarding the potential impacts on the OUV of the property by the two concessions in the buffer zone in the Central African Republic, and further requests the State Party of the Central African Republic to submit to the World Heritage Committee EIAs evaluating adequately the potential impacts of concessions for consideration, in accordance with IUCN World Heritage Advice Note: Environmental Assessment, and to prioritize certification of the two concessions;
13. Also requests the States Parties to continue to implement all the recommendations of the 2016 reactive monitoring mission;
14. Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

176. iSimangaliso Wetland Park (South Africa) (N 914)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1999

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/914/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 2003-2003)

Total amount approved: USD 20,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/914/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: EUR 4,573 through the France-UNESCO Convention agreement (2001-2002); USD 200,000 through the UNF/UNFIP project "Enhancing our Heritage" (2001-2007)

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Land conversion
- Management systems/ management plan
- Mining
- Lack of institution coordination

Additional Details:

Conflicting land use

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/914/>

Current conservation issues

The World Heritage Centre sent letters to the State Party on 13 November 2017, 12 November 2018, 4 March 2019, 3 September 2019, 23 October 2019 and 16 February 2021 requesting information related to the reported clearing and burning of swamp forest in the property, prospective mineral mining activities, impact of water use on Lake Sibaya, granting of an environmental authorization for proposed offshore exploration drilling and the artificial breaching of the sand barrier separating the Lake St. Lucia.

These issues were the subject of several consultation meetings between the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and the State Party. In follow-up, the State Party submitted reports in May 2019, December 2019, June 2020 and March 2021 (available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/914/documents/>), which provide the following information:

- The management authority has formally objected to the application for prospective mining activities lodged within the kwaSokhulu Area, located outside of the property, and is awaiting a response from the Department of Minerals and Energy. No mining is allowed in protected areas in South Africa. Objection was also raised against the proposed offshore exploration drilling some 75 km from the property. The State Party commits to keeping the World Heritage Committee informed of these two proposals;
- The management authority is commissioning scientific assessments on the impact on the water resources of Lake Sibaya, including use of water resources and pesticides. Measures currently taken include a moratorium on issuing of licenses for commercial forestry, which are requiring vast amounts of water. Work is also underway to establish a buffer zone for the property as a tool, to identify and mitigate/abate such negative impacts;
- At least 92 ha of swamp forest in the Sondwana Bay area inside the property have been cleared by local communities for subsistence agriculture. In response, several meetings have been

organized with communities, land claimants and traditional and local authorities. In 2021, no new clearance has been observed, possibly linked to the exceptionally wet season;

- While in its May 2019 report, the State Party noted that artificial breaching of the St. Lucia Estuary mouth to the Indian would be contrary to the efforts to allow the ecological restoration of the Lake St. Lucia estuarine system, in its February 2021 report, the State Party confirms that an assisted breach was implemented on 6 January 2021 with a channel being excavated. Following objections raised by scientists, the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries commissioned an independent Panel of Experts who will review all the relevant studies, recommendations and decisions taken in relation to the breaching.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

It is recalled that human-induced changes in the catchments, upstream water abstraction and agricultural practices were already of concern to the integrity of the property at the time of the property's inscription in 1999.

The clearing and burning of swamp forest for subsistence agriculture within the property is of great concern, as this not only destroys the forest vegetation, but also involves digging irrigation trenches and draining the land. The activities are reported to be the result of a conflict with local communities, and the efforts of the State Party to resolve this issue through dialogue are appreciated. However, ecological restoration of these areas will be complicated. It is therefore important that further damage does not take place. While it is positive that no further burning of vegetation has taken place since December 2020, this might be linked to the exceptionally wet conditions due to abundant rainfall. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to continue monitoring the situation, and in particular to continue its dialogue with the local communities to resolve outstanding issues and ensure that no further damage to the forests of the property takes place.

The significant drop in average water levels in Lake Sibaya since the time of inscription is also concerning. Lake Sibaya is the largest and deepest natural freshwater lake in the property and has a unique relict estuarine fauna, which is an important attribute of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). As mentioned in the State Party report, the drop in water level is linked to water abstraction but also the increase of commercial Eucalyptus plantations in the vicinity of the property. The reported efforts to develop a holistic approach to mitigating the water loss in Lake Sibaya system in consultation with all stakeholders is welcomed.

The artificial breaching of the mouth of the St. Lucia Estuary in January 2021 is a serious and complex matter and raises concerns. The hydrological and ecological functioning of Lake St. Lucia has been subject to major historical modification but in recent decades, the focus has been on restoring its natural estuarine functioning. It is recalled that the property's Integrated Management Plan and its Estuarine Management Plans since 2012 foresee hydrological restoration by allowing the uMfolozi River to follow its natural path back into the St. Lucia estuary and implement a policy of minimum interference in the estuarine system to facilitate as much natural functioning as possible. The multi-disciplinary study on Lake St. Lucia commissioned by the management authority under the Global Environment Fund (GEF) project, recommended that artificial breaching of the system should be stopped, and emphasized the need for natural hydrological and ecological restoration. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN therefore note that the decision to breach the mouth of the St. Lucia Estuary is departing from the management plan and scientific advice. In this regard, the State Party's decision to commission an independent Panel of Experts to review all the relevant studies, recommendations and decisions taken in relation to the breaching of Lake St. Lucia Estuary mouth is welcomed. It is recommended that the Committee urge the State Party to ensure that the work of this Panel be guided by the objective of protecting the OUV of the property.

The objections raised by the management authority against prospective mining activities outside the property, and the offshore exploratory drilling are appreciated.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.176

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*

2. Recalling Decisions CONF 209 VIII.A.1, 27 COM 7B.6 and 28 COM 15B.5, respectively adopted at its 23rd (Marrakesh, 1999), 27th (UNESCO, 2003) and 28th (Suzhou, 2004) sessions,
3. Noting with concern the clearing and burning of swamp forests for subsistence agriculture in the property, requests the State Party to continue to monitor the situation and to continue its dialogue with the local communities to resolve outstanding issues and to ensure that no further damage takes place;
4. Also noting with concern the significant drop in average water levels in Lake Sibaya since the time of inscription, welcomes the reported efforts to develop a holistic approach to mitigate water loss in Lake Sibaya system in consultation with all stakeholders, and also requests the State Party to assess the effectiveness of these efforts and strengthen its management responses where considered necessary;
5. Also welcomes the reported objection of the management authority to the proposed prospective mining and offshore exploratory drilling activities outside of the property, and further requests the State Party to ensure any activity that has the potential to negatively impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), undertaken in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, to inform decision-making;
6. Also recalling that ecological restoration is an important management objective of the Lake St. Lucia Estuary and key to maintaining the property's OUV, notes with concern that the artificial breaching of the estuary in January 2021 departs from the management plan and scientific advice, and further welcomes the decision to commission an independent Panel of Experts that will review all the relevant studies, recommendations and decisions taken in relation to the breaching of Lake St. Lucia Estuary mouth, and urges the State Party to ensure that the work of this Panel be guided by the objective of protecting the OUV of the property and submit the findings of the Panel to the World Heritage Centre;
7. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.

177. Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls (Zambia, Zimbabwe) (N 509)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1989

Criteria (vii)(viii)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/509/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 5 (from 2001-2007)

Total amount approved: USD 93,485

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/509/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 50,000 in 2015 through the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism programme (Flanders Funds-in-Trust)

Previous monitoring missions

November 2006: joint World Heritage Centre / IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Air pollution
- Drought
- Housing (uncontrolled urban development driven by population increase)
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation
- Invasive/alien species
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Management systems/ management plan
- Solid waste
- Surface water pollution
- Water extraction (related to existing hydropower production)
- Water infrastructure (project to construct a dam downstream of the property)
- Water infrastructure (Project to construct a dam across the gorge) (issue resolved)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/509/>

Current conservation issues

On 22 March 2021, the States Parties submitted a state of conservation report available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/509/documents/>, providing the following updates:

- All proposals that are clearly incompatible with the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property have been abandoned, including the cable car proposal within the property;
- The construction of the Mosi-oa-Tunya Livingstone Resort Hotel within the buffer zone of the property in Zambia has commenced. The 300-bed capacity resort, located adjacent to the Maramba River, was scaled down and will not include a golf course as initially planned;
- Measures are being taken to minimize the impacts of the Batoka Gorge Hydro Electric Scheme (BGHES) on the OUV of the property and the immediate environment, through collection of baseline ecological studies and modifications to the project design. The draft Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) was opened for stakeholder consultation until 25 January 2021 and the final report, expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2021, will subsequently be submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- Documents and maps concerning the property boundary clarification have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
- The finalization of the Sustainable Financing and Business Plan and the Sustainable Tourism Strategy are still pending, and the World Heritage Centre is invited to provide technical guidance;
- The Zambia-Zimbabwe Joint Site Management Committee (JSMC) undertook site patrols to assess existing and proposed tourism infrastructures and found no evidence of serious damage to the OUV of the property;
- JSMC held meetings to address among others the perceived negative impacts that are associated with tourism development pressure and to draft the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which will be funded by the African World Heritage Fund;
- Other activities undertaken in relation to the management of the property include: fauna and flora surveys; use of mechanical and chemical methods to control the spread of invasive alien species such as *Lantana camara*; creation of 20 km of firebreaks in and around the property;
- Several capacity building activities contributed to strengthening the technical capacities of the management team;

- Additional infrastructure development proposals inside the property include: lodges and conference centres, jetties, a glass viewing deck, offices, and a border post;
- Additional development proposals in the buffer zone include: several camp sites and lodges, hospital, conference facility, upgrading of a golf course, and the relocation of a helipad;
- Additional developments outside of the buffer zone include: a lodge on an island upstream of the property within Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park for which an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken but construction not yet commenced; construction of a hotel immediately adjacent to the Zambezi River, a proposal for the relocation of the Elephant Hotel Hills helipad and upgrade the existing Elephant Hills golf course.

On 25 September 2019, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Zambia regarding unusually early and long dry period that was reported to be affecting the water flow of the falls. On 22 November 2019, the World Heritage Centre further requested the State Party to provide comments regarding the Mosi-oa-Tunya Livingstone Resort Project and recalling the Committee Decision **43 COM 7B.34** urging the State Party to abandon the proposal. On 24 June 2020, the World Heritage Centre also requested comments from the State Party concerning the sale of land for construction of a Ferris wheel within the property. No specific response has been received from the States Parties in relation to the Ferris wheel proposal at the time writing.

The joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission could not be invited due to the COVID-19 restrictions but on 16 March 2021, the States Parties invited the mission to the property for October 2021.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The property continues to face considerable development pressure, particularly from a number of tourism infrastructure proposals, and their potential cumulative impacts raise increasingly high concerns. The Committee, in its Decision **41 COM 7B.22**, had specifically urged the States Parties to not permit the construction of a Ferris wheel within the property due to the likely significant detrimental impact on the OUV of the property. Furthermore, in its Decision **43 COM 7B.34**, the Committee urged the States Parties to abandon the development of a resort in the buffer zone, and any other proposals which are clearly incompatible with the conservation of the property's OUV. While the States Parties' decision to not proceed with the cable car project is appreciated, it is of utmost concern that the construction of the tourism resort in the buffer zone has commenced, be it in a scaled down version without the proposed golf course, and multiple additional development proposals exist inside and around the property, some of which have already been approved.

In the absence of assurance that the potential impact of each project individually and cumulatively, has been comprehensively assessed in relation to the protection of the property's OUV and that there will be no negative impacts on the OUV, it is recommended that the Committee urgently request the States Parties to halt further activities until further consultation with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN has taken place, and the potential impacts assessed in relation to the OUV. The SEA will be a vital tool to take a strategic view across the landscape and further details of this SEA should be provided to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN. The States Parties are strongly encouraged to seek early inputs and technical guidance from IUCN.

Until such comprehensive assessments have taken place, especially at the cumulative scale, and recalling the Committee's request to the States Parties to abandon any project that is incompatible with the OUV of the property, a decision to proceed with any large infrastructure projects within the property and its buffer zone would be of the utmost concern, and would likely lead to the property meeting the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

The ESIA for the BGHES has still not been provided to the World Heritage Centre for review. According to online material on the project available from the consultant's website (<https://www.erm.com/contentassets/6bdbb76b347f4e9fb9b9c14054806210/presentations/esia-disclosure-webinar-presentation-2dec20.pdf>), the reservoir of BGHES will extend into the property boundaries, and major negative impacts are anticipated through the loss of critical habitat for biodiversity and disruption to environmental flows. It is also recalled that in 1994 the Committee (Decision **18 COM IX**) commended the States Parties for dropping the proposal to build the BGHES due to its likely impact on the OUV of the property. It is therefore of concern that the project is being reconsidered. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider that the project should not proceed if it will encroach on

the property or if it may have any negative impacts on the OUV of the property, including its conditions of integrity. It is also recommended that the Committee urge the States Parties to submit the ESIA to the World Heritage Centre, and ensure no decision on the project is taken until IUCN has reviewed the ESIA. Should the project proceed without following such due process, this would also likely mean that the property would meet the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Positive actions are noted in other areas of management of the property, including the joint patrols and monitoring, and continuing their efforts to control the invasive alien plant species. The Sustainable Financing and Business Plan and the Sustainable Tourism Strategy should be finalized as a matter of priority, taking the IUCN's recommendations into consideration, and its implementation started as soon as possible.

In 2017, the Committee requested the States Parties to utilize the findings from an analysis of water flow, rainfall and upstream activity data in order to inform management, and to also incorporate the factor of climate change. Taking into consideration the abnormally early and long dry season experienced in 2019, it is recommended that the Committee request the States Parties to provide a summary of the key findings of the analysis and the measures being taken to ensure water abstraction from the Zambezi River is restricted in the face of climate change and to ensure a permanent flow in the property.

It is recalled that in the previous state of conservation report, the States Parties proposed to reduce the property's boundaries without a clear justification. The States Parties re-submitted the map of the property and it was agreed between the World Heritage Centre, IUCN and the States Parties that it remains relevant for the upcoming mission to make recommendations to the Committee on this matter as previously recommended (Decision **43 COM 7B.34**).

The States Parties' invitation for the mission to the property is appreciated. Taking note that the threats to the OUV of the property have continued to grow since the mission was initially requested in 2019, and that some infrastructure developments have proceeded in contrary to the Committee Decisions, the mission should be requested to assess how these recent developments impact on the OUV.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.177

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **18 COM IX**, **41 COM 7B.22** and **43 COM 7B.34**, adopted respectively in its 18th (Phuket, 1994), 41st (Baku, 2019) and 43rd (Krakow, 2017) sessions,*
3. *Welcomes the further progress of the two States Parties in strengthening the joint management of the transboundary property, including the organisation of joint patrols and monitoring, and the continued efforts to control the invasive alien plant species;*
4. *Notes its utmost concern over the increasing tourism infrastructure development pressure within and around the property, including the start of the construction of the Mosi-oa-Tunya Livingstone Resort Hotel within the buffer zone of the property, contrary to its request to abandon the proposal, urges the States Parties to halt further activities until further consultation with the World Heritage Centre and IUCN has taken place, all relevant Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by IUCN, and the potential impacts of the infrastructure developments on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property have been adequately assessed;*
5. *Notes with concern the likely negative impacts of the Batoka Gorge Hydro Electric Scheme (BGHES) on the OUV, also urges the State Party to not proceed if the proposal will encroach on the property or has the potential to impact on the OUV, and reiterates*

its request to the States Parties to submit the completed ESIA to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before making any decisions on the project;

6. *Requests the States Parties to provide details of the planned Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), including its scope, to the World Heritage Centre, and strongly encourages the States Parties to seek early inputs and technical guidance from IUCN in undertaking the SEA;*
7. *Also requests the States Parties to provide a summary of the key findings of the analysis undertaken earlier on the water flow, rainfall and upstream activity data in order to inform management, and the measures subsequently taken to ensure water abstraction from the Zambezi River continues to be adapted in the face of climate change;*
8. *Takes note that the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission could not take place due to the COVID-19 restrictions but that the States Parties have invited the mission, and further requests that the mission takes place as soon as possible in order to assess the potential threat posed to the property's OUV by the growing tourism development pressure in and around the property, the potential impacts of BGHES, to review the regulations to control this pressure and to make recommendations to the Committee on the proposed boundary modification;*
9. *Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

178. Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas (Zimbabwe) (N 302)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1984

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/302/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 3 (from 1990-2020)

Total amount approved: USD 81,854

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/302/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

January 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Poaching
- Oil exploration programme (issue resolved)
- Mining project
- Tourism development
- Management systems/management plan

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/302/>

Current conservation issues

On 30 March 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/302/documents/>, reporting as follows:

- Anti-poaching measures are continuing through collaborative joint operations, meetings and intelligence sharing with Zambia, as well as the fortnightly river border patrols. The implementation of the anti-poaching strategy is continuing. The operation of the Zambezi Valley Reaction Unit and the Rhino Task Force are well resourced;
- The use of Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) is being extended to the whole of the Zambezi Valley;
- Efforts are underway to establish groups of junior and community rangers as well as community wildlife clubs to strengthen wildlife community conservation, building on existing community involvement projects;
- The finalization of the General Management Plan (GMP) was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic but it is undergoing review through the financial support of Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the World Heritage Fund. The final Plan will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre upon completion;
- The implementation of the Elephant Management Plan is underway. The data from satellite collaring of elephants to track their movements have shown that they are not crossing over into Zambia, the reasons for which is being investigated. Several other studies are also being conducted, including vegetation mapping;
- Sport hunting in Sapi Safari Area and the northern part of Chewore Safari Area continues to be suspended;
- The finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the establishment of the Lower Zambezi-Mana Pools National Parks Trans-Frontier Conservation Area was delayed also due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but is in progress;
- The cooperation between the States Parties of Zimbabwe and Zambia was strengthened further through the organization of the first research collaboration meeting in 2020 to identify future opportunities for collaborated research;
- A map of tourism concessions in Mana Pools National Park, and a map showing tourism infrastructures across the property have been provided.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The State Party's continued positive actions in addressing poaching in the property is welcomed, especially through the continued collaboration with the neighboring State Party of Zambia, community involvement initiatives, and further expansion of the use of SMART. The details of the outcomes of the habitat surveys and data on poaching and other available conservation indicators were, however, not provided. The State Party should therefore be requested to submit this information.

It is appreciated that the findings from the elephant collaring study is being further examined. The outcomes of the study will be important in informing future management of the species and the property, and therefore it is recommended that the World Heritage Centre is kept informed on the outcomes.

It is recommended that the activities, which were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic should be completed as soon as the situation allows, including the finalization of the GMP and the signing of the MoU for the establishment of the transfrontier conservation area. The continued suspension of sport hunting in selected parts of the property is noted, but no reference is made to the suspension in the buffer zone, as previously reported by the State Party. In this context, recalling that the Committee had requested the State Party to clarify the status and extent of the buffer zone, it is recommended that the State Party be reminded to provide this detail.

From the submitted map of the tourism concessions in Mana Pools National Park, several appear to be located around the Zambezi River. Noting the previous confirmation that each proposal will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), it is recommended that the State Party ensure these are conducted in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, including a

specific assessment of impacts in relation to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN before approval of the projects

It is noted that no update is provided on the monitoring and mitigation activities of the Vine Camp lodge. As tourism activities return following the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to ensure monitoring and mitigation measures at the Vine Camp lodge continue and are reported to the World Heritage Centre.

No update was provided by the State Party of Zambia regarding the proposed Kangaluwi and Chisawa opencast mine in Lower Zambezi National Park. Noting reports in the media that the Court of Appeals of Zambia has dismissed an Appeal to stop the proposed large scale opencast mine in Lower Zambezi National Park, it is recommended that the Committee reiterate once again its concerns regarding the potential impact this project would likely pose to the OUV of the property and request the State Party of Zambia to provide an update on the mine project and not to go forward with this project, in line with its Decision **38 COM 7B.97**.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.178

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **42 COM 7B.97** adopted at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018),*
3. *Welcomes the State Party's continued actions to further strengthen its anti-poaching measures, including through the sufficient resourcing for the mobilisation of its operation units, ongoing collaboration with the State Party of Zambia, community involvement initiatives, and the further expansion of the use of Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART);*
4. *Takes note that data from satellite collaring of elephants to track their movements have shown that they are not crossing over into Zambia and that these findings are being further examined, requests the State Party to ensure the outcomes inform future management of elephants and the property, and to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of its progress;*
5. *Reiterates its request to the State Party to:*
 - a) *Report on the outcomes of habitat surveys, and provide data on poaching and other available conservation indicators,*
 - b) *Complete the review of the General Management Plan, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre once it is available, for review by IUCN,*
 - c) *Keep the World Heritage Centre informed of its progress in finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding for the Lower Zambezi-Mana Pools National Parks Trans-Frontier Conservation Area, and to request technical advice from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN as needed;*
6. *Also recalling that the State Party had previously reported its decision to suspend commercial sport hunting from not only Sapi Safari Area and the northern part of Chewore Safari Area, but also from the buffer zone to promote the recovery of wildlife species, also reiterates its request to the State Party to clarify the extent of the area referred to as the buffer zone, which has not yet been formally adopted by the Committee;*
7. *Also takes note of the locations of the tourism concessions and also requests the State Party to ensure that all proposals are subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment*

(EIA) in line with IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment, including a specific assessment of impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the EIA submitted to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN before approval of the projects;

8. *Reiterates its concern that the proposed Kangaluwi and Chisawa opencast mine in Lower Zambezi National Park could have serious impact on the OUV of the property and urges once again the State Party of Zambia to provide an update to the World Heritage Centre on the status of the mining project and not to go forward with this project, in line with its Decision **38 COM 7B.97**;*
9. *Further reiterates its request to the State Party to continue to uphold its commitment to ensure regular monitoring of the effectiveness of the environmental and monitoring plans of the Vine Camp lodge, and to report to the World Heritage Centre on the monitoring and mitigation activities;*
10. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

ASIA-PACIFIC

180. Greater Blue Mountains Area (Australia) (N 917)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2000

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Air transport infrastructure (construction of the Western Sydney Airport)
- Mining
- Water infrastructure (proposed raising of the Warragamba Dam wall)

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/>

Current conservation issues

Following significant bushfires that affected the property, the State Party submitted reports on the impacts of the bushfires on the property on 22 January and 23 April 2020 respectively. On 18 December 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property in response to Decision **43 COM 7B.2**, available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/917/documents/>, followed by an update on 3 June 2021. These report the following:

- The latest estimate of the areas affected by the 2019-2020 bushfires is reported to be 71%. It is further confirmed that a targeted fire-fighting operation prevented significant losses of the Wollemi pine stands, an important attribute of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV); however, some impacts have occurred. It is estimated that more than 300 threatened or migratory species were affected, including many that are attributes of the property's OUV. Targeted monitoring programmes to further assess impacts and monitor species' recovery are being implemented by the New South Wales (NSW) Government. Assessments are also underway to determine the impact on different eucalypt species, whose diversity is one of the key attributes of the property's OUV. While most of eucalypt species are highly fire adapted, their recovery depends on several factors affecting regeneration;
- There are also significant concerns about impacts on the Aboriginal cultural heritage, and post-fire recovery planning is underway with local Aboriginal communities;
- In January 2020, the Australian Government announced a \$AUD 50 million (approximately USD 35 million) bushfire recovery package for immediate interventions and planning of longer-term recovery for wildlife and habitats. Recommendations made by the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements to strengthen emergency management as well as climate and natural disaster risk reduction are being implemented (see also the report on the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia, under sub-item 7B.89 of the present session);

- Further updates are provided on the recovery investment and programmes, including modelling and mapping of fires risks specifically to the attributes of the OUV of the property and mapping of potential ecological refuge areas;
- Eight mining proposals in the vicinity of the property are subject to environmental assessments under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act. An assessment of cumulative impacts of existing and planned mining projects in the vicinity of the property has been initiated and is being undertaken, with a specific assessment of all stressors that present a risk to the OUV of the property;
- An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared for the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall, which is aimed at fully assessing all potential impacts on the OUV of the property and its other values, including Aboriginal cultural heritage, and will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre. A draft EIS has been provided to the NSW and Australian Governments for review, and work is underway to respond to the matters they raised before the EIS is finalized for public consultation. The Australian Government has also requested that the proponent of the project, Water NSW, undertake an analysis of the impacts of the 2019-2020 bushfires, given that 70% of the predicted temporary inundation area were burnt;
- Regarding the Western Sydney Airport, it is reported that the airspace and flight path design are currently being developed and will subsequently go through an environmental assessment process, expected to commence in 2021;
- A revised draft Strategic Plan for the property, which will consider all potential threats to the property, including from activities outside its boundaries, is further being developed and will be later undergo consultation with Aboriginal communities and the necessary environmental assessments.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The large-scale bushfires that affected this and other Australian World Heritage properties in 2019-2020 are noted with the utmost concern. The comprehensive information provided by the State Party regarding the immediate management responses, the preliminary assessment of impacts, as well as funding commitments and strategies for longer-term recovery is welcomed. The State Party should be commended for its fire-fighting responses, including those specifically targeting some of the attributes of the OUV of the property, such as the Wollemi pine stands. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to provide to the World Heritage Centre an update on the process of assessing the impacts of the fires on the OUV of the property and the recovery prospects for the affected attributes, as soon as any significant new information becomes available.

The information provided by the State Party regarding the ongoing preparation of the EIS for the project proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall is noted. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN continue to receive third-party information raising concerns about the rigor of the EIS process. It is therefore recommended that the Committee reiterate its request to the State Party to ensure, in line with its previous commitments, that the current process to prepare the EIS fully assesses all potential impacts on the OUV of the property and its other values, including Aboriginal cultural heritage. Given the significant impact of the 2019-2020 bushfires on the property, it will be also particularly important to undertake a thorough further assessment of how potential impacts of the raising of the Wall could exacerbate fire impacts, given that 70% of the predicted temporary inundation area is reported to have burnt. Such an assessment should also consider medium and longer-term recovery prospects of key species and habitats within those areas.

Further updates provided by the State Party regarding the development of the airspace and flight path design for the Western Sydney Airport and its subsequent environmental assessment, an assessment of cumulative impacts of existing and planned mining projects in the vicinity of the property, as well as further development of a revised Strategic Plan for the property, including planned consultation with Aboriginal communities, are noted. It is recommended that the Committee request the State Party to submit these documents and the results of their assessments to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN as soon as they become available.

Given the multiple issues potentially affecting the property and the fact that many impacts of the 2019-2020 bushfires would need to be taken into account in the EIS, it is recommended that the State Party consult IUCN for advice on the development of the EIS planning documents prior to their finalisation, as well as on the development of longer-term bushfire recovery plans for the property.

As climate change is an increasing threat to this and other World Heritage properties in Australia, the Committee may wish to recall Decision **41 COM 7** (Krakow, 2017), which reiterated the importance of States Parties undertaking the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and welcome the efforts of the State Party to develop an understanding of projected changes resulting from climate change in relation to the property's OUV and to strengthen climate and disaster resilience.

Acknowledging that two World Heritage properties in Australia were particularly affected by the 2019-2020 bushfire season (i.e. the Greater Blue Mountains Area and the Gondwana Rainforests), the efforts made through the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements to look at lessons learned, develop recommendations on how to strengthen emergency management as well as climate and natural disaster risk reduction, and implement reforms based on experience are appreciated.

The State Party should be encouraged to share the lessons learned with other States Parties facing similar threats (also see Section II.F of Document *WHC/21/44.COM/7*), promoting knowledge exchange on fire management strategies for natural World Heritage properties.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.180

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.2**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),*
3. *Expresses its utmost concern about the unprecedented fires that affected large parts of the property and significantly impacted some areas and habitats, and commends the State Party for its immediate fire-fighting responses, including those targeting specific attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, such as the Wollemi pine stands;*
4. *Welcomes the information provided by the State Party regarding the immediate management responses to the 2019-2020 bushfires, including the assessment of direct and indirect impacts, plans for longer-term actions and the consideration of funding commitments to ensure long-term recovery, and requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN, an update on the process of assessing the impacts of fires on the OUV of the property and its recovery prospects, as soon as this significant information has been collated;*
5. *Takes note of the information provided by the State Party regarding the ongoing preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall, reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure, in line with its commitments, that the current process to prepare the EIS fully assesses all potential impacts on the OUV of the property and its other values, including Aboriginal cultural heritage, and also requests the State Party to thoroughly assess whether raising the wall could exacerbate bushfire impacts on the property and affect the medium- and longer-term recovery prospects of key species and habitats within the predicted temporary inundation areas, and to submit the EIS to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN, prior to its final approval;*
6. *Notes the initiation of an assessment of the cumulative impacts of existing and planned mining projects in the vicinity of the property, including a specific assessment of all stressors that present a risk to the property's OUV, and the confirmation regarding the development of the airspace and flight path design for the Western Sydney Airport and its subsequent environmental assessment, and further requests the State Party to submit*

the results of these processes to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN, as soon as they become available;

7. *Also welcomes the continued development of a revised Strategic Plan for the property and the confirmation that this plan will undergo consultation with the Aboriginal communities and be subject to the necessary environmental assessment, and also reiterates its request to the State Party to ensure that potential threats to the property from activities outside its boundaries, in particular mining activities, are fully considered in the development of this management framework;*
8. *Encourages the State Party to consult IUCN for advice on the development of the EIS planning documents prior to their finalisation, as well as on the development of longer-term bushfire recovery plans for the property's OUV;*
9. *Also recalling Decision **41 COM 7**, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017), which reiterated the importance of States Parties undertaking the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), notes with concern that climate change is recognized as an increasing threat to the property, and further welcomes the efforts of the State Party to develop an understanding of projected changes resulting from climate change in relation to the property's OUV and to strengthen climate and disaster resilience;*
10. *Appreciates the efforts made through the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements to look at lessons learned, develop recommendations on how to strengthen emergency management as well as climate and natural disaster risk reduction, and to implement reforms based on experience, and also encourages the State Party to share the lessons learned with other States Parties to the Convention facing similar threats, promoting knowledge exchange on fire management strategies at natural World Heritage properties;*
11. *Requests furthermore the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*

187. Landscapes of Dauria (Mongolia, Russian Federation) (N 1448)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2017

Criteria (ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1448/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1448/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

Factors affecting the property identified at the time of inscription:

- Mining (Mongolia)
- Management systems / management plans (Transboundary management coordination) (Mongolia and Russian Federation)
- Illegal activities (Short of coordinated capacities to prevent and minimize the effects of hunting, poaching and other threats to the integrity of the property) (Mongolia and Russian Federation)
- Financial and human resources (Short of resources and capacities allocated to the management of the protected areas) (Mongolia and Russian Federation)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1448/>

Current conservation issues

In accordance with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*, on 30 September 2020, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Mongolia, after several third parties expressed concerns over potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property from the Onon-Ulz dam construction in Mongolia, upstream of the property. According to the information sent to the World Heritage Centre, the dam project is under construction without an appropriate Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to determine its potential impacts on the property's OUV.

On 6 November 2020, the State Party of Mongolia submitted information, which states that the aims of the dam project are as follows: stabilize and restore the Ulz river ecosystem and its biodiversity in the face of climate change; establish a reservoir to increase availability of surface water in rural areas; maintain the Khukh lake, including its ecological function as a significant stopover site for migratory birds; and secure benefits for the local community and economy.

On 12 January 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party of Mongolia, noting with concern that no detailed documentation of the dam project on Ulz River, including the relevant EIA, had been provided thus far, despite the fact that the construction of the dam has commenced, and requested a report on the state of conservation of the property for examination by the Committee, in addition to relevant EIAs and other supporting documents of the dam project. In the same letter, the World Heritage Centre requested the State Party of Mongolia not to proceed with the project until the EIA has been reviewed by IUCN. At the time of writing the present report, the EIA is yet to be provided.

On 28 February 2021, the State Party of Mongolia submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1448/documents/>. It responds to Decision **41 COM 8B.6** and provides a short description of the dam project as follows:

- The construction of the Onon-Ulz dam project, located 24-28 km upstream of the Ugtam Nature Refuge component of the property, began in July 2020. The dam is being built to regulate water supply of the Ulz River, create a reservoir to be used during droughts, and maintain stable ecological balance. The State Party of Mongolia foresees no long-term negative impact on the OUV of the property resulting from the project;
- No mining exists within the Mongolian components of the property, although mining is legally permitted in the buffer zones of the Mongolian components of the property. However, exploration activities, which took place until 2018, have since ceased. In a June 2015 letter to IUCN, the State Party of Mongolia committed not to allow any future mining operation within the Mongolian components of the property or their buffer zones;
- Coordination of the transboundary ecosystem management is continuing under the framework of the China-Mongolia-Russia International Protected Area Agreement (DIPA), which proposed measures to reduce the negative impacts of spring hunting activities, particularly on the nesting birds in the border steppe areas of the property. A joint work plan to minimize fires and poaching risks has also been adopted;
- The management plans for the Ugtam Nature Refuge and the Mongol Daguur Strictly Protected Area components of the property are being revised according to a new improved methodology. The management plans will be adopted by the Administration of Strictly Protected Areas of the Eastern Mongolian Provinces upon completion.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The commencement of the construction of the Onon-Ulz dam on the upstream segment of the Ulz River in the absence of a detailed assessment of its impact on the OUV of the property is of utmost concern. The Ulz River is one of the main rivers flowing through the property and is the principal water source for the Torey Lakes within the Russian component of the property, whose biodiversity depends on the natural cyclical flow regimes and large variations in water levels. The diverse habitats within the property, including lakes and wetlands, characterize the OUV and serve as vital habitats for rare and threatened species. While taking note of the State Party of Mongolia's stated intention for the dam to increase water flow of the Ulz River, it is regrettable that it has not provided a copy of an EIA to the World Heritage Centre, despite the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and that there is no confirmation that potential impacts on the OUV of the property were adequately assessed. It is therefore recommended that the Committee urgently request the State Party of Mongolia to halt any further activities until the EIA has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by IUCN.

In other areas, the State Party of Mongolia has reported some positive progress since the inscription of the property, including the cessation of mining exploration activities in the buffer zone of the Mongolian components of the property. While it is noted that mining is still legally allowed in buffer zones in Mongolia, it is appreciated that the State Party committed itself not to allow any future mining operation within the Mongolian components of the property or their buffer zones.

The continued coordination between the States Parties of Mongolia and the Russian Federation under the DIPA framework for transboundary management issues relating to the wider steppe ecosystem in which the property is located is to be welcomed. Coordination between the States Parties for the management of the property nevertheless should be further strengthened. It is also recommended that the States Parties be encouraged to build on existing cooperation by exploring the opportunity to extend the property, possibly also jointly with the State Party of China, in order to enhance the property's integrity by including additional areas of forest steppe and critical habitats, notably for migratory birds and the Mongolian gazelle.

It is noted that the management plans for the two components in Mongolia are being revised. Recalling that the Committee had previously identified the need to further increase the resourcing and capacity for management, especially on the Mongolian side, the State Party should be encouraged to continue strengthening its resources and capacities for the implementation of the updated management plans once they are completed and to ensure coordination with the Russian Federation at the operational level.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.187

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **41 COM 8B.6**, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017),
3. Notes with utmost concern that the construction of the Onon-Ulz dam on the Ulz River, upstream of the property in Mongolia, has commenced without prior notification to the World Heritage Committee, despite the provisions of Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and could impact the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property by modifying the natural flow regimes of the river and lake levels;
4. Urgently requests the State Party of Mongolia to halt any further activities associated with the Onon-Ulz dam project until an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that includes an assessment of potential impacts on the OUV of the property has been submitted to the World Heritage Centre and reviewed by IUCN, in line with Paragraphs 118bis and 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*;
5. Welcomes the continued coordination between the States Parties through the framework of the China-Mongolia-Russia International Protected Area Agreement (DIPA) to manage

transboundary conservation issues relating to the wider steppe ecosystem in which the property is located, and also requests the States Parties of Mongolia and the Russian Federation to further strengthen their coordination for the management of the property;

6. *Encourages the States Parties to consider, possibly jointly with the State Party of China, a potential future expansion of the transboundary World Heritage property in order to cover additional areas of forest steppe and critical habitats, notably for migratory birds and the Mongolian gazelle;*
7. *Also welcomes the confirmation that there is currently no mining exploration or exploitation activity within the boundaries of the property or its buffer zone and the commitment made by the State Party of Mongolia not to allow any future mining operation within the Mongolian components of the property or their buffer zones;*
8. *Takes note that the management plans of the Mongolian components of the property are being revised, further requests the State Party of Mongolia to submit these revised management plans to the World Heritage Centre prior to adoption, and also encourages the State Party of Mongolia to strengthen its resources and capacities for the effective implementation of the updated management plans, once they are finalized;*
9. *Finally requests the States Parties to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated joint report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

188. Chitwan National Park (Nepal) (N 284)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1984

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/284/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1988 to 1989)

Total amount approved: USD 80,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/284/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

December 2002: IUCN monitoring mission; March 2016: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Ground transport infrastructure (Plans to construct a road and railway through the property; Proposed infrastructure projects)
- Invasive/alien terrestrial species (Spread of invasive species; Encroachment of wildlife habitats in the buffer zone)
- Management systems/Management Plan (Lack of appropriate inter-agencies and inter-ministries consultation and coordination for development proposals)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/284/>

Current conservation issues

On 12 April 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/284/documents/>, which reports the following:

- Coordinated and collaborative efforts to address poaching and illegal trafficking resulted in no poaching within the property for six of the past nine years (3,287 days) and led to strengthened institutional mechanisms, improved community participation and enhanced interagency coordination. Surveillance technologies include Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) patrolling, drones, CCTV and tracking dogs. However, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, four rhinoceros were recently poached. All cases are being investigated and fourteen poachers were arrested;
- An alternative alignment for the East-West Electrified Railroad outside the property is under consideration. The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) requested the relocation of the route to avoid a hotspot for migration and dispersion of major wild species and an internationally recognized wetland. The new alignment will be outside the property and remains to be confirmed;
- The 2016 IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission recommendations regarding the Thori-Madi-Bharatpur road have been accepted and implemented inside and outside the property. New measures include regulation of road usage in the property by site managers and a verdict of the Supreme Court of Nepal to stop any upgrading of the road inside the property without consultation with UNESCO. In response to Decision **41 COM 7B.31**, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was requested for the proposed Thori-Birjung road;
- An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) of the proposed Terai Hulaki Highway did not outline an alignment for the highway to cross the property. However, during the construction phase, it was confirmed that seven kilometers would cross the buffer zone, so a high-level inter-agency meeting was held in February 2021 and decided to stop construction in that area;
- No decision has been taken on the alignment of the proposed China-India Trade Link of Province 3 (now Bagmati Province) and Province 4 (now Gandaki Province), the Madi-Balmiki Ashram road and the Malekhu-Thori road that crosses the property. The DNPWC continues to oppose the roads and no construction of the three road sections has been initiated, including outside the property. The aforementioned roads and railways development projects pass through the buffer zone and are thus expected to have low direct impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;
- No infrastructure project is planned within the property. EIAs for several projects in the buffer zone have been submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by IUCN;
- In 2016, an area of 2.063 ha from the Padampur site (previously buffer zone) was gazetted into the national park, and 1.818 ha from the Gajendra Mokchhya Dham of Tribeni (Gajendra Dham) were moved into the buffer zone. An enclosure for adaptation of translocated Asian Wild Water Buffalo was established at the Padampur site. The Gajendra Dham is promoted for religious purposes and tourism activities. Consultations with the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu is underway to register the modifications. No further boundary modifications are planned;
- The revised management plan for the property includes holistic strategies for tourism management and promotion in the property and buffer zone. Gajendra Dham is managed by the buffer zone management committee (Triveni Buffer Zone Community User Group), accommodation for pilgrimages has been constructed, and solid waste management is being undertaken with the local Rural Municipality.

The State Party transmitted EIAs for the following proposed projects:

- In August 2019, for the Badarmudhe Khola Bridge, Pateri Khola Bridge and Rimal Khola Bridge along Madi-Tori Road within the property. An IUCN technical review was transmitted to the State Party on 18 June 2020;
- On 26 February 2020, for a bottling company in the buffer zone of the property. An IUCN technical review was transmitted to the State Party on 12 June 2020 and a revised EIA transmitted by the State Party on 19 July 2020;

- On 15 January 2021, for three bridges over the Bahai, Magui and Riyu Khola rivers;
- On 19 January 2021, for a Kishan Egg project located within the buffer zone of the property.

On 5 August 2020, the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu requested comments from the State Party following third-party information on the forced eviction and destruction of homes of members of an indigenous Chepang community by the Chitwan National Park authority. At the time of writing the present report, the State Party has not yet provided a response. The World Wildlife Fund International (WWF) commissioned a report entitled “*Embedding human rights in nature conservation: from intent to action - report of the Independent Panel of Experts of the Independent Review of allegations raised in the media regarding human rights violations in the context of WWF’s conservation work*” (https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/independent_review___independent_panel_of_experts___final_report_24_nov_2020.pdf), which was published in November 2020 and also refers to this and other alleged human rights abuses in and around the property, including the beating and death of a Chepang youth.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

While the continued efforts to combat rhinoceros poaching are noted, it is however concerning that the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on surveillance efforts resulted in the recent poaching of four rhinoceros, and it is recommended the State Party be urged to continue its efforts addressing poaching incidents and its collaborative anti-poaching efforts.

The continued confirmation that the East-West Railroad will not be located within the property and that appropriate EIA processes will be undertaken is welcomed, as are efforts to avoid impacts on wildlife hotspots and important wetlands, and measures to maintain ecological connectivity. Noting however the reported potential for construction to occur close to the property, it is important to request a detailed map of the proposed alignment when it is available and for all potential impacts on the property and its OUV to be adequately assessed prior to finalizing a decision on an alternative route.

Recalling the Committee’s concerns regarding the threat of various other infrastructure developments, the confirmation that the 2016 mission’s recommendations regarding the Thori-Madi-Bharatpur road have also been implemented outside the property is welcomed. The EIA process for the Thori-Birjung road is also noted. Regarding the proposed Terai Hulaki Highway, the inter-ministerial decision to halt construction of a seven-kilometer stretch that would cross the buffer zone without an assessment of its impacts on the OUV is acknowledged, and the State Party should be requested to confirm that any potential impact of the highway on the OUV of the property has been appropriately assessed before taking any decision to proceed further. Noting that no decision has been taken on the alignment of the proposed China-India Trade Link of Province 3 (now Bagmati Province) and Province 4 (now Gandaki Province), the Madi-Balmiki Ashram and Malekhu-Thori roads within the property, and that no construction has commenced outside the property, it is recommended to reiterate the importance of a permanent ban on any other new roads or the reopening/upgrading of old roads passing through the property.

The State Party’s report provided in response to Decision **43 COM 7B.11**, which indicates that an area of 1.818 ha including Gajendra Dham was moved from the national park to the buffer zone while 2,063 ha from the Padampur site from the buffer zone was included in the national park, requires further clarification. It is important to recall that the 2016 mission recommended the establishment of an appropriate zonation scheme to set aside areas for spiritual practices and nature conservation, appropriate limits on any further construction of facilities beyond normal maintenance works, and adequate measures to minimize impacts from the large number of pilgrims who visit the site every year. Although the State Party reports that the revised Management Plan for the property includes holistic strategies for tourism management for the property and its buffer zone, including Gajendra Dham, it is unclear whether the legal protection provided by the buffer zone is sufficient to implement the mission’s recommendations. It is therefore recommended that the State Party be requested to provide further details on the legal protection currently extended to Gajendra Dham, which remains part of the property. It is important to recall that any proposed modification of the boundaries of a World Heritage property or buffer zone must first be submitted to the World Heritage Centre before any change is implemented on the ground, through a boundary modification process in line with Paragraphs 163-165 of the *Operational Guidelines*. Such a request would then be reviewed by the Advisory Bodies and subject to a review and decision by the Committee. If the State Party wishes to amend the boundaries of the property, an appropriate boundary modification should therefore be submitted in line with the procedures outlined in the *Operational Guidelines*. The World Heritage Centre and IUCN are available to provide guidance on these procedures, if required.

The alleged human rights abuses related to Chitwan National Park raised in the UNESCO letter of August 2020, along with the report of the Independent Panel appointed by WWF, regarding the evictions and destruction of the homes of members of an indigenous Chepang community by the park authority, and the death of a Chepang youth, all raise significant concerns that are not discussed in the State Party's report. To respect the social, economic and cultural rights of local and indigenous communities, as outlined in the 2015 *Policy Document on the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention*, these matters require further and urgent consideration by the State Party, and it is recommended that the Committee request the the State Party to respond to the issues raised in the report and implement adequate actions to address them.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.188

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.11**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Welcomes the ongoing efforts to combat rhinoceros poaching, but notes with concern the recent poaching of four rhinoceros as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on surveillance and urges the State Party to actively continue its efforts to address poaching and illegal trafficking;
4. Also welcomes the continued confirmation by the State Party that the alternative alignment of the East-West Electrified Railroad will be located outside the property, and that Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) will be completed, requests the State Party to provide a detailed map of the alignment when it is available, and reiterates its request that the State Party ensure that all potential impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property are fully assessed by the EIA, in line with the IUCN Advice Note on Environmental Assessments;
5. Further welcomes the confirmation that the recommendations of the 2016 IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission regarding the Thori-Madi-Bharatpur road have also been implemented outside the property, and also requests the State Party to continue this implementation in line with the mission recommendations;
6. Reiterates its concern that other infrastructure projects continue to pose a threat to the property, including the proposed Terai Hulaki Highway, the China-India Trade Links of Province-3 (now Bagmati Province) and Province-4 (now Gandaki Province), the Madi-Balmiki Ashram road and the Malekhu-Thori road; acknowledges the decision to halt the construction of a seven-kilometer stretch of the proposed alignment of the Terai Hulaki Highway that would cross the buffer zone and further requests the State Party to confirm that any potential impact of the highway on the OUV of the property has been appropriately assessed before taking any decision to proceed;
7. Also notes that no decision has been taken regarding the China-India Trade Links of Province-3 (now Bagmati Province) and Province-4 (now Gandaki Province), the Madi-Balmiki Ashram road and the Malekhu-Thori road and also reiterates its request to the State Party not to approve any other new roads or the reopening/upgrading of old roads passing through the property;
8. Reiterates its position that, if any of the aforementioned road and railway developments was to proceed through the property, it would represent a potential danger to the OUV of the property, in accordance with Paragraph 180 of the Operational Guidelines, and

thus form a clear basis for the inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger;

9. Also recalling its request to the State Party to provide clarification regarding the report that Gajendra Dham is no longer located within the boundaries of Chitwan National Park, following a revision of boundaries in 2016 and its demarcation on the ground, also notes with concern the reported transfer of 1.818 ha from the Gajendra Mokchhya Dham of Tribeni into the buffer zone and of 2,063 ha from the Padampur site in the buffer zone into the national park, and further recalling that any proposed change to the boundaries of a property must first be submitted to the World Heritage Centre through a boundary modification process in line with Paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines, requests furthermore the State Party to:
 - a) Provide detailed information on the legal protection status of the property, including provisions for visitor management at Gajendra Dham, and the implementation of the recommendations of the 2016 mission, and notably to develop, in collaboration with the Chitwan National Park Office and the responsible authorities at Gajendra Dham, develop a management plan for Gajendra Dham which should include:
 - (i) An appropriate zonation scheme to set aside areas for spiritual practices and for nature conservation,
 - (ii) Appropriate limits on any further construction of facilities, beyond the normal maintenance works, and
 - (iii) Adequate measures to minimize impacts from the large number of pilgrims visiting the site annually, including a waste management plan and provisions to allow only daytime ritual activities under the observation of the Chitwan National Park Office,
 - b) Submit a proposal for a boundary modification to the World Heritage Centre in line with the Operational Guidelines, if it wishes to amend the boundaries of the property;
10. Notes with concern the alleged human rights abuses related to Chitwan National Park raised by UNESCO and through the Independent Panel report on human rights commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund International, and requests moreover the State Party to provide a full response regarding its considerations of the findings of this report and to implement actions to address the issues raised, in conformity with relevant international norms and the 2015 Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention;
11. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

190. Wood Buffalo National Park (Canada) (N 256)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1983

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/256/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/256/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

September/October 2016: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Road construction (issue resolved)
- Renewable energy facilities (existing and planned hydroelectric dams, including Site C and Amisk)
- Oil and gas (Alberta oil sands mining)
- Climate change
- Lack of adequate and comprehensive environmental monitoring
- Governance (lack of effective engagement with First Nations and Métis in monitoring activities and insufficient consideration of local and indigenous knowledge)
- Groundwater and air pollution
- Cumulative impacts (insufficiently understood cumulative impacts of multiple development pressures)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/256/>

Current conservation issues

On 21 December 2020, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/256/documents>, and also announced an investment of CAD 59.9m (UD 49.5m) over 3 years for the implementation of the Wood Buffalo National Park Action Plan (AP) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/parks-canada/news/2020/12/government-of-canada-supports-continued-delivery-of-action-plan-to-ensure-the-ongoing-protection-of-wood-buffalo-national-park-world-heritage-site.html>).

In response to Committee Decision **43 COM 7B.15**, the State Party reports as follows:

- Half of the actions under the AP are reportedly completed or underway and longer-term funding is being identified;
- Ongoing activities include renewal of partnerships; development of new policies for Indigenous peoples; improved impact assessment processes; monitoring and communication; and evaluation of water management structures in the Peace Athabasca Delta (PAD);
- The provincial parks south of the property have further grown to more than 1.3 m ha of provincial crown land, including the Kitaskino Nuwenëné Wildland Park (KNWP, formerly “Biodiversity Stewardship Area”) based on efforts involving the Alberta Government, First Nations and industry;

- The Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Canada determined that wood bison, including the Ronald Lake Bison Herd, is facing imminent threat to its recovery due to disease risks and industrial activities;
- Noting the advanced Site C hydropower project and the proposed Amisk Hydroelectric Project, the State Party reports that a longer-term modelling effort is underway to build a holistic, inter-jurisdictional framework that captures the complex interactions influencing the health of the PAD;
- The Alberta Government is reported to be “pursuing opportunities to assess the risk” of the tailings ponds of the Alberta Oil Sands. The establishment of a water-science team under the Oil Sands Monitoring (OSM) program, along with the Tailings Management Framework, the Oil Sands Reclamation Interest Group (OSRIG) and the Surface Water Quantity Management Framework for the Lower Athabasca River, are reported;
- The Joint Review Panel (JRP) for the Teck Frontier Oil Sands Mine Project considered the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in line with the AP. The proponent, however, has since withdrawn this project.

In line with Paragraph 174 of the *Operational Guidelines*, the World Heritage Centre submitted letters to the State Party with third party information related to the suspension of environmental monitoring (25 June 2020) and on the findings of the recent Alberta Tailings Pond II factual record prepared by the Secretariat of the Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) (3 November 2020). The State Party replied to these letters on 27 November and 17 December 2020, respectively. The World Heritage Centre also received written submissions from several First Nations and non-governmental organizations, including an “Indigenous state of conservation report” submitted by three First Nations. The World Heritage Centre transmitted the information to the State Party on 16 December 2020, 7 January and 23 February 2021. The State Party replied on 21 December 2020 and 9 April 2021, including updates on public consultations on the expansion of KNWP, environmental flows framework, monitoring of the PAD, and stakeholder and rights-holder involvement in management. It also reported of a meeting between the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and the Wood Buffalo National Park Co-operative Management Committee.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The further implementation of the AP and announced additional funding demonstrate a strong State Party commitment. Similarly, the growing conservation complex south of the property is promising as an evolving buffer against the approaching development frontier, subject to adequate resourcing and coordination. Nonetheless, the key challenges, which continue to compromise the effectiveness of the AP and the integrity of the property remain a significant concern. The announced temporary budget increase does not remove major uncertainty regarding reliable resourcing on par with the significant scale and complexity of the setting, beyond a three-year horizon, and required commitments to First Nations and Métis. Besides resourcing, three overarching governance challenges remain. First, the federal land manager of the property (Parks Canada Agency) has very limited authority beyond the property even though all major threats are outside the property’s boundaries. Second, effective mechanisms for inter-jurisdictional water governance continue to be absent due to its ad hoc nature. Third, the ambition to collaborate with First Nations and Métis, and respect and consider indigenous knowledge, has met with modest success according to the above noted submissions by First Nations.

Meanwhile, the footprint of the Alberta Oil Sands continues to increase through large expansion projects including the Horizon North Pit Mine. It is noted with utmost concern that the JRP concluded the Teck Frontier Oil Sands Mine Project, which would be the largest and closest oil sands project to the property, to be in the public interest, while acknowledging “significant adverse environmental effects”. Although the proponent withdrew the proposal, the project remains a potential future risk. The determination of imminent threats to the recovery of wood bison, partially on the grounds of industrial development, is a further indication that the pressure on the property and its flagship species continues to be very high.

It is of high concern that the risk assessment of the tailings ponds under the AP, requested by the Committee, has not started, whilst both very large ponds containing oil sands processed water (OSPW) have further expanded, and oil sands monitoring was temporarily suspended in 2020. Furthermore, in 2020, the CEC found evidence of OSPW from tailings ponds seeping into groundwater and affecting the Athabasca River. Moreover, publicly available government documents, including the 2020 CEC report (<http://www.cec.org/media/media-releases/cec-secretariat-releases-report-on-alberta-canada-oil-sands-tailings-ponds/>), state that intentional releases of OSPW into the Athabasca River are being

planned. The OSM Program considers oil sands related development in isolation, whereas a greater integration with the AP is critical to address cumulative issues.

In terms of hydropower development, construction of the Site C project is continuing. Research and assessments, including through the SEA and the AP, have generated valuable insights. However, it is of serious concern that mechanisms to determine and agree on environmental flow regulation, as recommended by the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission and endorsed by the Committee in its Decision **41 COM 7B.2** are still not in place 5 years after the mission, let alone binding protocols or frameworks. An Environmental Impact Statement for the Amisk Hydroelectric Project was previously foreseen for 2020 but no update is provided.

Based on the above, it is considered that, in spite of the State Party's positive actions and commitments to date, regrettably the status of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, particularly the Peace Athabasca Delta which is at the core of the OUV, is declining due to: a) unresolved inter-jurisdictional water governance challenges; b) advancement of Site C project; c) no progress made on the risk assessment or management of the large tailings ponds despite new information on major risks and likely current impacts on water quality; d) temporary suspension of ecological monitoring for oil sands; and e) concern about the future release of OSPW. Recalling that the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission considered that danger listing would be warranted in the absence of a major and timely response, and noting that the previously expressed Committee concerns continue to remain severe and the threats have increased, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN consider it likely that the property now meets the criteria for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in line with Paragraph 180(b) of the *Operational Guidelines*. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess the state of conservation of the property, to confirm whether the property meets the condition for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and to recommend the measures necessary to address the threats to its OUV.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.190

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decisions **39 COM 7B.18**, **41 COM 7B.2** and **43 COM 7B.15**, adopted at its 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,
3. While welcoming the important State Party investment in the Wood Buffalo National Park Action Plan and its commitment to enhance the relationship and collaboration with First Nations and Métis, expresses its utmost concern that the major overarching threats and risks stemming from areas outside the property identified by the 2016 Reactive Monitoring mission have not been met with effective management responses, in particular the threats to the Peace Athabasca Delta (PAD) and thereby to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property due to:
 - a) The absence of effective inter-jurisdictional water governance,
 - b) The continuation of hydropower development in the absence of clarity on flow regulation that considers OUV,
 - c) The continued absence of an adequate risk assessment for the large tailings ponds upstream of the property despite new information on major risks;
4. Notes that the federal land manager of the property (Parks Canada Agency) has very limited authority beyond the property even though all major threats are outside the property's boundaries, and also expresses its utmost concern about:
 - a) The temporary suspension of oil sands monitoring at a time when the footprint of the oil sands continues to grow,

- b) *The findings by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), including consistent evidence of seepage of oil sands processed water (OSPW) from tailings ponds into groundwater within the Athabasca watershed,*
 - c) *The intention to consider releasing OSPW into the Athabasca River,*
 - d) *The confirmation of an imminent threat to the recovery of wood bison due to disease risks and industrial activities;*
5. *Requests the State Party to allocate adequate resources and establish mechanisms to enable effective coordinated management between the federal and provincial governments for the property and the adjacent existing and new provincial protected areas, and strongly encourages the State Party to further exploration of innovative conservation governance and management models in both the provincial parks and the federal national park;*
 6. *Reiterates its encouragement to the State Party to consider the designation of a buffer zone for the property, in particular towards the advancing development frontier;*
 7. *Takes note of the State Party announcement to dedicate substantial additional funding to the implementation of the Action Plan over a three-year period and strongly requests the State Party to ensure adequate and reliable resourcing beyond the three-year term;*
 8. *Also takes note of third party information, including reports from First Nations, regarding ongoing challenges by the State Party in the involvement of stakeholders and rights-holders;*
 9. *Reiterates its request the State Party to fully implement all mission recommendations as soon as possible, in particular to:*
 - a) *Adopt a clear and coherent policy and guidance to enable the transition to a genuine partnership with First Nations and Métis communities in the governance and management of the property,*
 - b) *Conduct environmental flows assessments to the highest international standards for the Peace, Athabasca and Slave Rivers as they pertain to the health of the PAD, in order to identify water flows needed to sustain the ecological functioning of the PAD under the circumstances of existing and planned future dams and water withdrawals,*
 - c) *Conduct a systematic risk assessment of the tailings ponds of the Alberta Oil Sands region with a focus on risks to the PAD, and submit this report to the World Heritage Centre, for review by IUCN, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines,*
 - d) *Expand the scope of monitoring and project assessments to encompass possible individual and cumulative impacts on the OUV of the property and in particular the PAD;*
 10. *Notes with regret that, despite the State Party's important efforts to date, progress has been insufficient in addressing the Committee requests, and regretting that the property continues to face severe threats with its conservation status having not improved since the 2016 mission and the conditions of OUV declining, considers that the property likely meets the criteria for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger in conformity with Chapter IV.B of the Operational Guidelines;*
 11. *Also requests the State Party to invite, as soon as possible, a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess its state of*

conservation, in particular in relation to the above-mentioned threats, and to confirm whether the property meets the conditions for inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger, and to recommend the measures necessary to address the threats to its OUV;

12. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by 1 February 2022, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property, including a pathway to address the governance challenges and multiple threats impeding the effectiveness of the implementation of the Action Plan and a broader response to the growing threats to the OUV of the property, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022, with a view to considering, in case of confirmation of potential or ascertained danger to its OUV, the possible inscription of the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.*

191. Doñana National Park (Spain) (N 685bis)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1994

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/685/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/685/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

1998: World Heritage Centre Advisory mission; 1999, 2001, 2004: joint World Heritage Centre, IUCN and Ramsar missions (Doñana 2005 expert meetings on Hydrological Restoration of Wetlands); January 2011: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission and Ramsar Advisory mission; January 2015: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2020: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/Ramsar Reactive Monitoring mission;

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Oil and gas (Potential impacts from infrastructural projects in the vicinity of the property, including gas storage)
- Mining (Proposed re-opening of Aznalcóllar mine upstream of the property)
- Water infrastructure (Proposed upgrading of a dam upstream of the property)
- Water (extraction) (Unsustainable use of water with impacts on the Doñana aquifer)
- Water infrastructure (Dredging of the Guadalquivir River)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/685/>

Current conservation issues

A joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/Ramsar Reactive Monitoring mission visited the property from 25 to 28 February 2020 (mission report available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/685/documents/>). On 30 November 2020, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property available at the same link which reports the following:

- Within the context of a long drought, in several sectors the condition of the Doñana aquifer has stabilised (2018-2019 hydrological year). In 2020 three of the five bodies of water in the Doñana aquifer were declared "*at risk of not achieving good quantitative status*" and one "*at risk of not achieving good chemical status*";
- The Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana (PEOCFD, also previously referred to as the Special Irrigation Plan), other water measures and annual Extraction Plans continue to be implemented:
 - 446 wells have been closed, user communities have been formed, water concessions are being regularized, 298 water rights files have been reviewed with 75 proceedings terminated, zoning operations have been approved, 151 forestry infringement proceedings have been initiated since 2019, and remote sensing is being used for surveillance,
 - 3.66 hm³ of ground water has been substituted with surface water from the Tinto-Odiel-Piedras basin and the Technical Commission responsible for implementing the planned transfer of 19.99 hm³ will soon be appointed. It will duly consider the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV),
 - The two most easterly wells near Matalascañas will be relocated;
- On 17 September 2020, a hearing was held regarding the State Party's alleged non-compliance with the European Union (EU) Water and Habitats Framework Directives;
- The draft Guadalquivir Basin Hydrological Plan (2021-2027) includes a specific chapter on the property. It is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2022;
- No new developments are reported regarding the reopening of the Aznalcóllar mine and the four gas projects;
- The ornithological values remain exceptional with an average of more than 500,000 wintering aquatic birds and the maintenance of habitats for the reproduction of at least seven endangered species. Under severe drought conditions in 2020, only 300,000 wintering aquatic birds were counted, the lowest number since 2007. The Iberian imperial eagle continues to maintain a stable presence in the protected area and Iberian lynx populations remain at historical highs;
- Of the 38 Habitats of Community Interest (HCI) under the Habitats Directive of the European Commission, most have an excellent or good conservation status, but four are of significant concern.

On 3 December 2020, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) issued the Advocate General's Opinion that the excessive abstraction of groundwater in the Andalusian Doñana natural area infringes the EU Habitats Directive (https://europa.eu/newsroom/content/1522020-3-december-2020-opinion-advocate-general-case-c-55919_en).

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The 2020 Reactive Monitoring mission concluded that the values for which the property has been inscribed under the World Heritage Convention and recognized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands are still present but noted that there remains scientific uncertainty about the impacts of the wider eco-hydrological dynamics of Doñana and the potential future risks of the impacts of climate change on the OUV of the property. The State Party should be requested to implement all recommendations of the mission.

The State Party's reported efforts to reduce groundwater usage from the Doñana aquifer (including through continued inspections, remote sensing and closures of illegal wells and illegally irrigated farmlands) are appreciated. However, the confirmation that three water bodies are overexploited and that the CJEU considers that the excessive abstraction of groundwater in the Doñana natural area infringes the EU Habitats Directive, is highly concerning. Noting the mission's conclusion that further research on the hydrological and ecological connectivity between the Doñana aquifer and the wetlands of the property is required, and that the CJEU considers that there has been no appropriate assessment of the effects of groundwater abstraction on the protected areas concerned, it is recommended that this further research be undertaken urgently in line with the mission recommendations, including to determine any potential impacts of abstraction on the OUV of the property. Considering this level of scientific uncertainty, and in order to eliminate any possible risk to the OUV, it is recommended that the State Party be requested to take all measures necessary to ensure the recovery of the water bodies,

including to urgently continue the implementation of the PEOCFD, to relocate the most eastern wells near Matalascañas, and to support sustainable agriculture practices.

The inclusion of a chapter on the OUV of the property in the draft Guadalquivir Basin Hydrological Plan (2021-2027) is welcomed. Yet it is noted that this plan does not provide an overview of the minimum water requirements needed to ensure the protection of the property's OUV nor an assessment of the potential impacts of other water uses on such a threshold. As highlighted by the mission, an increased research effort is urgently required to understand the relationship between the region's hydrology and the property's ecology, against the backdrop of climate change. The construction of an eco-hydrological model would allow the impacts of various scenarios to be defined in order to inform urgent management actions including to increase the resilience of the property under climate change.

The confirmation by the State Party that there are no new developments regarding the reopening of the Aznalcóllar mine is noted. Against the background of Decisions **22 COM VII.25/24**, **24 BUR IV.B.39** and **39 COM 7B.26**, it is recommended that the State Party prepares a clear risk preparedness plan and rapid emergency response capacities.

Regarding the gas storage projects, in line with the recommendations of the mission, the State Party should be requested to include in future state of conservation reports a summary of the systematic monitoring of the possible impacts of the two operating drilling holes near the property. It is also recommended that the Committee reiterates its previous decision, and request the State Party to ensure that any development, water transfer or infrastructure project in or near the property is thoroughly assessed in conformity with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment.

The mission also noted the importance of the surrounding areas to the OUV, for example certain species that are attributes of the OUV (such as the Iberian lynx or migratory bird species) also utilise habitats in the areas beyond the property. It is recommended therefore, to request the State Party to establish an official buffer zone for the property, which includes the areas in the immediate water catchment of the property. Such a buffer zone would also increase the resilience of a sensitive ecosystem in light of anticipated climate change impacts.

Recalling the importance of effectively monitoring and reporting on the attributes of OUV, it is recommended that the World Heritage Centre and IUCN finalize the retrospective Statement of OUV of the property with the State Party, for its adoption at the next Committee session.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.191

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **37 COM 7B.27**, **38 COM 7B.79**, **39 COM 7B.26**, **41 COM 7B.9** and **43 COM 7B.20** adopted at its 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 38th (Doha, 2014), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Appreciates the State Party's continued efforts to reduce groundwater usage from the Doñana aquifer, including through continued inspections, use of Earth Observation technologies, and closures of illegal wells and illegally irrigated farmlands, however, expresses its utmost concern that despite these efforts three water bodies have officially been declared as overexploited and that the Court of Justice of the European Union (EU) considers that the excessive abstraction of groundwater in the Doñana natural area infringes the EU Habitats Directive;*
4. *Notes the conclusion of the 2020 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN/Ramsar Reactive Monitoring mission that the values for which the property has been inscribed under both the World Heritage Convention and the Ramsar Convention on wetlands are still present but that there remains scientific uncertainty about the impacts of the wider eco-hydrological dynamics of Doñana and the potential future risks of the impacts of climate change on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property;*

5. Requests the State Party to implement all recommendations of the 2020 mission, in particular to:
- a) Increase the resources available to the Guadalquivir Hydrographical Confederation; continue the urgent implementation of the Special Management Plan of the Irrigation Zones located to the North of the Forest Crown of Doñana; ensure that projects including water transfers, dam extensions, and licensed groundwater abstraction have no negative impact on the OUV; and also encourage, incentivize and provide financial support if needed for the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices by farmers of the Doñana area,
 - b) Relocate within three years the most eastern wells that provide water for the Matalascañas tourist resort,
 - c) Undertake an increased research effort to understand the relationship between the hydrology and ecology of the area, including the construction of an eco-hydrological model of the property which can inform management actions and actions to increase the resilience of the property under climate change,
 - d) Create a strategic plan that defines conceptually the extent to which a reduction in water consumption is required in response to climate change impacts to conserve and protect the OUV of the property, and the extent to which alterations to the OUV and ecological character of the wetland ecosystem due to climate change can be expected, along with any adaptation and mitigation measures that can be implemented to maintain the conditions of integrity of the property and increase its resilience,
 - e) Finalize the retrospective Statement of OUV (rSOUV) as soon as possible and develop a clear set of fixed indicators to monitor the state of conservation of the OUV, and report on those indicators in future state of conservation reports,
 - f) Present an updated Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Guadalquivir River Basin to ensure that it includes a specific chapter on the OUV of the property, and submit it to the World Heritage Centre,
 - g) Continue honoring the previously made commitment to remove any deep dredging from the revised Guadalquivir Basin Hydrological Plan (2021-2027),
 - h) Demonstrate great caution with regards to re-opening the former Aznalcóllar mine, and ensure that systematic risk preparedness and emergency action plans take into account the property and submit these analyses for review by IUCN, as soon as they become available and before a decision on re-opening the mine is made,
 - i) Put in place a systematic monitoring of the possible impacts and risk assessments of Rincon-2 and Marismas-3 on the hydrology and OUV, include a summary of those findings in future state of conservation reports, and ensure that the individual and cumulative impacts on the property's OUV of any development or infrastructure project in or near the property are thoroughly assessed in conformity with IUCN's World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment,
 - j) Establish an official World Heritage buffer zone around the property that includes the Natural Park (Ramsar Site), Natura 2000 sites and other established protected areas in the immediate water catchment of the property which underpins its OUV;
6. Also requests the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, in cooperation with the State Party, to finalize the rSOUV for the property for adoption at the next session;
7. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and

the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

193. Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System (Belize) (N 764)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1996

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

Year(s) of inscription on the List of World Heritage in Danger 2009-2018

Sale and lease of public lands for the purposes of development within the property leading to the destruction of mangrove and marine ecosystems

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

Total amount granted: USD 140,000: i) USD 30,000 from the Rapid Response Facility for the monitoring of unauthorized activities in the Bladen Nature Reserves which were impacting the property; ii) USD 30,000 for emergency conservation actions in favour of the critically endangered wide sawfish (2010); iii) USD 80,000 in support of public use planning and site financing strategy development for the Blue Hole Natural Monument (2008-2009)

Previous monitoring missions

March 2009: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; February 2013: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; January 2015: joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Technical mission; December 2017 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Advisory mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Housing and major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (Destruction of fragile ecosystems due to resort / housing development) (issue resolved)
- Integrated management
- Invasive / alien marine species (Introduced species)
- Land conversion (Sale and lease of public lands within the property)
- Oil and gas (Oil concessions within the marine area)

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/764/>

Current conservation issues

On 19 March 2021, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/187419>, reporting the following progress towards implementing Decision **43 COM7B.21**:

- The land verification process is complete. Survey results were authenticated by the Ministry of Natural Resources. The regulations for the designation of the identified remaining public lands as mangrove reserves are still pending but expected to be approved in 2021, with legislation drafting commenced in March 2021;
- Consideration of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property has been integrated into the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations via amendment, which was adopted in February 2020. Any possible impacts on the property must now be addressed in the development of an EIA and during a public hearing. A copy of the amended EIA regulations has also been provided by the State Party;

- Progress with the implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plan has continued. Major accomplishments include, among others, the improved collaboration among key agencies involved in coastal and marine conservation, including the integration of the shipping sector in the process. An update of the ICZM has been initiated and is expected to be completed by the end of 2021;
- The Fisheries Resources Act was approved and made public in February 2020. Additionally, a National Fisheries Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for the Fisheries Sector was developed. Expansion of marine protected areas, including some comprising the property, has also continued;
- Additional efforts and progress have been made with regards to management planning, restoration and resilience, sustainable development and coral diseases control;

On 23 February 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party requesting information about the potential impact of the project entitled "Cargo extension and construction of the cruise terminal and cruise tourism village". No response has been received at the time of writing of this report.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Further progress with finalizing some of the key pending processes and regulations aimed at protecting the OUV of the property should be welcomed. Particularly, it is welcomed that the State Party has completed the land tenure verification and is in the final stages of legislating the remaining public lands in the property as strict mangrove reserves consistent with the requests of the World Heritage Committee. Remaining public lands are located in South Water Caye Marine Reserve and the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve.

Consideration of the OUV of the property has now been integrated into the EIA regulations, with the amended version of the regulations now officially approved, requiring by law that any possible impacts on the property must now be addressed in the development of an EIA and during a public hearing. The Fisheries Resources Act is also adopted and now provides the framework for significant improvements in fisheries conservation, management, development and governance. The legislation necessary for its implementation is being developed. In addition to the new legislation, a new National Fisheries Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for the fisheries sector was developed. The National Replenishment Zone Expansion initiative has continued to be implemented along with NGO and private sector partners. The remaining no take zones proposed to be protected are envisioned to be legislated in the near future. Further major accomplishments have also been achieved toward the implementation of the ICZM plan and an update of the plan is underway.

It can be concluded that the management of the property has decidedly further improved since its removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger at the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee in 2018, and that the reported progress, particularly the finalization of the land verification process and the final approval of the amended EIA regulations, has now almost fully resolved the pending issues noted by the Committee at that time. The collective measures to improve conservation of the property have gone well beyond the requests made by the Committee, particularly with regards to fisheries management and management and expansion of marine protected areas, and new funding also continues to be attracted for the further protection of the property, in particularly with regards to climate adaptation.

It is of concern that no response has been provided by the State Party to the letter by the World Heritage Centre regarding the project entitled "Cargo extension and construction of the cruise terminal and cruise tourism village" and associated dumping of dredged materials. Of particular concern is the fact that the EIA of the project, which is available online on the webpage of the Department of the Environment, does not appear to specifically assess potential impacts of the project on the OUV, including integrity, of the property. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to provide information about the current status of the project and the possible impacts of the planned development on the OUV of the property, including any relevant impact assessments of this aspect, and to ensure that no activities, including dumping of dredged materials at sea, are allowed to proceed if they can result in negative impacts on the property.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.193

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.21**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Welcomes the further progress reported by the State Party in addressing most of the previously raised concerns regarding pending legislative improvements, including the official approval of the amended Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, which now specifically include consideration of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and the adoption and implementation of a new Fisheries Resources Act and associated policy and strategy documents;
4. Also welcomes the State Party's confirmation that the land tenure verification process has been completed and requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre the final legislation for the designation as strict mangrove reserves of the remaining public lands within the property, identified through this process, as soon as it is adopted;
5. Congratulates the State Party for further improving the management of the property since its removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger at its 42nd session in 2018, and concludes that the reported progress, particularly the finalization of the land verification process and the final approval of the amended EIA regulations, has now almost fully resolved the pending issues noted at that time;
6. Also requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre detailed information on the current status of the project "Cargo extension and construction of the cruise terminal and cruise tourism village" and its possible impacts on the OUV of the property, including any relevant EIAs, for review by IUCN, and to ensure that no activity, including dumping of dredged materials at sea, is allowed to proceed if it can result in negative impacts on the property;
7. Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property on the implementation of the above.

195. Pantanal Conservation Area (Brazil) (N 999)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2000

Criteria (vii)(ix)(x)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/999/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 1 (from 1999-1999)

Total amount approved: USD 6,000

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/999/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

N/A

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

N/A

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/999/>

Current conservation issues

On 16 March 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party requesting information on significant wildfires that affected the property. On 23 April 2021, the State Party submitted a report on the state of conservation of the property available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/999/documents/>, reporting the following:

- A comprehensive assessment of the wildfires and their impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property has not yet been possible considering the dimensions and complexities of the Pantanal biome, the extent of the fires and sanitary conditions impacting interagency coordination;
- The Pantanal biome has been affected by severe drought since 2019, resulting in wildfires from both natural and anthropogenic causes and resulting in negative impact on biodiversity, climate and the local economy. Prolonged drought has led to a reduction in water levels of the usually flooded region and its rivers, exacerbating fires. Fires are a natural phenomenon in the biome;
- The area impacted by fires between 1 January and 15 November 2020 in the Pantanal biome, which includes the property, was estimated as 4.350.000 hectares, approximately 32% of the biome;
- Reptiles and amphibians were among the most affected groups of vertebrates. Potentially threatened bird species include hyacinth macaws (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*), “cujubi” (*Aburria kujubi*) and the brown-bellied backdaw (*Penelope ochrogaster*) which may face future impacts of water scarcity, food and shelter. Terrestrial mammals that rely on forest and arboreal zones have also been impacted;
- Extreme fires, including “crown fires” in the forest canopy, have damaged sensitive forest areas and dry organic soils have enabled long-lasting underground fires;
- Federal, State and Municipal government authorities have worked together for more than four months, in collaboration with the private sector, NGOs and volunteers to respond to the fires. The Chico Mendes Institute (ICMBio) mobilised around 350 experts and fire-fighting infrastructure, and military aircraft dropped water in impacted areas;
- To speed the recovery of impacted areas, increase fire-fighting capacity and prevent future fires, ICMBio is undertaking several research activities including impact evaluation, future prevention and establishing new partnerships, amounting in a new national strategy which will help minimise the impact of future fires and advance recovery of damaged areas.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

Recognizing that fire is a natural phenomenon of the Pantanal biome, it is of concern that severe drought conditions since 2019 have resulted in wildfires that led to a negative impact on biodiversity, climatic conditions and the local economy, and it is highly concerning that in 2020 wildfires impacted 4.350.000 hectares, around 32% of the wider Pantanal biome, which includes the property.

Whilst acknowledging that the property represents only a comparatively small part of the biome and that it has not yet been possible to determine the specific impact of the wildfires on the property and its OUV, it is concerning that various species of flora and fauna within the biome have been affected, including sensitive forest areas and threatened species that are important attributes of its OUV. It is therefore recommended that the Committee request the State Party to assess the impacts of the wildfires on the OUV of the property and to submit a report to the World Heritage Centre for review when available.

The reported response measures taken at various levels of government in collaboration with ICMBio, the private sector, NGOs and volunteers to directly address the wildfires, assess impacts and strengthen future fire-fighting capacity as part of a new national strategy to help minimise the impact of future fires and advance recovery of damaged areas, are welcomed. Noting also the potential for climate change to further exacerbate extreme weather conditions, such as drought and resulting wildfires, it is recommended that the State Party actively continue measures to address the wildfires, assess impacts and strengthen appropriate management responses including fire prevention and mitigation measures, and to facilitate the recovery of impacted fauna and flora that constitute part of the OUV.

Recognising that other World Heritage properties have also recently been affected by fire (see Section II.F of Document WHC/21/44.COM/7), the State Party is encouraged to exchange knowledge on fire management strategies in natural World Heritage properties with other States Parties facing similar threats.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.195

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Expresses its utmost concern that severe drought since 2019 has resulted in wildfires that have impacted around 4.3 million hectares, around 32% of the wider Pantanal biome, which includes the property, resulting in negative impacts on biodiversity, climate and the local economy, and affecting sensitive forest areas and various species of fauna that are attributes of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) including threatened species;*
3. *Acknowledging that an assessment of the specific impacts of the wildfires on the property has not yet been possible, requests the State Party to assess the impacts of the wildfires on the OUV of the property and to submit this to the World Heritage Centre when available;*
4. *Welcomes the reported response measures taken by Federal, State and Municipal government authorities in collaboration with the Chico Mendes Institute, private sector, NGOs and volunteers to address the fires, assess impacts and strengthen future fire-fighting capacity as part of a new national strategy and, noting also the potential for climate change to further exacerbate extreme weather conditions such as drought and resulting wildfires, also requests the State Party to actively continue management measures to address any impacts of wildfires on the OUV of the property and facilitate the recovery of impacted fauna and flora, as well as to further strengthen fire prevention and mitigation measures;*
5. *Recognising the impacts of fires on a number of natural World Heritage properties, encourages the State Party to exchange knowledge and best practice of fire management strategies in natural World Heritage properties with other States Parties of the Convention facing similar threats;*
6. *Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 45th session in 2022.*

198. Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (Mexico) (N 1290)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 2008

Criteria (vii)

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1290/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 0

Total amount approved: USD 0

For details, see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1290/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

January 2011: Joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission; January-February

2018: IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

- Illegal activities - Illegal logging
- Land conversion - Agricultural encroachment
- Forest fires (issue resolved)
- Decline in the overwintering population of Monarch butterflies in the property
- Impacts of tourism / visitor / recreation (tourism pressures associated with growth in visitor numbers and heavy concentration in specific areas)
- Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure
- Mining in the buffer zone

Illustrative material see page <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1290/>

Current conservation issues

On 9 February 2021, the State Party submitted a state of conservation report, which is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1290/documents/> and reports the following progress:

- To mitigate the impacts of illegal logging, surveillance measures have been implemented with the support of field patrols. However, in 2020, surveillance activities decreased due to global COVID-19 pandemic. The area of newly degraded forest areas in the 2019-2020 period has quadrupled compared to 2018-2019, increasing from 0.43 ha to 13.36 ha with illegal logging noted as the main reason;
- Forest restoration programmes have been continued in the previously degraded areas of the property;
- Commercial avocado production in the broader region and associated deforestation and significant water consumption are reported to affect parts of the buffer zone of the property;
- In 2020, the Comprehensive Fire Management Plan for the property was completed;
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies throughout the region's protected areas have been implemented through the "Climate Change Adaptation Program" (PACC);
- The 2020 population target issued by the Trinational Working Group for Monarch butterflies corresponding to the number of individuals occupying 6 ha of overwintering habitat in Mexico was achieved in 2018/19, but fell below the threshold the following season. Activities under the trinational framework include habitat conservation, establishing research and monitoring priorities, and educational programmes;

- No updated information is provided regarding the proposed mining project within the buffer zone of the property. The State Party refers to the previously reported technical evaluation, which prevented the project from proceeding, but discussions to reopen the mine continue;
- The process of updating the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve Management Programme has begun (a draft updated Management Programme has been developed) and will continue through public consultation of the document;
- During the 2018/19 season, 14 colonies of Monarch butterflies were registered, occupying 6.05 ha, with 8 colonies (4.98 ha) within the property. This represents the largest area occupied by overwintering butterflies since 2006/07. However, in the 2019/20 season, 11 colonies were registered, occupying a total area of 2.83 ha; 5 colonies were located within the property (2.46 ha). This occupation represents a 53.22% decrease compared to the area in the 2018/19 season, albeit from a high occupancy level.

The World Heritage Centre also notes with concern the reports from early 2020 regarding the violent death of several conservationists actively involved in the protection of the property (see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2080/> and <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2082/>).

On 14 October 2020, a letter (CLT/WHC/LAC/CMT/LS2999) was sent to the State Party requesting official information on reported continuous illegal logging activities within the property.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The measures taken to continue implementation of the recommendations of the 2018 IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission are welcomed, in particular, forest restoration measures, and programmes fostering involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in conservation activities, and provide benefits from them. However, it is of utmost concern that illegal logging and forest degradation have increased sharply, as evident from the fact that the area degraded by illegal logging activities in the 2019-2020 period has quadrupled in the same reporting period in 2018-2019. The increasing logging pressure has also been documented in several media reports. The death of several local conservationists, allegedly linked to work to protect the property and fight illegal logging, is highly concerning and it is recommended that the Committee express its condolences to their families. Noting that surveillance of illegal logging has been further curtailed due to limitations imposed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is recommended that the State Party be urged to take the urgent measures to significantly increase surveillance measures as soon as possible in order to halt the illegal logging in the property.

Of further concern are newly emerging threats, such as the expansion of commercial avocado plantations in the vicinity, including within some areas in the buffer zone of the property. While the threat to the property is reported to be low at the moment, this issue will require further monitoring and assessment of all possible impacts.

It is regrettable that no updated information is provided regarding the mining project previously proposed in the buffer zone of the property (Angangué project). Noting that the project remains *de facto* prohibited, due to the previously reported evaluation undertaken by CONANP and SEMARNAT, which prohibited land use changes and therefore prevented the project from proceeding, the situation remains unchanged. It is recommended that the Committee urge again the State Party to implement the recommendations of the mission regarding mining, namely by clearly defining the property as a No-go area for any mineral exploration and extraction, and developing strict regulations for any mining activities within its buffer zone, in order to avoid any negative impacts on the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

As the OUV of the property is contingent upon the conservation of the Monarch butterfly throughout its entire migratory range, the trilateral cooperation between the States Parties of Canada, Mexico and the United States of America through habitat conservation, research and monitoring, and education is welcomed. In this regard, the joint efforts and commitments reported in the National Action Plan for the Conservation of the Monarch Butterfly 2018-2024 are welcomed. It is recommended the States Parties be requested to continue and build upon these measures, with a particular focus on conserving and restoring native milkweed species in the United States of America in order to sustain population targets for the species in the long term, and ensure the conservation of the property's OUV in doing so.

The implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies throughout the region's protected areas, including the property, through the PACC and the formation of the Comprehensive Fire Management Plan is encouraging. However, noting that numerous colonies consistently establish

themselves outside the property, and given their susceptibility to climate change and potential associated changes in the distribution of overwintering colonies, the State Party should be encouraged again to consider developing a proposal for an extension of the property to ensure that areas consistently occupied by overwintering colonies are appropriately protected and to increase the potential of the property to effectively conserve its OUV under changing climatic conditions.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.198

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,
2. Recalling Decision **43 COM 7B.27**, adopted at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019),
3. Expresses its great concern regarding the death of local conservationists, allegedly linked to their work to protect the property and fight illegal logging, and expresses its most sincere condolences to their families;
4. Notes with utmost concern that illegal logging activities in the property have substantially increased and that measures towards surveillance of illegal activities have been further curtailed due to limitations imposed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, and urges the State Party to significantly increase surveillance measures as a matter of priority in order to halt the illegal logging in the property;
5. Welcomes the ongoing commitment by the State Party in implementing the recommendations of the 2018 IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property; and the advances on the update of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve Management Programme with a participatory approach, and requests the State Party to submit it for review by the IUCN once completed;
6. Regrets that, whilst the Anganguero mining project remains de facto prohibited, no updated information on the status of the project and the current situation regarding mining concessions within the property and its buffer zone has been provided, and also urges again the State Party to ensure that no mining activities are permitted within the property, and to implement other recommendations of the 2018 mission related to this issue;
7. Also welcomes the ongoing trilateral cooperation between the States Parties of Canada, Mexico and the United States of America, and also requests the three States Parties to consolidate and build upon measures to conserve the butterfly through these means, with a particular focus on minimizing the loss and to restoring native milkweed species in the United States of America;
8. Noting the information regarding the strategies for adaptation to climate change implemented in the property and the wider region, also notes that Monarch butterfly colonies continue to occur outside the property, and given their susceptibility to climate change amongst other threats, encourages again the State Party to consider developing a proposal for an extension of the property in order to ensure that all areas consistently occupied by overwintering colonies are appropriately protected and to increase the potential of the property to effectively conserve its Outstanding Universal Value under changing climatic conditions;
9. Further requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and

the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.

199. Canaima National Park (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of) (N 701)

Year of inscription on the World Heritage List 1994

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

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

Previous Committee Decisions see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/documents/>

International Assistance

Requests approved: 2 (from 1999-2005)

Total amount approved: USD 43,777

For details, see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/assistance/>

UNESCO Extra-budgetary Funds

N/A

Previous monitoring missions

1998: UNESCO / IUCN mission

Factors affecting the property identified in previous reports

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

Illustrative material see page <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/701/>

Current conservation issues

On 12 September 2018, the World Heritage Centre sent a letter to the State Party, noting third party information and media articles raising concerns about mining activities within and around the property and asking the State Party to provide clarifications on this matter.

On 19 October 2018 and later 28 February 2019, the State Party submitted a retrospective report for 2018-2019, as well as additional documents, and on 28 December 2020 a response regarding mining. These documents report the following:

- Mining is prohibited within national parks in Venezuela. In 2016, a National Strategic Development Zone “Arco Minero del Orinoco” (ZDENAMO, for its name in Spanish) was established for the purpose of development of activities related to mineral resources. A meeting was convened with the relevant organizations to clarify possible overlap of this zone with the Canaima National Park and other protected areas. Some discrepancies were observed between the boundaries based on the maps from the Geographic Institute of Venezuela from the 1970s, but, based on current technologies, it was concluded that there is no overlap between ZDENAMO and Canaima National Park. If such overlap could have been perceived, this was due to the use of maps of insufficient resolution and scale;
- Clarification of the property's boundaries has been undertaken by INPARQUES (National Parks Institute). With the newly available geodesic technologies the total area of Canaima National Park is estimated at 2,816,015 ha (compared to 3,000,000 ha reported at the time of inscription in 1994), which, however, does not imply any changes to the property's boundaries.
- Various management and conservation activities are reported;

On 8 March 2021, the State Party submitted a report on management and conservation of the property in 2020, providing an overview of different activities, which have continued despite the difficulties posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

On 24 March 2021, the World Heritage Centre sent another letter to the State Party, noting that it continued to receive third-party information regarding growing pressure from illegal mining activities on the property, including satellite images of areas affected by alleged illegal activities, and requesting the State Party to provide updated information on this matter. The State Party provided a preliminary response on 20 April 2021 and further information on 25 April, noting the following:

- In order to assess areas within the property potentially affected by any activities, different methods were used, including satellite images from 2020 and 2021, two overflights of the property undertaken in March and April 2021 and discussions with representatives of local authorities;
- It has been concluded that 99,97% of the territory of the property had not been affected by any negative factors;
- Occasional illegal mining activities might have occurred due to worsened economic situation in the broader region of the property. Some illegal mining activities, such as alluvial mining, had also occurred in the property at various points in the past and affected several areas where damage is still present, as evidenced by satellite images and also referred to in third parties reports. Various measures had been undertaken to fight illegal activities. In most cases, the surface of the areas affected by human activities is reported to have been decreasing. However, it is also noted that such an analysis based on satellite images does not always allow to identify the exact nature of human activities affecting the area and their current status;
- It is again reiterated that no area of the property overlaps with the ZDENAMO where legal mining activities are possible, even though some overlap initially existed at the time of the creation of the zone in 2016, but this has been subsequently corrected through adjustments to the boundaries of the zone and establishment of a 1-km buffer along the border of the property;
- Further information is provided on different national strategies and frameworks aimed at promoting mining as one of the key economic sectors in a responsible manner.

Analysis and Conclusions of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN

The information provided by the State Party regarding management of the property and different conservation activities, many of which continued despite the difficulties posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, is welcomed.

Furthermore, the extensive clarifications regarding the recently established ZDENAMO, including the confirmation that it does not spatially overlap with the property, is noted. However, given well-known potentially wide-ranging impacts of gold mining, it is of concern that, despite the establishment of a 1-km buffer between ZDENAMO and the property, some areas already foreseen for mining activities are located in close vicinity to the northern border of the property. While the State Party notes that all mining activities in ZDENAMO need to undergo the necessary assessment and permits procedures, it is unclear whether a specific assessment of possible negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property has been undertaken or if undertaking of such an assessment is foreseen in the existing regulations.

The clarifications provided by the State Party regarding occasional illegal mining activities within the property that had been reported in the past and whose impacts can still be detected through analysis of satellite images is further noted. While it is welcomed that 99,97% of the property is reported to remain intact, according to the recent analysis and areal inspections, the fact that illegal mining had occurred in the past, including potentially quite recently, is of concern. Overall, while clarifications by the State Party are welcomed, it is difficult to conclude, based on the available information and as also noted by the State Party, what the current extent and status of such activities is and, more importantly, if any impacts on the OUV of the property might have occurred. Therefore it is recommended that the World Heritage Committee request the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to assess, including through on-the-ground visits where feasible, the degree to which the property's OUV, including its integrity, might be affected by illegal mining activities. Furthermore, it is recommended that the mission review the planned and ongoing legal mining activities in the parts of ZDENAMO located in the vicinity to the northern border of the property, assess whether they might result in any potential negative impacts on the OUV of the property and provide advice to the

State Party in ensuring that assessment of possible impacts on the OUV of the property is integrated into existing national regulations for mining.

It is also noted that INPARQUES and the Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Ecosocialismo (MINEC) are studying the possibility to expand the park by adding two adjacent different areas located north of the property, of an area of approximately 212,268 ha, since they have the optimal characteristics to be conserved and not intervened, and because they do not have any other form of protection.

Finally, the clarifications provided by the State Party regarding the boundaries of Canaima National Park, which have been mapped more precisely using modern geospatial technologies are noted. While it might be the case that the maps and technologies used at the time of inscription were not precise, the difference between the area of the property recorded at the time of inscription and the newly estimated area of Canaima National Park is quite significant. It is therefore recommended that this matter is further clarified and that the Committee request the State Party to develop and submit an official proposal for clarification of the boundaries of the property through existing procedures under the Convention, in consultation with the World Heritage Centre.

Draft Decision: 44 COM 7B.199

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/21/44.COM/7B.Add,*
2. *Welcomes the information provided by the State Party regarding different conservation and management activities in the property, many of which continued despite the difficulties posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic;*
3. *Notes the clarifications provided by the State Party regarding the recently established National Strategic Development Zone “Arco Minero del Orinoco” (ZDENAMO), including that it does not spatially overlap with the property, but expresses its concern that, despite the establishment of a 1-km buffer between ZDENAMO and the property, some areas foreseen for mining activities are located in close vicinity to the northern border of the property and that it remains unclear whether a specific assessment of possible negative impacts of mining activities on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property has been undertaken;*
4. *While welcoming the information that most of the property remains intact, notes with concern the confirmation by the State Party that some illegal mining activities occur in the property as concluded by the State Party based on its analysis of satellite images;*
5. *Considering that, based on the available information and as also confirmed by the State Party, it is difficult to assess the current extent and status of such illegal activities in the property and to conclude whether any impacts on the OUV of the property might have occurred, requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission to the property to:*
 - a) *Assess, including through on-the-ground visits where feasible, the degree to which the property’s OUV, including its integrity, might have been affected by illegal mining activities,*
 - b) *Review the planned and ongoing legal mining activities in the parts of ZDENAMO located in the vicinity to the northern border of the property and assess whether they might result in any potential negative impacts on the OUV of the property and provide advice to the State Party in ensuring that assessment of possible impacts on the OUV of the property is integrated into existing national regulations for mining;*

6. *Also requests the State Party to submit an official proposal for clarification of boundaries of the property within the framework of the Retrospective Inventory, according to Paragraphs 163-165 of the Operational Guidelines concerning Minory Boundary Modifications and to provide further information on the proposals for futher expansion of the Canaima National Park;*
7. *Finally requests the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 December 2022**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session in 2023.*